



## Materials Selection Policy

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The purpose of the Materials Selection 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. The Woodridge Public Library collects and provides access to a wide range of materials to meet the leisure, cultural, informational and educational needs of the community. The Library provides materials in a variety of formats which will be of interest and value to its patrons.

### **Selection Criteria**

Library staff use their professional judgment and expertise to make selection decisions, including choosing titles, identifying quantities for purchase, selecting locations for materials, and choosing materials for topical library displays, highlighting different collection areas. Highest selection priority is given to those materials having the broadest appeal.

Multiple criteria may be used to evaluate and select items for the collection. Selected items are not required to meet all of these criteria which include:

- Popular demand
- Relevance to community interests and needs
- Quality (including awards received, literary or artistic merit, opinions of professional reviewers, reputation or qualifications of the author or publisher)
- Existing holdings in relation to customer demand
- Currency, contemporary significance, or historic importance
- Price and availability
- Relation to existing collection
- Availability of materials via reciprocal borrowing, interlibrary loan, and from other sources
- Suitability for the intended audience
- Suitability of format for library circulation and use

The Library does not collect materials for advanced scholarly or professional research, nor does it act as an archive of historical materials. While the Library does endeavor to support school curricula, textbooks are not purchased. New formats are considered and collections established when a significant portion of the community has access to the technology to make use of the format.

### **Withdrawal/Deselection of Materials**

To maintain the quality of the collection, all materials are periodically evaluated by staff to ensure they are still useful to the public, are in good condition, and do not contain obsolete information. Items may be withdrawn due to:

- Low usage
- Multiple copies that are no longer circulating
- Space considerations
- Superseded editions of formats
- Outdated or inaccurate information
- Items that are worn, soiled, badly marked, or in disrepair

Formats and special collections are discontinued when they are no longer widely used. Withdrawn materials may be given to the Friends of the Woodridge Public Library, offered to other organizations or discarded.

### **Patron Suggestions for Purchase**

The Library encourages input from the Woodridge community concerning additions to the collection. All suggestions for purchase are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials.

### **Self-Published Materials**

The Library does not purchase unsolicited materials or act in lieu of professional review sources. In general, the Library does not collect self-published books. The Library may accept donated copies of self-published materials but does not guarantee inclusion in the collection.

### **Donations**

The Woodridge Public Library accepts donations of books and other materials. The Library retains the right to accept or reject donations based on the same evaluative criteria that are applied to purchase materials. Not all donations can be accepted. 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. Library staff and/or representatives of the Friends of the Library make all decisions as to the use, housing, and final disposition of donations.

### **Responsibilities**

Responsibility for the policy governing the management of the Library's collection rests with the Board of Trustees. Librarians select materials based on their knowledge of the community's needs. It is the responsibility of the Library staff to see that collections are developed appropriately. The final responsibility for the selection of materials and displays rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Board of Trustees.

### **Intellectual Freedom**

The Library is committed to the principles expressed in the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read and Freedom to View Statements (see Appendix I - III). To this end, the Library has the responsibility to provide materials representing a wide range of ideas and opinions, including controversial, unpopular and unorthodox viewpoints and expression. Language, situations, or subjects that may be offensive to some community members do not disqualify material whose value is to be judged on its entirety based on the outlined selection criteria. Library collections will be organized, marked, and maintained to help users discover the materials they seek. The Library will not use any system of coding, rating, or labeling to identify or segregate materials to limit discovery or access. The Library, the Library Board, and Library personnel will not, either directly or indirectly, ban or censor any material. Inclusion of an item in the collection does not constitute an endorsement of its content. While patrons are free to reject titles of which they do not approve for themselves, they cannot restrict the freedom of others to choose what to read, hear, or view. There are no age restrictions on the borrowing of Library materials. The responsibility for monitoring library material used by minors rests with the parent or guardian.

### **Concerns About Library Materials**

Patron concerns about a title will be referred to the appropriate Manager (Adult & Teen or Children's), depending on the classification of the material. If the initial response is not satisfactory to the patron, the patron will be referred to the Library Director. Patrons not satisfied with the response from the Library Director may complete a copy of the "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" (see Appendix IV) and request the matter be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Board Meeting. The individual completing the Request form must be eligible to hold a free library card from the Woodridge Public Library or have purchased a WPL non-resident card. This provision may be waived by the Library Director if the individual completing the Request form can demonstrate a direct, particular and harmful effect from the material

challenged. All questions on the Request form must be completed in order for the Request to proceed. Only one title may be listed on the Request form. The Board will then review the matter and respond to it. No title will be removed from the library collection while it is being reviewed. Once a decision has been reached, the title will not be reviewed again for five years from the date of the final decision.

This policy shall be updated every two years.

*The Library staff shall develop such rules and procedures as are necessary to ensure compliance with the Woodridge Public Library Materials Selection Policy.*

Approved by the Woodridge Public Library Board of Trustees on 1/15/2025

## 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.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

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Adopted June 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019. Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 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:

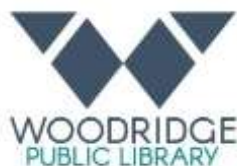
1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions 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

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Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Do you represent:

Yourself \_\_\_\_\_

An organization (name of) \_\_\_\_\_

Are you familiar with the Woodridge Public Library Materials Selection Policy? \_\_\_\_\_

Resource on which you are commenting:

\_\_\_ Book \_\_\_ e-Book \_\_\_ Magazine \_\_\_ Audio Recording

\_\_\_ Digital Resource \_\_\_ Game \_\_\_ Newspaper \_\_\_ Other

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Producer \_\_\_\_\_

What brought this resource to your attention? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Did you read, hear, or view the entire work? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your specific objection? Cite examples. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are there resources(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

\_\_\_\_\_

What action are you requesting the Library Board consider? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*Attach additional sheets if necessary.*

Approved by the Woodridge Public Library Board of Trustees on 1/15/2025