

## **City of Shafter Library and Learning Center Collection Development Policy**

The Shafter Library and Learning Center (SLLC) serves the community of Shafter, California. The combination of classes for school-aged youth and access to resources for all ages in a central, accessible location, make it one of the most valuable public institutions in the City. In 2021, after the library was closed by Kern County and in response to an outpouring of community support for continuing library service, the City took over responsibility for the library from Kern County. In partnership with Bakersfield College, the City reopened the library on January 19, 2022 and now provides services and resources designed to support literacy, education, and the reading interests of the public.

SLLC staff builds and maintains collections by anticipating and responding to the needs and expectations of the community. A collection development budget is set annually by the City. The allocation of collection development funds are based on factors including demand, cost of materials, publishing trends, changes in the marketplace and a strategic focus on the SLLC's mission, budget, and space.

Shafter is a community that values education both to support local industry and improve the lives of residents.

SLLC's focus on serving Shafter is best expressed through its mission statement, which reflects a commitment to education, community service, and engagement: *"To nurture the seeds of discovery, learning, and connection, and help spread those roots across our community."*

### **Purpose and Goals of the Collection Development Policy**

SLLC's Collection Development Policy provides guidance within budgetary and space limitations, to the selection and evaluation of materials which anticipate the needs of the citizens of Shafter. It directly relates the collection to the Library's mission and strategic objectives; defines the scope of the Library's collections; and provides a plan for the continuing development of its resources.

Goals:

1. Govern the work of library staff and contracted company Library Systems and Services (LS&S) responsible for collection development and maintenance
2. Inform Library members, government officials, prospective funders, other libraries, and the public-at-large about Shafter Library's collection development policies and practices
3. Guide the solicitation of grants, gifts, and endowments for purchase of Library resources.

The SLLC neither promotes nor discourages specific views or opinions. Materials selected seek to present a wide spectrum of views essential to an informed citizenry. Having diverse viewpoints in

the collection does not constitute endorsement of any particular or expressed views. SLLC subscribes to the principles expressed in the following American Library Association documents:

1. Library Bill of Rights
2. The Freedom to Read

The SLLC's primary collection development goal is to support discovery, learning, and connection through books. Within this broad goal, the Library seeks to meet the diversity of community needs within the constraints of its resources.

Progress toward this goal is measured by input from community members and staff as well as by annual circulation statistics drawn from SLLC's Integrated Library System (ILS).

As a single rural library, SLLC does not provide comprehensive or research-level collections of scholarly and specialized materials.

As a library that is part of the City's effort to enhance education, SLLC's collection will primarily focus on the needs of children, students, and families, including their need for materials in Spanish.

### **Responsibility for Collection Development**

The responsibility for materials selection and collection development rests with SLLC management. These individuals delegate responsibility for materials selection and collection maintenance to staff employed by contracted company LS&S. Selection duties are delegated to staff that, because of their education, training, and/or experience, have the knowledge to select materials. Suggestions for materials from staff and members are encouraged and seriously considered in the selection process. The SLLC management have the authority to:

- Approve or disapprove selection recommendation from staff and public
- Authority to make final decisions on the withdrawal of materials, replacement orders and any other additions or deletions
- Authority to review collections in the system, evaluate the contents, and revise this manual as needed
- Authority to initiate projects to withdraw materials as a result of collection evaluations
- Authority to acquire materials in addition to those acquired by staff as the need arises

### **Intellectual Freedom and Censorship**

The City of Shafter Library subscribes to the positions articulated in the following statements concerning Library collections (appended to this document), which have been adopted by the American Library Association:

- The Library Bill of Rights
- Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights
- Challenged Material
- Diversity in Collection Development
- Evaluating Library Collections
- Expurgation of Library Material
- The Freedom to Read
- The Freedom to View

### **Selection Criteria**

Selection or rejection only rarely is based on a single criterion. Decisions are usually made because an item is thought to satisfy several criteria. Selection gives the highest priority to those materials most in demand by City of Shafter residents. The following criteria apply to both purchased and donated material:

- Popular demand
- Accurate, current, and impartial content, or content where the bias is clearly stated
- Authority and reputation of author(s), creator(s), composer(s), director(s), or publisher(s)
- Suitability for the intended audience
- Budget and space limitations
- Availability from vendor(s) and/or publishers
- Quality of production, including ease of use
- Relation to items already in the collection
- Local or regional interest or significance
- Availability of similar material in other libraries

### **Deaccessioning**

The Library's intent is to maintain a collection used by City of Shafter residents. Items in the collection will be periodically examined for physical condition, accuracy of information, and frequency of use within the last five years. Damaged items that are still usable will be repaired or replaced, if possible. Obsolete or unneeded items will be eliminated. Statistical reports from the Library's ILS will be consulted while making decisions.

Except when in high demand, previous editions of works are discarded when a new edition is acquired. Books in disrepair are discarded if they can be speedily replaced. Every effort is made to replace worn copies of landmark works.

### **Receiving of Gifts/Donations**

The Shafter Library and Learning Center encourages donations of funds and materials for the collections. The Library accepts donations with the understanding that:

- All donations are permanent and cannot be returned
- The Library generally cannot accept donations with specific stipulations
- The Library reserves the right to integrate donations with other materials on the same subject(s)
- Items selected for the collections meet the policy and criteria described above
- Unneeded items will be disposed of in whatever manner deemed appropriate by management (including but not limited to: little free library donations, Friends of the Library fundraisers, and donations to families)
- Acknowledgement of gifts may be provided, but the Library will not make appraisals of the value of donated items

### **Disposition of Gifts**

- Gift items will be integrated into the regular library collections in normal sequence, available to all library members, and otherwise handled as any other material belonging to the library.
- The library will place a bookplate into books purchased with donated monies when appropriate; however, the library will not agree to form separate collections of either donated materials or materials purchased with donated money.
- The Library retains unconditional ownership of an accepted gift. All donations are accepted only if the library supervisor and Learning Center director determine that they can be utilized by, or benefit the Library. Once conveyed to the Library, no gift will be returned to the donor.
- The library reserves the right to decide the conditions of display, housing, and access to the materials.
- All gifts may be utilized, sold or disposed of in the best interest of the Library. When gift items are withdrawn from the collection, the Library will not notify the donor of the withdrawal. The Library will not automatically replace worn-out, damaged, or lost gift items.
- The library is not obligated to keep donated materials for any length of time. The Library supervisor and Learning Center director reserve the right to make the final decision on the disposition of any gift.
- All monetary donations will be conveyed and transferred to the Shafter Friends of the Library, who will deposit them in the organization's accounts and use them or invest them from that fund in accordance with the donor's wishes.

### **Requesting Materials**

Members desiring the Library to purchase materials may submit a Request for Purchase. The Library attempts to purchase all Requests for Purchase that meet the Collection Development Policy and are available via our preferred vendors.

Public input is encouraged and appreciated, but all suggestions are subject to the Collection Development Policy. The Library provides multiple methods of public input through the following request guidelines:

- Requests should be titles published in the preceding 12 months, have a high usage potential or fill a series/subject gap
- Fall within the specified collection guidelines and criteria
- Not already owned by the Library System

### **Request for Reconsideration of Selection Decisions**

The SLLC supports Shafter residents' constitutionally protected right to free speech. If a complaint is received about an item or items in the collection, the member will be asked to record the complaint on the Request for Reconsideration form. Complaints will be considered seriously. The library supervisor will review the completed form and appoint a review committee. The Committee will review the item(s) and advise the library supervisor whether collection development policy and criteria were followed in selection and maintenance decisions. Whatever the decision, the member will receive a written response from the library supervisor within 30 business days of submitting the form.

## **Appendix**

Policy statements concerning Library collections adopted by the American Library Association and endorsed by SLLC.

### **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 views of those contributing to their creation.
2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting 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, and January 23, 1980, inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.*

### **An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

The American Library Association declares as a matter of firm principle that it is the responsibility of every Library to have a clearly defined materials selection policy in written form that reflects the Library Bill of Rights, and that is approved by the appropriate governing authority.

Challenged materials that meet the criteria for selection in the materials selection policy of the Library should not be removed under any legal or extra-legal pressure. The Library Bill of Rights states in Article I that "Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation," and in Article II, that "Materials should not be

proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." Freedom of expression is protected by the Constitution of the United States, but constitutionally protected expression is often separated from unprotected expression only by a dim and uncertain line. The Constitution requires a procedure designed to focus searchingly on challenged expression before it can be suppressed. An adversary hearing is a part of this procedure.

Therefore, any attempt, be it legal or extra-legal, to regulate or suppress materials in libraries must be closely scrutinized to the end that protected expression is not abridged.

*Adopted June 25, 1971, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; January 10, 1990.*

### **Diversity in Collection Development:**

#### **An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

Throughout history, the focus of censorship has fluctuated from generation to generation. Books and other materials have not been selected or have been removed from Library collections for many reasons, among which are prejudicial language and ideas, political content, economic theory, social philosophies, religious beliefs, sexual forms of expression, and other potentially controversial topics.

Some examples of censorship may include removing or not selecting materials because they are considered by some as racist or sexist; not purchasing conservative religious materials; not selecting materials about or by minorities because it is thought these groups or interests are not represented in a community; or not providing information on or materials from non-mainstream political entities. Librarians may seek to increase user awareness of materials on various social concerns by many means, including, but not limited to, issuing bibliographies and presenting exhibits and programs. Librarians have a professional responsibility to be inclusive, not exclusive, in collection development and in the provision of interlibrary loan. Access to all materials legally obtainable should be assured to the user, and policies should not unjustly exclude materials even if they are offensive to the librarian or the user. Collection development should reflect the philosophy inherent in Article II of the Library Bill of Rights: "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." A balanced collection reflects a diversity of materials, not an equality of numbers. Collection development responsibilities include selecting materials in the languages in common use in the community the Library serves. Collection development and the selection of materials should be done according to professional standards and established selection and review procedures.

There are many complex facets to any issue, and variations of context in which issues may be expressed, discussed, or interpreted. Librarians have a professional responsibility to be fair, just, and equitable and to give all Library users equal protection in guarding against violation of the Library patron's right to read, view, or listen to materials and resources protected by the First

Amendment, no matter what the viewpoint of the author, creator, or selector. Librarians have an obligation to protect Library collections from removal of materials based on personal bias or prejudice, and to select and support the access to materials on all subjects that meet, as closely as possible, the needs, interests, and abilities of all persons in the community the Library serves. This includes materials that reflect political, economic, religious, social, minority, and sexual issues.

Intellectual freedom, the essence of equitable Library services, provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause, or movement may be explored. Toleration is meaningless without tolerance for what some may consider detestable. Librarians cannot justly permit their own preferences to limit their degree of tolerance in collection development, because freedom is indivisible.

*Adopted July 14, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990.*

### **Evaluating Library Collections:**

#### **An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

The continuous review of Library materials is necessary as a means of maintaining an active Library collection of current interest to users. In the process, materials may be added and physically deteriorated or obsolete materials may be replaced or removed in accordance with the collection maintenance policy of a given Library and the needs of the community it serves. Continued evaluation is closely related to the goals and responsibilities of all libraries and is a valuable tool of collection development. This procedure is not to be used as a convenient means to remove materials presumed to be controversial or disapproved of by segments of the community. Such abuse of the evaluation function violates the principles of intellectual freedom and is in opposition to the Preamble and Articles I and II of the Library Bill of Rights, which state:

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 views of those contributing to their creation.
2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

The American Library Association opposes such "silent censorship" and strongly urges that libraries adopt guidelines setting forth the positive purposes and principles of evaluation of materials in Library collections.

*Adopted February 2, 1973, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981.*



## **Expurgation of Library Materials:**

### **An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

Expurgating Library materials is a violation of the Library Bill of Rights. Expurgation as defined by this interpretation includes any deletion, excision, alteration, editing, or obliteration of any part(s) of books or other Library resources by the Library, its agent, or its parent institution (if any). By such expurgation, the Library is in effect denying access to the complete work and the entire spectrum of ideas that the work intended to express. Such action stands in violation of Articles I, II, and III of the Library Bill of Rights, which state that "Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation," that "Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval," and that "Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment."

The act of expurgation has serious implications. It involves a determination that it is necessary to restrict access to the complete work. This is censorship. When a work is expurgated, under the assumption that certain portions of that work would be harmful to minors, the situation is no less serious.

Expurgation of any books or other Library resources imposes a restriction, without regard to the rights and desires of all Library users, by limiting access to ideas and information. (See also other Interpretations to the Library Bill of Rights, including Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks and Free Access to Libraries for Minors.)

Further, expurgation without written permission from the holder of the copyright on the material may violate the copyright provisions of the United States Code.

*Adopted February 2, 1973, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; January 10, 1990.*

### **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.
6. 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.

7. 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.

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.*

## **Libraries: An American Value**

Libraries in America are cornerstones of the communities they serve. Free access to the books, ideas, materials, and information in America's libraries is imperative for education, employment, enjoyment, and self-government.

Libraries are a legacy to each generation, offering the heritage of the past and the promise of the future. To ensure that libraries flourish and have the freedom to promote and protect the public good in the 21st century, we believe certain principles must be guaranteed.

To that end, we affirm this contract with the people we serve:

- We defend the constitutional rights of all individuals, including children and teenagers, to use the library's materials and services;
- We value our nation's diversity and strive to reflect that diversity by providing a full spectrum of materials and services to the communities we serve;
- We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its materials and services;
- We connect people and ideas by helping each person select from and effectively use the library's materials;
- We protect each individual's privacy and confidentiality in the use of library materials and services;
- We protect the rights of individuals to express their opinions about library materials and services;
- We celebrate and preserve our democratic society by making available the widest possible range of viewpoints, opinions and ideas, so that all individuals have the opportunity to become lifelong learners - informed, literate, educated, and culturally enriched.

Change is constant, but these principles transcend change and endure in a dynamic technological, social, and political environment.

By embracing these principles, libraries in the United States can contribute to a future that values and protects freedom of speech in a world that celebrates both our similarities and our differences, respects individuals and their beliefs, and holds all persons truly equal and free.

*Adopted February 3, 1999, by the Council of the American Library Association*