

# **Dover Public Library**

## **Collection Development Policy**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Collection development is the systematic and cost-effective building and evaluation of the library's collections of materials. Its goal is to support the mission of the library and involves both selection and de-selection (or "weeding"). Successful collection development balances the forces driving collection building such as usage trends, patron requests, staff input, media reviews and technology against the limitations of space, human resources, budget and availability.

The library should meet the educational, informational, recreational, cultural, and civic needs of its users through collections that include a wide variety of print and non-print materials for all ages and levels of educational achievement. Our materials should mirror the interests of a diverse user base with an emphasis on customer-centered collections that respond to the current needs and interests of the community, rather than building historical or esoteric collections -except for the acquisition of materials of both past and current significance to the Dover area.

### **PURPOSE**

Since no library can acquire all materials, it is necessary for every library to employ a policy of selectivity in its acquisitions. The Dover Public Library provides, within budgetary limitations, a general collection of reliable and timely materials embracing broad areas of knowledge. Included are works of enduring value as well as materials on current issues. Within the framework of these broad objectives, selection is based on community needs, both those expressed and those inferred from city demographics and evidence of areas of interest.

The Library does not promulgate particular beliefs or views, nor is the selection of any given book equivalent to an endorsement of the viewpoint of the author. Impartiality and judicious selection are to be exercised in all materials acquisition practices. Allocation of the materials budget and the number of items purchased for each area of the collection will be determined by indicators of use, cost, and objectives for development of the collection.

### **MISSION & GOALS**

This collection development policy establishes criteria to aid our librarians in the selection and acquisition of library materials and to inform the public about the principles upon which selection decisions are made. The Mission Statement of the Dover Public Library guides the selection of materials as it does the development of all services and the allocation of resources. It states:

*“The Dover Public Library supports lifelong enjoyment of reading and learning, effectively delivering what we call “Solutions and Delight”. The focus of our staff, collections, programs and facilities is the provision of a broad range of information services, in multiple formats, which entertain, enlighten, empower, educate and enrich the citizens we serve.”*

Our goals include:

1. To ensure that our collections fulfill the informational and recreational reading, listening and viewing needs of all segments of Dover’s population;
2. To strive for a collection that is balanced, comprehensive, and of adequate size, quality, and diversity to meet the needs of its users;
3. To insure that all parts of the collection are up-to-date, attractive, and well-maintained;
4. To utilize collection usage statistics to insure an optimal allocation of the materials budget;
5. To continually evaluate present formats, and to identify and adopt new formats that will make the collection more valuable to our patrons.

The Dover Public Library subscribes to the principles of intellectual freedom as stated in *The Library Bill of Rights* (see Appendix A), a document issued by the American Library Association. Included in this statement is the commitment to honor the rights of an individual to use the library regardless of age, race, religion national origin, or social or political views. Accordingly, the staff of the library provides equal service to all library users. Children and adults are equally free to use the entire library and to borrow all materials in the circulating collection. (see also Appendix B: *Freedom to Read Statement*; Appendix C: *Freedom to View Statement*; Appendix D: *Code of Ethics of the American Library Association*)

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

Ultimate responsibility for the selection of library materials rests with the Library Director who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees. Those staff members who are qualified, by reason of education, training, or experience, share this responsibility. The Library makes appropriate selection tools available and tracks the materials budget to ensure a constant flow of new materials throughout the year, according to budget allocation. All staff members and the general public are encouraged to recommend materials for consideration. Suggestions will be subject to the same standards of selection as other considered materials.

Print materials remain the primary focus of the Dover Public Library. The collection includes a wide range of subjects with a variety of treatments, primarily in subject areas where there is significant, actual, or anticipated demand. The collection provides information useful for basic research in most fields of knowledge. We make no attempt to collect expensive, esoteric, highly specialized, rare or academic research materials. These may potentially be obtained via interlibrary loan.

All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of certain standards. An item need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable. Several standards or a combination of standards may be used, as some materials may be judged primarily on artistic merit while others are considered because of scholarship, value, or ability to satisfy the recreational and entertainment needs of the community.

### **GUIDELINES FOR SELECTION---Print**

These guidelines are applicable to most selection decisions. Other factors may be taken into consideration, and the importance or weight of a particular guideline will vary from one acquisition to another.

- Relevance to community needs
- Relation to existing collection
- Popular demand and user appeal
- Reputation of author, creator, publisher, or producer
- Attention of critics, reviewers, and media
- Contemporary or timely significance
- Permanent or lasting value
- Important human or social insight
- Suitability of subject, style, and format for intended audience
- Accuracy and authoritativeness
- Cost
- Format and physical quality
- Ease of use
- Availability in other area libraries and through interlibrary loan

### **Fiction**

The library purchases a wide range of adult fiction, reflecting the diverse interests of a public that varies greatly in education, taste, and reading ability. The library purchases most fiction pre-publication using professional review journals and other standard resources. Efforts are made to purchase books representing all genres and categories of fiction. The library is very much aware of public demand and will often purchase fiction titles that are not notable for their literary quality or artistic merit but which have substantial popular appeal.

Popular titles are purchased as necessary to meet demand and to fill requests. While the Library does not have the budget to buy multiple copies of every title, it does buy multiples, usually bestsellers, when there is high patron demand. When there are more than six holds per copy of a title, additional copies may be purchased.

### **Non-Fiction**

The library's adult non-fiction collection includes material on almost any topic which might be of interest to the library's users. The library purchases most non-fiction pre-publication relying on professional review journals and other critical resources. Popular items and subjects are purchased according to demand, but the library also

provides materials for those whose interests or needs are not widely shared. Although accuracy of content and authority of a work's creators are important criteria in the selection of non-fiction materials, the library does not assume responsibility for inaccuracies or errors in the works included in its collections. Opinion, hypothesis, and theory are as important to the library's non-fiction collection as proven facts.

The library attempts to acquire materials representing all diverse points of view on current and historical questions and controversies, including legal, constitutional, political, economic, medical, ethical, religious, social, sexual, and other issues. Inclusion of material representing a particular belief, opinion, or point of view in the library's collection does not constitute endorsement by the library.

Reference materials are typically available at all times for research. Some titles are included as both circulating and reference copies.

### **Large Print**

Large print books provide access to literature and information for adult patrons with visual challenges that make it hard to read regular print. Patron interests and title availability direct the content of this collection. Patron interests reflect those of the general population, and the collection includes both informational and recreational reading. Selection criteria is consistent with criteria used for the general collection, with the added consideration of print size and patron usability.

### **Local History & Genealogy**

This collection at the Dover Public Library contains material on the history, description, family genealogy, and development of the City of Dover, the State of New Hampshire and includes some regional history covering southern Maine and northern Massachusetts as well. Local history and genealogical materials relating to Dover are particularly sought for the collection. All local history materials are housed in the Library's Marston Room and may only be used in-house. Local newspapers are also microfilmed for permanent preservation.

The objective of this collection is to provide research materials which help preserve and record the history of Dover and Strafford County. The library acquires and maintains materials that are a permanent record of the past and present activities of the community. The majority of these records are irreplaceable. To preserve this collection, it is necessary to make the materials available for use within the library only. Works of local imprint or works by local authors are added only when they contribute directly to the social and cultural history of the region. The library attempts to acquire all genealogical material relating to the seacoast region of New Hampshire and any indexes to local births, deaths, marriages, and cemetery records. Family histories are accepted if any of the ancestors or descendants had ties to the Dover region.

### **Newspapers**

The Dover Public Library's newspaper collection provides local and regional, daily and weekly newspapers of popular interest. Microfilm of the local newspapers is available dating back to 1828. An Obituary Index for Foster's Daily Democrat goes back to 1895 and a news index of Dover news stories in Foster's goes back to 1974.

## **Magazines**

The Dover Public Library maintains a representative collection of popular and informational magazines intended to supplement the book collection. The focus of the magazine collection is on publications that will provide entertainment and current information on a variety of practical and news-related topics. Included are periodicals related to business, health, current events, consumer product evaluations, fashion, beauty, sports, history, computers, travel, home improvement, hobbies and crafts, arts and entertainment, and local interest publications. The main criteria used to determine whether a magazine will be added to the collection are:

- the potential for use of the magazine;
- its inclusion in indexes and full text databases received by the library;
- reviews of the publication;
- coverage of the publication's subject area in the library's existing collection.

To ensure that these materials are readily available for patron use, the library does allow circulation of all issues except the most current issue which remains available for in-house use by patrons

## **Children's Collection**

The Children's Room at the Dover Public Library strives to provide children with the library materials necessary to aid their educational and personal development. The Children's Room collection serves children from birth through 6<sup>th</sup> grade, plus any adult involved with children such as parents, caregivers, teachers, homeschoolers, and children's literature students. It includes materials for all reading, listening, and viewing levels; for all recreational preferences; and on all subject interests. It spans from materials for pre-readers and beginning readers through titles purchased for older children.

Some items may be included that might not be considered appropriate by all adults for all children. The Children's Room collection, like all of literature, often reflects reality. As such it may include material which is controversial or offensive to some. While some books are too mature for one child, other children may be ready for them. Only each child and their parents can decide what material is suitable for that child to read. Parents should assist their children, especially younger children, in selecting material to meet their needs satisfactorily.

Elementary and high school libraries serve the curriculum needs of the students. While not duplicating these resources or attempting to follow all the changes in curriculum, the Dover Public Library does recognize the need to provide a wide variety of cultural and recreational reading matter for students and to provide some basic class related materials for students seeking to complete their assignments outside school hours.

Replacement and duplication of older and classic titles is extensive as children read and reread favorite books spanning generations. The Children's Room also houses material on children's literature and library service to children and has a section dedicated to parenting and teaching.

## **Picture Books**

The library provides picture books for reading aloud and sharing with children from birth to early elementary grades. In these books, the text and pictures should complement each other. Sentences should be rhythmic and vocabulary distinctive and appropriate for the child's listening ability. The illustrations should be artistic and satisfying to the child. The story should be original and interesting, preferably with an underlying theme to add depth to a minimal plot. Concept and information books should be creatively presented. The illustrations in wordless books should encourage the child to create a story. Easy to read books should be artistically illustrated and creatively written with a readability of pre-primer through grade three. All picture books should broaden the child either emotionally or intellectually.

## **Children's Fiction**

Fiction is selected for all elementary grades. Plot should grow out of a strong theme, be believable, and excitingly developed through action. Characters should be logically motivated and revealed through incidents. Words should flow smoothly with few clichés. Dialogue should sound natural and illustrations, if included, should be artistic and add to the appreciation of the story. Adaptations and abridgments are purchased only when they are faithful to the intent of the original. Each book in a series is evaluated separately.

## **Children's Non-Fiction**

Non-fiction should be accurate, objective, and consistently appropriate to the age of the reader. The format should be appealing with the inclusion of diagrams, maps, illustrations, and photographs as needed to enhance the understanding or enjoyment of the text. The text should show some originality of treatment. The style should be direct and neither over simplified nor too complicated for the intended audience. Indexes and bibliographies should usually be included, and they should be accurate and complete.

The non-circulating reference collection, while not extensive, consists of books needed to answer specific questions. It includes encyclopedias, almanacs, dictionaries, indexes, important lists, and definitive books in areas such as plants, shells, birds, states, and presidents.

## **Children's Magazines**

Magazines are selected to appeal to children of all ages and are chosen from approved professional lists and from examination of new publications.

## **Teen Collection**

The transitional age from childhood to maturity is an experimental stage during which young people investigate a wide variety of interests. Teens may use a wider range of library materials than any other age group. While the entire library collection is available to the teens, the library recognizes that certain materials have a special appeal or message for this group. Therefore, some items are purchased specifically for the teen collection. Some items found here are duplicated in the children's collection, in the adult collection, or in both.

The teen collection includes recreational reading, including fiction, poetry, paperbacks, magazines, and graphic novels particularly appropriate to adolescent's age twelve to seventeen. Non-fiction suited for teens is inter-shelved with adult non-fiction in the main stack areas. The Teen Collection is not intended to be a comprehensive collection serving all the needs and interests of teens, nor is it the library's intention that teens should be confined solely to the use of this material.

Materials are selected for this collection to educate, empower, and broaden the horizons of teens to help them to cope with the problems and pressures of adolescence. To fulfill these needs, the collection will inevitably include materials on controversial topics which some may find offensive.

### **GUIDELINES FOR SELECTION---Non-print resources**

The Library purchases a diversified collection of visual and sound media. Visual and sound media review and selection decisions are based primarily on the same criteria used for print purchases. Criteria for selection of non-print materials includes:

- Purpose, scope and intended audience
- Subject interest and current demand
- Reputation of producer/distributor/artist/performer
- Technical quality
- Comparison to other works in same medium
- Historic value
- Physical durability of format
- Cost
- Evaluation of critical review sources
- Appropriateness and ease of use

The film collection includes **DVDs** of classic movies, box office hits, foreign films, documentaries, Manga, musical performance/concert, exercise and dance instruction, compilations of television shows and popular entertainment titles for all ages.

The music collection includes **CDs** from the classical, bluegrass, jazz, world music, classic rock, Broadway show, opera, folk, and blues genres.

Children's DVDs and CDs are also purchased for the Children's Room.

Most of the titles purchased do not include public performance rights.

Videos produced specifically for instructional use in the classroom are not purchased.

The library normally does not purchase edited versions of recordings and movies. Additionally, the library purchases visual and sound media in the predominant format.

### **Audiobooks**

The Library selects, acquires and maintains a diversified collection of audiobooks. These recordings are most often purchased in unabridged versions, although abridged versions may be selected when that is the only format available. Review and selection decisions are based on the same criteria used for print purchases.

## **Electronic Resources**

For the purpose of library collection development, “electronic resources” are defined as commercial products that require computer access. Examples include, but are not limited to: periodical indexes, reference databases, and multimedia files. Some of these sources may be made available through consortia agreements. Others may be available to the Library free through grants or state agencies.

When possible, the Library gives priority to the acquisition of electronic resources that offer significant added-value such as uniqueness of information, ease of use, wider accessibility, timely updates and cost-effectiveness. Electronic resources generally are more costly than print, but offer advantages such as allowing multiple users access to the same resource simultaneously, or more powerful searching capabilities, or interactivity. Partnerships in cooperative acquisitions and cost sharing with other public libraries are pursued when feasible.

Criteria in selecting electronic resources includes:

- Relevancy of subject matter to community needs
- Organization of data
- Timeliness, accuracy, completeness
- User friendliness
- Hardware, software, and connectivity requirements
- System-wide access potential
- Cost (in relation to paper format)
- Availability and quality of technical support
- Availability of a trial subscription
- Perpetuity of information
- Reputation of producer
- Spatial requirements for equipment & workstations

## **NEW FORMATS**

New formats will be considered for the collection when, by industry reports, survey results, and evidence from local requests, a significant portion of the population has the necessary technology to make use of the format. Similar considerations will influence the decision to delete, or discontinue purchases of, an older or obsolescent format from the Library’s collection. New media formats are studied carefully to assess their suitability for library inclusion, and to properly determine whether they will receive lasting and wide-spread public acceptance before any new media form is added to the library. Among the criteria used to evaluate the appropriateness of new media formats are:



- Market penetration of the media format compared to existing and competing media formats
- Expense of any required playback equipment
- Complexity of use
- Cost per use
- Copyright and digital right management licenses

## **PLACEMENT OF MATERIALS**

The placement of materials within the Dover Public Library is determined by several factors. The library uses the Dewey Decimal Classification for arrangement of non-fiction. This classification scheme divides material by subject. Librarians catalog materials in the proper subject area and assign them to various areas (e.g. Adult, Children's, Young Adult, Reference) of the library. Additionally, reviews by professionals in the field recommending age appropriateness of materials aid the librarians in choosing and locating material. For ease of use, collections are often organized by format (e.g. audiobooks music, DVDs, paperbacks) or fiction genre (mystery, science fiction, etc.) in a single area for ease of use.

Although the Library is divided into areas labeled as Children's, Reference, Fiction, Non-Fiction, etc., patrons of any age may use any and all parts of the Library.

## **COLLECTION MAINTENANCE**

The evaluation of the collection is a fundamental and ongoing responsibility. Staff continuously evaluate materials, replacing or repairing those that are worn or damaged, and withdraw items no longer current or in demand. As the library continues to collect newly published items, shelf space will continue to be a challenge. The most effective way to maximize limited shelving and storage is through the removal of little-used and outdated materials. Removing obsolete titles and materials in poor physical condition makes it easier for patrons to choose from the worthwhile titles that remain.

Collection evaluation or "weeding" is never employed as a convenient means to remove materials deemed controversial or disapproved of by segments of the community. Such abuse would be a violation of the principles of intellectual freedom as expressed in the Library Bill of Rights.

### **Reasons for Weeding**

- To identify and withdraw incorrect or outdated materials. Users are dependent on us to provide up-to-date information. Outdated medical, legal, travel, tax and educational information especially can cause serious problems for our users.

- To remove materials that are no longer being used. If the collection is full of materials that are not being used, our users cannot find the materials that they do want. Since we add over 10,000 items each year, we aim to withdraw somewhat less than that (taking into account attrition from other sources). Optimally, library shelves should not be more than 3/4 full, with the top and bottom shelves empty as they are hard to reach.
- To remove worn or damaged materials. Attractive, clean materials are preferred by all users and infer that the library is a modern, up-to-date source of information. A well-maintained collection sends the message that we expect users to treat our materials with respect and return them in the good condition in which they were borrowed. Popular worn titles are withdrawn and replaced with attractive newer editions. Classics will circulate heavily if they are clean and inviting.
- To increase circulation. Paradoxically, decreasing the size of the collection often results in increasing circulation. Users find it difficult to find useful materials when the collection is overcrowded with outdated, unattractive, or irrelevant materials. Weeding makes the "good stuff" more accessible. Stagnation is a common result of collections that are not properly and regularly weeded.

Additionally, statistical tools such as circulation reports, collection use charts, and age of collection reports are studied to determine how the collection is being used and how it should change to satisfy patron needs.

Depending on their condition, books and other materials withdrawn from the library's collections may be offered for sale in the Friends of the Library's semi-annual book sales.

## **GIFTS**

The Library encourages and appreciates the donation of hardcover and paperback books in good condition, music CDs, audiobooks and DVDs. The Library reserves the right to accept, decline, discard, or sell in the Friends of the Library's book sales any materials which are presented or offered. These materials may also, depending on circumstances, be given to a school or other non-profit agency for use in a recognized program.

Donated materials shall be handled according to the following guidelines:

- 1.) Single items or small collections (one bag or an armload) may be donated at the Adult Circulation Desk at any time. Patrons wishing to donate multiple cartons of books should call the Circulation Desk (516-6050) to make arrangements to drop them off at the Library's utility entrance. Donations should not be left outside or placed in the book drops.
- 2.) Books must be in good condition: no mildewed or moldy books will be accepted.
- 3.) No textbooks or Reader's Digest condensed books will be accepted.
- 4.) No sets, such as encyclopedias, will be accepted.
- 5.) No 8-track, cassette, or VHS tapes will be accepted.

Once a donated book has been accepted, there are several paths the book may follow:

1.) Library Acquisition

The item may be catalogued and added to the library's collection.

2.) Friends of the Library Ongoing Book sale

The item may be accepted for sale at the Friends of the Library's ongoing book sale. Proceeds from this sale go to support the Friends of the Library.

3.) Friends of the Library Annual Book sale

The item may be accepted for sale in the Friends' annual book sale. Books accepted for this purpose are stored until the sale's start on the last Saturday in October. Until the week before the book sale, all handling of donated books within the Library shall be done by library staff only. Members of the Friends of the Library who volunteer to work at the book sale receive a 50% discount on the purchase of these books.

4.) Disposal

The item may be deemed unacceptable and disposed of immediately. Examples include smelly books, damaged books, physically worn books, or books with no apparent sale potential.

The Library cannot provide an appraisal for donations of materials which are accepted for its collection or for the book sale. Gifts to the Dover Public Library may be deductible for income tax purposes, but the Library accepts no responsibility for any individual's use of tax deductions. A receipt for the number and type of items donated can be provided to donors who request one.

Memorial gifts are frequently made to the Library in memory of, or in honor of, an individual. A Memorial/Tribute Donation form is available at the Circulation Desk (see also Appendix E). Preferences for titles, subjects, or types of materials to be purchased with gift funds may be stated. A memorial bookplate is placed in each book and in the online catalog and a written acknowledgement is sent to both the donor and the recipient or the recipient's family.

The Library reserves the right to refuse gifts upon which restrictions are placed.

## **OBJECTIONS TO LIBRARY MATERIALS**

A singular obligation of the public library is to reflect, within its collection, differing points of view. The Dover Public Library does not endorse particular beliefs or views, nor does the selection of an item express or imply endorsements of the viewpoint of the author. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, nor will items be sequestered, except for the purpose of protecting them from theft or damage.

The choice of library materials by users is an individual matter. While a person may reject materials for him/herself or for his/her children, he/she cannot exercise censorship to restrict access to materials by others.

Recognizing that a diversity of materials may result in some requests for reconsideration, the following procedures have been developed to assure that objections or complaints are handled in an attentive and consistent manner:

- 1.) The staff member receiving a request to remove an item from the library's collection will ask the patron to fill out a "*Patron Request for Review of Library Materials*" form (see Appendix F). The completed form will then be submitted to the Library Director along with the questioned material. The questioned material will not be withdrawn from public circulation while it is being reviewed.
- 2.) Once the completed form has been submitted, the Library Director will appoint a review committee of library staff members with appropriate professional expertise. After a thorough review has been completed, the committee will make its recommendation to the Library Director. The Library Director will review the committee's findings and contact the requesting party with their decision. If the requesting party is not satisfied, and wishes to appeal the decision, the request will then be forwarded to the Board of Library Trustees. The Board of Library Trustees will have final decision on any request for the removal of materials from the Library.

## **REVIEW AND REVISION**

This Collection Development Policy will be reviewed periodically to reassess and adapt to any new and differing areas of interest and concern, and revised as necessary in order to be responsive to the established mission, community interests, and customer needs at the Dover Public Library.

## **APPENDICES**

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

## **Appendix B. 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.

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.

### **Appendix C. The 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.

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

## **Appendix D. The Code of Ethics of the American Library Association**

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

- I. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
- II. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.
- III. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.
- IV. We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.
- V. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
- VI. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
- VII. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
- VIII. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

Adopted June 28, 1997, by the ALA Council; amended January 22, 2008.

## Appendix E. Memorial/Tribute Form

Honor the memory of a loved one, pay tribute to family or friends, or celebrate a special occasion by donating to the Dover Public Library. Suitable library materials (books, DVDs, audiobooks) will be purchased and your gift can be recognized with a personalized bookplate in each item.

Your name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount of your donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name of honoree (as it should appear on bookplate): \_\_\_\_\_

Please note any special bookplate wording: (E.g.: *“Donated in memory of John Smith by the Johnson Family”*; *“In celebration of \_\_\_\_\_”*; date of birth; date of death, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

A letter will be mailed to the recipient of your choice, letting him or her know of your gift. Please tell us where to send this acknowledgement:

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Use (please circle as many as you want):

- Books (Adult, Juvenile, Teen, Large Print, Fiction, Non-Fiction, Genealogy/Local history)  
Any specific subject? \_\_\_\_\_
- Audiobooks on CD (Fiction or Non-Fiction, Adult or Juvenile)
- DVDs (New features, Children's, Instructional, Concert/Performance, Documentary, Foreign films, Manga, TV Series)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Whatever the library needs!

Would you like to be notified when chosen item(s) are ready so that you can be the first to see/borrow them?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Please send (or drop off) this completed form and your check to:  
Dover Public Library, 73 Locust Street, Dover, NH 03820

Questions: please call 603-516-6050      Thank you for your donation!

**Dover Public Library**  
**REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS**

The Dover Public Library, and the Board of Library Trustees, supports the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights. We also value the community member's right to express their concerns regarding materials that are a part of the library's collection. If there is an objection to an item being in the Library's collection, there is an option to request that the item be re-evaluated. The requesting library patron must complete this form and submit it to library staff. We ask you to read our entire Collection Development Policy and its appendices prior to submitting this form.

Once the completed form has been submitted, the Library Director will appoint a review committee of library staff members with appropriate professional expertise. After a thorough review has been completed, the committee will make its recommendation to the Library Director. The Library Director will review the committee's findings and contact the requesting party with her decision. If the requesting party is not satisfied, and wishes to appeal the decision, the request will then be forwarded to the Board of Library Trustees. The Board of Library Trustees will have final decision on any request for the removal of materials from the Library.

*Please respond to the following:*

**A. Description of item concerned:**

Check one:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Book               | <input type="checkbox"/> Audiobook        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine/Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Describe) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Video/DVD          |   |

Author/Artist:

\_\_\_\_\_

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

Publisher or Distributor: \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Questions about the item:**

1. What do you find objectionable and/or offensive about this item? Please give specific examples, including listing pages or sections (attach additional sheets if needed).

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Have you read any published reviews of this item? Yes No

If yes, please give name and date of publication: \_\_\_\_\_

4. What action do you request the library take? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you have a recommendation for an alternative to this item? \_\_\_\_\_

**C. In order to respond to your request, we need the following information:**

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephones: Day \_\_\_\_\_ Evening \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Representing:

- Self
- Organization (Name) \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (Identify) \_\_\_\_\_

**D. Signature of person submitting the Reconsideration Form:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Dover Public Library appreciates your interest in the Library's collection. You will receive notification of the library's decision after its consideration by a Review Committee and the Library Board of Trustees.**

**E. Signature of Library staff member receiving the Reconsideration Form:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Request for Reconsideration

Updated and approved by Dover Public Library Trustees on 2/3/2022