

Intellectual Freedom at SPL

One of SPL's core values is intellectual freedom. **We support open and unrestricted access to information, and protect individual rights to privacy and choice without fear of censorship or discrimination.**

What is intellectual freedom?

It's your right to read, write, listen to, and talk about your beliefs and opinions. At SPL, we support intellectual freedom as the foundation for an informed, democratic society. But we're not alone:

- The [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#) protects intellectual freedom. It declares that all Canadians have the right to "freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression."
- "Freedom of expression is a fundamental right of all Canadians, and freedom to read is part of that precious heritage.... Censorship does not protect society; it smothers creativity and precludes open debate of controversial issues." – The Book and Periodical Council, [Position Statement on Freedom of Expression and Freedom to Read](#)
- "Libraries have a core responsibility to safeguard and facilitate access to constitutionally protected expressions of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, including those which some individuals and groups consider unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. ...Libraries provide, defend and promote equitable access to the widest possible variety of expressive content and resist calls for censorship and the adoption of systems that deny or restrict access to resources." - The Canadian Federation of Library Associations, [Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries](#)

Intellectual Freedom and Our Materials

Saskatoon is diverse, and so is our collection.

At SPL, we ensure that our collection contains the widest possible variety of content, including content that some will find unpopular or unacceptable. Materials of a controversial nature will not be censored or restricted.

We serve the interests and needs of people of varied economic, social, educational and cultural backgrounds, and of differing religious and political affiliations. Our selection criteria include:

- Literary and artistic merit
- Authenticity and honesty of presentation
- Usefulness for the intended audience

Our materials are “open access,” meaning that they are equally available to all members of the community.

What About Kids?

Parents and guardians are the best judge of what kids should and should not do. We encourage you to have discussions with your children about what is appropriate for them to read, listen, view and play.

How About Hate Speech?

Our position on Intellectual Freedom does not apply to the expression or dissemination of views that promote and/or incite hatred. Such communications are prohibited in libraries, including our online presence. Canadian courts determine what constitutes Hate Speech.

Intellectual Freedom and the Internet

We provide unfiltered internet access in support of intellectual freedom, which means we do not block any websites. However, users must comply with our [Terms of Use for Computers & Wi-Fi](#).

I Don't Think You Should Have This Book

We value your opinions. If there is a book, magazine, DVD, or video game in our collection that you don't like, please share your concerns with us. You can talk to a staff member, or submit a written Request for Reconsideration of Library Material (just ask for a form at any service desk). All issues will be explored and responded to.



saskatoonlibrary.ca

Is something missing? If you know of valuable materials that would contribute to the Library's collection of viewpoints, please let us know by [suggesting a title](#) for purchase.

Intellectual Freedom Resources

Freedom to Read: www.freedomtoread.ca

Canadian Federation of Library Associations: <http://cfla-fcab.ca>

American Library Association: www.ala.org

International Federation of Library Associations: www.ifla.org

Banned Books Week: www.bannedbooksweek.org