

Rehoboth Beach Public Library

Collection Development Policy

Rehoboth Beach Public Library Operations Committee

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INTRODUCTION

The Rehoboth Beach Public Library, by providing access to information, supports and encourages the freedom to read, learn and discover in a welcoming environment. A strong emphasis is placed on providing current, high-demand, high-interest materials. Those materials are available in a variety of formats to community residents and summer visitors. We strive to enhance the quality of life-long learning and love of reading. Identifying the public's needs and expectations and finding the means to meet or exceed them is a fundamental principle of public library service.

This Collection Development Policy presents the policies that determine the selection of materials and the maintenance of the collection. Collection management policies and procedures are constantly evolving and will undergo change as priorities are reevaluated and reassigned.

MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

The Materials Selection Policy has been reviewed by the Board of Commissioners of the Rehoboth Beach Public Library to guide library staff and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made. Copies of the American Library Association (ALA) Statements are included in this Collection Policy.

- Books and other library materials are selected on the basis of educational, informational, and recreational value. Responsibility for the selection of materials lies with the Director, who, in turn may delegate this responsibility to various staff members and members of the Book Selection Committee.
- Committee should include staff members especially those who have interaction with the public on a daily basis. Ultimate responsibility for the selection rests with the Board.
- No title is excluded on the basis of moral, racial, religious or political prejudice. Titles are selected, within the limitations of the budget, on the basis of critical consensus among recognized subject authorities and widely held community standards. In the case of controversial matters materials dealing with alternate views should be considered for inclusion. Suggestions from patrons are encouraged and will be given due consideration.
- The Library will review written requests for the reconsideration of library materials, for which the form is attached to this policy, concerning specific titles as it deems necessary, and retention or deletion will be determined by the Library's selection guidelines.
- The Library endorses the American Library Association's Freedom to Read statement, The Library Bill of Rights, and the statements on Labeling Library Materials, Access to Electronic Information Services, and Networks, and Free Access to Libraries for Minors.

APPROVED

- Library Bill of Rights
 - Statement on Labeling
 - The Freedom to Read
 - The Freedom to View
 - Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks
-

THE SELECTION PROCESS RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

Ultimate responsibility for materials selection rests with the Director who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Board. The Director may delegate to various staff members who are part of a selection committee, selection of specific genres, subject matter or formats. All professional staff members may have input on the selection of library materials.

The authority and responsibility of the Director consists of the following:

- Authority to approve or disapprove selection recommendations from other staff and the public.
- Authority to approve or disapprove the licensing of digital resources.
- Authority to make final decisions on the withdrawal of circulating materials, the rebinding of books, repackaging of audiovisual materials, replacement orders, and the addition of gifts to the cataloged circulating collection.
- Authority to review various collections in the library, evaluate the contents and submit written reports to the Board.
- Authority to review, evaluate, or initiate cooperative resource initiatives with other organizations.
- Authority to initiate any weeding projects as a result of collection evaluations.

Through consortia lending within the Delaware Library Catalog and other statewide and countywide arrangements, the Library is able to provide a far wider range of resources, both physical and digital, to our members than the library would be able to provide on its own. The Library will endeavor to engage in these and other cooperative arrangements to enhance the collections available to its members.

SELECTION GUIDELINES

Selection is a discerning and interpretive process, involving a general knowledge of the subject and important literature, a familiarity with the materials in the collection, awareness of the bibliographies of the subject, and recognition of the needs of the community.

Selection of materials for the Adult Fiction and Nonfiction print collections is primarily the responsibility of the Book Selection Committee. Committee is comprised of professional staff selected by the director who are familiar with the collection, review standard sources and meet monthly to discuss titles and make recommendations for purchase.

CRITERIA

Literary merit, enduring value, accuracy, authoritativeness, social significance, importance of subject matter to the collection, timeliness, popular demand, cost, scarcity of material on the subject and availability elsewhere, especially within the Delaware Library Catalog, quality and suitability of the format, other considerations may be applicable in specific subject areas. Selectors should choose materials that will build a well-rounded collection which includes all viewpoints and opinions and which will meet the public's needs.

TOOLS

Professional journals, trade journals, subject bibliographies, publishers' catalogs and promotional materials, reviews from reputable sources, lists of recommended titles, and sales representatives for specific materials. Purchase suggestions from patrons are also an important source.

Standard review sources include the following: Booklist, Library Journal, Publishers Weekly, Forecast, Kirkus, and the New York Times Book Review. Other popular resources should also be followed so that staff is aware of new publications that the public may be reading about.

GOALS

Materials are selected to meet the objectives of public library service. The Rehoboth Beach Library has selected the following initiative in its Strategic Plan:

COLLECTION SCOPE

The scope of the Library collections refers to the formats offered, the treatment, and the level of difficulty. Materials selected for the Library collections are intended to meet the cultural, informational, educational, and recreational needs of the residents of Sussex County and specifically the residents of the Rehoboth Beach Library service area. Special attention is given to the lifelong learning interests of the community, such as courses or programs offered by the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, Rehoboth Art League, Sussex County Genealogy Assoc. or The Rehoboth Beach Film Society. The scope of the collection is intended to offer a choice of format, treatment, and level of difficulty so that most individual library needs can be met and service given to individuals of all ages, within current budget parameters and constraints. The Library encourages the use of interlibrary cooperation to better serve the needs of the public by expanding available resources. The collection is not archival, and is reviewed and revised on an on-going basis to meet contemporary needs.

FORMAT

Materials are purchased in the most appropriate format for library use. Books are generally purchased in hardcover editions because of their durability. However, paperback editions may be purchased, and are preferred in cases where the hardcover is extremely expensive and the title would either be used infrequently or is of an ephemeral nature. Paperbacks of popular fiction that are donated in good condition are added to the collection for additional circulation.

Formats include text, audio, and video, in both physical and digital formats. The Library recognizes the place of non-print formats in the collection as legitimate educational and recreational resources for the community it serves. The Library monitors the development of new formats and, within budgetary and technical limitations, adds these to the collection.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

The range of difficulty starts with picture books and easy nonfiction, and progresses through graded readers to college level and beyond. Materials intended for professionals in a field are purchased when a need exists.

ARCHIVAL

Archival refers to the holding policies for part or all of the collection. Current usefulness is the determining factor in how long material is kept. The amount of use that an item receives in the present outweighs the possibility that someone may use it someday. Local history materials will be retained in the collection, but even this collection may undergo periodic evaluation and reassessment. Local history materials that are selected for removal from the Library collection may be offered to other interested organizations, such as other libraries or the Rehoboth Beach Historical Society.

GIFT BOOKS

Gifts to the collection can be in the form of money or actual materials. Gift plates and letters of acknowledgment are appropriate stipulations by a donor, but other requirements should be evaluated carefully before the gift is accepted. All gifts become part of the general collection and should not require special circulation procedures. Gifts of books and other library materials are gratefully accepted by the Library with the understanding that they will be considered for addition to the collection in accordance with the Selection Guidelines. The libraries reserve the right to sell or otherwise dispose of gift materials not added to the collection.

When a patron offers to give books, magazines, or non-print materials to the library, the following guidelines apply. If there is a question about these guidelines, or a special situation, the patron should be referred to the Director.

The library will accept hardcover and/or paperback books and audiovisual materials if they are in good condition. Local history materials are welcome, as are foreign language materials. Appropriate material may be added to the collection, put in the library's book sales, or, if not in acceptable condition, discarded.

Materials that are moldy, dirty, foul-smelling, yellowed, water damaged, heavily scratched or incomplete will not be accepted. Guidebooks and medical books older than 5 years, encyclopedias, textbooks, outdated electronic media, Reader's Digest condensed editions, or magazines older than one year cannot be accepted.

The donor will receive a written acknowledgment of the gift upon request. If so requested, the donor must leave name and address and number of books donated. Library staff will not appraise the books or indicate a value in the acknowledgment letter.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN

Interlibrary Loan (ILL) refers to requesting materials from libraries outside of the Delaware Library Catalog. ILL should be used for educational or informational purposes only. ILL is not a substitute for collection development, but is meant to expand the range of materials available to library users without needlessly duplicating the resources of other libraries.

All ILL requests for recent material are considered for purchase. In addition, all titles that have been requested through ILL at least three times in a year are given high selection priority. Extra consideration is given to requests for titles published within the last six months, because it is unlikely that these will be available from other libraries.

Titles that have been requested by patrons and considered for purchase, but which do not fit the scope of the collection, are too old, out-of-date, or out-of-print, are submitted to ILL.

ILL may not be used for any title that is owned or on order by the library unless the copy is determined to be missing.

MULTIPLE COPIES

While the Library does not have the budgetary resources to buy multiple copies of every title owned, multiple copies of titles that have high public demand are purchased. For titles with many holds, an attempt is made, on a system-wide basis, to purchase one book for every four patron holds. Before ordering additional copies it should be determined that a title has high demand in our local community. If duplicate copies have been donated on a popular title on copy may be added to the “browsing collection”. These titles are not subject to holds and may not be renewed. They are available to the public on a walk in basis.

In some subject areas where patron demand is extremely high, the Library prefers to buy one copy of several different titles instead of buying numerous copies of one title. More variety and depth in the collection can be achieved through this approach.

STANDING ORDERS

Some popular authors may be included on vendor lists for pre-publication order to eliminate the possibility of missing an item which would be in popular demand. The standing order and automatic continuation titles are reevaluated annually by the Director or a designee, authors may be removed, new authors added, or the number of copies adjusted to accommodate patron interest and demand.

REPAIR/REPLACEMENT

When a book is returned damaged or in poor condition, circulation staff will check item out to repair and place in proper place in workroom. Technical Services staff will review the titles needing repair regularly and decide which books should be repaired, replaced, or withdrawn from the collection.

WEEDING

In order to maintain an up-to-date collection, worn and obsolete materials are continuously weeded. Materials may also be withdrawn if they are little used or superseded by a new edition or better work on the same subject. Depth and breadth of varying degrees are desirable in various areas of the collection. The Collection Development Policy serves as a guide for weeding and maintaining the collection as well as for the selection of materials.

Titles are withdrawn from the Library's collection through systematic weeding by selectors or because of loss or physical damage. Materials which are withdrawn because of loss or damage are reported to appropriate library staff who decide whether the item should be replaced using the same criteria as for selection. Other factors applicable when deciding on replacements include the number of copies of a title available in the Library or in the Delaware Library Catalog, the availability of newer materials on the subject, the importance of the work in its subject area, its listing in standard bibliographies, and its cost.

Systematic evaluation and weeding of the collection is required in order to keep the collection responsive to patrons' needs, to insure its vitality and usefulness to the community, and to make room for newer materials. For this reason, subject areas should be reassessed for relevancy and currency every three years, at a minimum, although certain areas may require more frequent review.

Weeding identifies damaged items, ephemeral materials which are no longer used, out-of-date materials, extra copies which are not being used, and materials which are inappropriate for the collection. Weeding also helps the Director evaluate the collection by identifying areas or titles where additional materials are needed, older editions which need to be updated, and subjects, titles, or authors that are no longer of interest to the community. Titles can be checked against standard bibliographies in the subject to see if the items have historical or literary value. Holdings that are readily accessible in other libraries may also be considered when making weeding decisions. Withdrawn materials that are in good condition will be put in the book sale. Materials withdrawn from the Reference collection that retain informational value may be transferred to the circulating collection or offered to other libraries through Reference Exchange Lists.

RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

A singular obligation of the public library is to reflect within its collection differing points of view on controversial or debatable subjects. The Library does not promulgate particular beliefs or views, nor does the selection of an item express or imply an endorsement of the author's viewpoint. 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 damage or theft.

Comments from members of the community about the collection or individual items in the collection frequently provide librarians with useful information about interests or needs that may not be adequately met by the collection. The Library welcomes expressions of opinion by patrons, but will be governed by this Materials Selection Policy in making additions to or deleting items from the collection.

Patrons who request the reconsideration of library materials will be asked to put their request in writing by completing and signing the form entitled "Request for Reconsideration of Library Material." (See attached)

Upon receipt of a formal, written request, the Director will notify the County Librarian, and the Board of Commissioners. The Director will appoint an ad hoc committee composed of the Library Director, Assistant Director, a representative from the Library Staff and representatives from the Book Selection Committee. The committee will make a written recommendation to the Director who in consultation with the Board will then make a decision regarding the disposition of the material. The Director will communicate this decision and the reasons for it, in writing, to the person who initiated the request for reconsideration at the earliest possible date. The Director will inform the Board and the County Librarian of all requests for reconsideration of library materials and their disposition.

In the event that the person who initiated the request is not satisfied with the decision, he/she may appeal for a hearing before the Board by making a written request to the President of the Board. The Board reserves the right to limit the length of presentation and number of speakers at the hearing. The Board will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled in accordance with stated policies and procedures of the Library. On the basis of this determination, the Board may vote to uphold or override the decision.

APPENDIX

Rehoboth Beach Public Library
REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

Title: _____

Author: _____

Publisher: _____

This is a: ___ book ___ magazine ___ recording ___ video/dvd ___ other

Request initiated by (your name): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Do you represent:

_____ yourself

_____ an organization (name) _____

_____ other group (name): _____

1. To what in the work do you object (please be specific; cite page numbers):

2. Did you read/view/listen to the entire work? ___ yes ___ no If not, which parts have you read/viewed/listened to?

3. What do you feel might be the result of reading/viewing/listening to this work?

4. For what age group would you recommend this work?

5. What do you believe is the theme of this work?

6. Are you aware of judgments of this work by literary critics? ___ yes ___ no If yes, please cite.

7. What would you like the library to do about this work?

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

Signature

Date

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; January 23, 1980; 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.

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.

FREEDOM TO VIEW

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

Approved and Adopted by:
The Board of Commissioners of the Rehoboth Beach Public Library, Inc.,