

# WOODRIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY COLLECTION MANAGEMENT POLICY

## Introduction

It is the goal of the Woodridge Public Library to meet the informational, education, cultural, inspirational, and recreational needs of the residents of Woodridge. It is in the public interest for the Library to make available a wide diversity of materials in various formats. An effort is made to include materials representing all sides of controversial issues so that informed decisions can be made by the public.

The responsibility for the policy governing the management of the Library's collections rests with the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees of the Woodridge Public Library endorses the American Library Association's *Library Bill of the Rights* (Appendix I), *Freedom to Read* (Appendix II) and *Freedom to View* (Appendix III) Statements. Responsibility for managing the collections (including selection and withdrawal) is delegated to the Library Administrator and her/his designees.

## Purpose

The purpose of the Collection Management Policy of the Woodridge Public Library is to guide the Library staff in their assigned areas of collection management and to inform the public of the principles which govern the management of the Library's collections.

## Criteria for Selection

1. Materials in many formats are selected to fulfill the four roles established by the Woodridge Public Library Board of Trustees. These roles are: Educational Support Center, Popular Materials Center, Preschoolers' Door to Learning, and Reference Library.

The following criteria serve as guidelines:

- a. Literary quality
  - b. Popular demand
  - c. Value of information
  - d. Current or historical interest
  - e. Input gathered from critical reviews and standard selection sources
  - f. Relevance to community interests and needs
2. Selection of materials is made on the basis of the values and interests of all the people in the community. No material will be excluded because of the race, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, or political or social views of the author.
  3. No titles are excluded from the collection solely because the frankness of presentation might be offensive to some nor because the material might not be suitable for all levels. High interest materials of questionable long term value are included in the collection and may be withdrawn once they have served their purpose. Literary merit is not a necessary criterion for high interest materials.
  4. The Library selects appropriate material for each age group. Special collections serve the needs and interests of children of preschool, elementary and junior high age. There are no age restrictions on the borrowing of library materials. Selection of materials for the adult collection will not be limited by the fact that this collection is widely used by both high school and junior high students, and, increasingly, by elementary school students. The responsibility for monitoring library material used by minors rests with the parent or guardian.
  5. When available, materials which contain a significant amount of information about Woodridge or are written by a resident of the Village of Woodridge will be acquired.

## Disposition of Library Materials

The collections of the Woodridge Public Library are evaluated in an ongoing process in order to find areas that need strengthening as well as to identify materials that should be withdrawn because they are dated,

unused, in poor condition, obsolete formats, or duplicate copies no longer being requested. These materials may be discarded, sold by the Friends of the Library, or given to other local not-for-profit organizations.

### **Challenge to Materials**

1. The Board of Trustees believes that censorship is an individual matter and declares that while anyone is free to reject for themselves materials of which they do not approve, they cannot act as censors to restrict the freedom of others.
2. Patrons with complaints concerning specific library materials will be referred to the Head of the Adult/Young Adult or Children's Departments, depending on the classification of the material. It is the responsibility of the department head to discuss the complaint with the patron and attempt to clarify questions regarding the material. The patron will be provided with a copy of the *Collection Management Policy* of the Woodridge Public Library.
3. If the patron decides to pursue the complaint, he/she will complete a copy of the "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" (see Appendix IV) and return it to the Department Head. Upon receipt, the Department Head will review the form and make an appointment with the patron for a second consultation regarding the material. Should the consultation not rectify the problem, the patron will be referred to the Library Administrator. The appropriate Department Head will be asked to attend. In the event that the patron wants to further pursue the complaint, the Library Administrator will bring the matter to the attention of the Library Board of Trustees for their consideration.

### **Donations and Gifts**

1. Gifts of books and other materials will be accepted by the Library with the understanding that these articles are given unconditionally and become the property of the Library. The Library reserves the right to add the item to its collection, donate it to another institution or dispose of it in any other manner.
2. Donations of cash for memorials or for other special occasions are accepted under the Honor Bound program. Specific subject areas may be suggested by donors for these materials, but selection of specific titles will be made by library staff in accordance with this policy. Commemorative gifts are acknowledged by a bookplate whenever possible.
3. Gifts of money, real property, and stocks and bonds are encouraged and are most useful to the Library in an unrestricted form. Any restrictions or conditions attached to such gifts must fall within the Library's mission, roles, long range plan, and policies and be acceptable to the Board of Trustees.
4. Personal property, art objects, memorial or commemorative objects, displays or plaques, portraits, artifacts and similar materials are generally not accepted as gifts by the Library. Under certain circumstances the Library may accept such a gift if all conditions are approved by the Board of Trustees.
5. The Library will not accept any materials which are not outright gifts, nor will the Library accept any materials that attach the condition of periodic or permanent display.
6. No valuations or appraisals will be made by the library staff on any potential or actual gifts to the library.

### **Review of Policy**

The Board of Trustees reviews the *Collection Management Policy* biennially.

Approved by the Board of Trustees

May 17, 1995; amended October 15, 2008, reviewed October 20, 2010, reviewed October 17, 2012; amended April 15, 2015

**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.

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Adopted June 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 24, 1996.

### 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.**

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.

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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 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

**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 guarantee 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.

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This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

**Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council**

**REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS**

Please complete in full.

1. Request initiated by:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you represent

Yourself \_\_\_\_\_

An organization (name, please) \_\_\_\_\_

Other group (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

3. The format of the item (please circle):

Book \_\_\_\_\_ Periodical \_\_\_\_\_  
Compact Disc \_\_\_\_\_ DVD \_\_\_\_\_  
e-Book \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

4. The item itself:

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher: \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

5. The objection:

A. To what do you object? (Please include page numbers for the first four. Attach another sheet if additional space is required for answers.)

Language \_\_\_\_\_

Illustrations \_\_\_\_\_

Historical, factual, scientific distortion \_\_\_\_\_

Specific passages \_\_\_\_\_

General tone of the work \_\_\_\_\_

Perceived intent of the author (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

B. Did you read the entire work? \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no  
If not, what parts?

C. What do you feel might be the result of reading/listening to/watching this work?  
\_\_\_\_\_

D. For what age group would you recommend this work?\_\_\_\_\_

E. What do you believe is the theme of this work? \_\_\_\_\_

F. Are you aware of judgments of this work by critics? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_No

Please list the reviews and sources you have read or heard that agree with your opinion.  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What would you like the Library to do about this work?  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey a valuable picture and perspective of the subject treated?  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Did you read the *Library Bill of Rights*, *The Freedom to Read* and *The Freedom to View* statements?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Signature (required for reconsideration)\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Board of Trustees  
October 15, 2008; revised 4/15/15