

Wolfeboro Public Library

Collection Development Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this Collection Development Policy is to guide the library staff and to inform the public of the principles upon which the collection is developed. The overall goal of collection development is selecting and maintaining a well-rounded and well-balanced collection that supports the library's mission and general objectives.

Mission Statement: The mission of the Wolfeboro Public Library is to provide materials, services, and programs to meet the personal, educational, and informational needs of community members of all ages.

General Objectives:

1. To assemble, preserve, and administer library materials in organized collections in a variety of formats. To provide materials in order to promote and stimulate knowledge, wisdom, culture, and enjoyment for all citizens and to facilitate education of all people in the community.
2. To serve the public in an efficient, impartial, courteous and friendly manner.
3. To support the principle of intellectual freedom as a foundation of a free society.

Selection

The Wolfeboro Public Library Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for all materials added to the collection. The Board of Trustees delegates this responsibility to the Library Director who, within the framework of this policy, may entrust staff with the selection of resources. In general, the Library Director selects and maintains material in the Adult Collection and the Children's Librarian selects and maintains material in the Children's and Young Adult Collections.

Selection Criteria:

The following qualities may be used in reviewing items for addition to the collection:

- Timeliness and accuracy of the information
- Credibility and authority of the creator
- Popularity of or demand for the work
- Cost-effectiveness within the library's budget
- Quality of writing or form of expression
- How the work supports the mission of the library?
- How the work supplements the existing collection?
- Actual and potential historical significance

Selection Tools and Methods:

Published reviews in professional and general periodicals are consulted in the evaluation of materials. Selection tools include Booklist, Library Journal, School Library Journal, commercial catalogs, and reviews found in the popular media and online. Requests from the public are accepted following the procedures outlined within the Patron Recommendations section of this policy.

Format Choices:

The library currently collects materials in print and non-print formats including books, magazines, newspapers, DVDs, CDs, online databases, and online resources.

New formats and types of access will be considered as new technologies and options become available. Considerations include the availability of items in the format, cost per item, availability, and the library's ability to support the use and maintenance of the format.

Patron Recommendations:

Requests for materials are an important consideration in the selection process. Library users may request that materials be added to the collection by filling out a "Request for Purchase" form. Suggestions for purchase will be considered under the same selection criteria as all other library material. If it is not possible or appropriate to purchase the material a copy may be obtained through Interlibrary Loan (ILL).

Gifts and Donations:

The Wolfeboro Public Library welcomes gifts and donations in support of the development of the library's collections. Many valuable Library resources originated this way. Modest gifts and donations are appreciated, as are bequests, endowments and larger contributions. Gifts of any kind are accepted subject to the following limitations: (1) the library retains unconditional ownership; (2) the library makes the final decision on acceptance, use, retention, removal or other considerations. The library will not place a value on a gift; appraisals of gifts are the responsibility of the donor. The library reserves the right to decline gifts.

Collections

Adult Non-Fiction Collection:

The library acquires works that will serve both current and future generations of library patrons. The non-fiction collection includes a wide range of subjects and viewpoints, which reflect local interest, historical significance, and the library's mission. No one subject or viewpoint is given undue emphasis. The collection encourages reading, supports general studies, and promotes self-education by containing works that range in complexity and comprehensiveness. Non-fiction material is a source for such things as intellectual stimulation, learning, practical advice, and casual entertainment; the non-fiction collection is not intended to adequately serve any specific academic research. Selection of adult non-fiction is influenced by the timeliness, accuracy, and authority of materials.

Adult Fiction Collection:

Adult fiction primarily serves the recreational interests of library patrons. The Wolfeboro Public Library acquires and maintains a collection of popular, genre, and literary fiction works, which reflects the variety of tastes and reading skills of its patrons. Selection of adult fiction is influenced by popularity, literary reviews and awards, originality, and writing style.

These elements may not be applied equally to all types and styles of fiction. Genre fiction in particular may be selected comparatively within the context of that genre, while works that come in series may be automatically selected to maintain continuity.

Young Adult Collection:

The Young Adult Collection primarily includes fiction and non-fiction materials in a variety of formats for young people in grades 7 through 12. In addition to the general selection criteria, selection for this collection considers the following qualities: materials that are clearly reviewed and/or labeled as young adult, characters of middle school, high school or college age, theme or subject matter of interest to and intended for young adults.

Children's Collection:

To encourage life-long reading habits, the Children's Collection provides fiction and non-fiction materials in a variety of formats to satisfy and stimulate the informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs of children from infancy through grade eight. The materials are selected with regard to the stages of emotional and intellectual maturity of children.

Periodicals

The periodical collection provides popular magazines and newspapers for library users of all ages. In addition to print periodicals the library maintains a collection of local newspapers digitally going back to the late 1800s. Electronic copies of some periodicals are available through online databases. The collection is intended to complement the book collection and items are selected according to the same criteria as other library materials. Additional selection criteria include cost and storage considerations.

Special Collections:

The Wolfeboro Public Library seeks to collect and preserve materials relevant to the history of Wolfeboro and New Hampshire. The library maintains a small collection of family histories, maps, and other historical items of local interest. These are considered valuable for local history and genealogy purposes. As most items are not replaceable, this collection is reserved for in-library use only and staff must retrieve materials for patrons.

Multimedia Collections:

Audio and Music

The audio materials collection contains both audio books and music CDs. CD, downloadable and audiocassette formats are currently available, though no audiocassettes are currently being added to the collection.

The audio books represent popular reading materials, both fiction and nonfiction. Unabridged works are preferred over abridged works, unless unabridged titles are unavailable. Audio books, along with large-print formats, are a significant collection priority as they accommodate patrons with visual difficulties.

The music collection includes musical works encompassing a range of styles, including classical, jazz, movie/TV, rhythm and blues, and popular items. Additional items are selected to meet popular demand.

Video and Film

The collection consists of a varied selection of feature films, including current high interest, old classics, and foreign films in DVD format. Informational titles include such popular subjects as travel, sports, exercise, parenting, cooking, business, language, documentaries, arts, hobbies, and home repair.

Computer Resources

The library has computer-based resources available through subscriptions, including those made available by the New Hampshire State Library or via the Internet. These resources are chosen for both educational and recreational purposes, as they pertain to the library's overall mission.

Internet Access

The library provides access to the Internet on publicly accessible library computers and via an unsecured wireless modem. Providing access to the Internet as a whole is different from selecting or excluding specific content available online. By accessing and using the library's Internet services the user agrees to abide by the "Wolfeboro Public Library Policy and Guidelines for Public Internet Access". Parents are encouraged to monitor their children's Internet access.

Maintenance

Evaluation:

Continuous evaluation of the collection ensures that the library is fulfilling its mission to provide relevant resources to patrons. Evaluation includes:

- Statistical tools such as circulation reports and collection turnover rates
- Checking standard bibliographies and recommended lists against library holdings
- The continuous weeding of unused items and materials in poor physical condition
- Evaluation of patron requests and suggestions
- Regular review of this Collection Development Policy, every three years at a minimum.

Deaccessioning/Weeding:

The Wolfeboro Public Library staff is required to weed the collection on a regular basis in order to keep the collection current, relevant, and attractive; to eliminate outdated information and to make the best use of shelf and virtual spaces. As items in the collection become worn, dated, damaged, or lost, staff members will identify unacceptable or missing items and decide if replacing or repairing them is possible and appropriate.

Criteria for weeding decisions include:

- Age: Is the item outdated, superseded by a new edition, or no longer relevant?
- Physical condition: Is the item faded, worn, torn, soiled, musty, or damaged?
- Demand: Has the item been accessed frequently or recently?
- Duplication: Does the library hold multiple copies and does demand support that?
- Availability: Is the item still available for replacement purchase?
- Completeness: Does the library have the rest of the set or series?
- Collection needs: Does removing the item leave a gap in the collection that should be filled?
- Geographic significance: Is the item important to the Wolfeboro area or New Hampshire?
- Historical value: Is the item historically important or a definitive work for the subject area?
- Uniqueness: Is the item rare or of archival quality? Does the library hold the only copy?
- Location: Does the item belong in a different location either within the library or elsewhere?

Controversial Materials and Requests for Reconsideration:

Public libraries preserve and enhance the people's right to a broader range of ideas than those held by any one librarian, publisher or government. On occasion, there can be diverse opinions by individuals or groups as to what is acceptable or appropriate for the collection. Library collections are not limited to only those ideas and information one person or group believes to be true, good and proper.

The Wolfeboro Public Library is committed to supporting intellectual freedom, providing access to diverse viewpoints, and protecting the privacy of library users. The library's selection of an item is not an endorsement of its viewpoint. The "Library Bill of Rights" adopted by the American Library Association issued jointly by the American Library Association and the Association of American Publishers are basic to the Collection Development Policy and are used in conjunction with this policy. These documents are in Appendices A and B.

The Board of Trustees endorses the "Freedom to Read Statement" (Appendix B) and its interpretations. Materials selected under the Collection Development Policy are considered protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. The Board of Trustees believes that anyone is free to reject for himself/herself library materials of which he or she does not approve, however, the individual cannot restrict the freedom of others to read, view or hear. Parents or legal guardians have the responsibility

to guide and direct the reading, viewing, or listening of their own minor children. The library does not take the place of the parent or guardian.

Library patrons who ask the library to remove materials from the collection will receive copies of this Collection Development Policy, the “Library Bill of Rights,” the “Freedom to Read Statement,” and the “Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials” form.

Use of the “Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials” form provides an opportunity to review whether a material’s presence in the collection is appropriate under this Collection Development Policy. The Library Director is responsible for reviewing requests in a timely fashion. If the material is found to be appropriate, the philosophy and criteria used will be explained in writing to the patron.

If the patron is not satisfied with the explanation, the Board of Trustees will review the request at their next regularly scheduled board meeting. Patrons are welcome to express their concerns directly to the Board of Trustees at this time. The Wolfeboro Public Library Board of Trustees will vote on the request based on whether the questioned material is compliant with this Collection Development Policy and will notify the requesting patron within ten days after such board meeting of their final decision.

Forms: Request for Purchase

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Appendix A: Library Bill of Rights

Appendix B: Freedom to Read Statement

Approved by the Wolfeboro Public Library Board of Trustees April 2, 2007; Revised 9/2/11; Revised 9/12/14; Revised 4/10/2023; Revised 5/8/2023.

Collection Development Policy – 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.

Adopted June 18, 1948.
Amended February 2, 1961; June 28, 1967; and January 23, 1980,
inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996,
by the ALA Council.

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.