Warren-Newport Public Library District

Lake County, Illinois

Board of Trustees

Policy 3015

Materials Selection

Adopted: July 16, 1996

Reviewed/Revised: February 13, 2001; March 9, 2004; February 20, 2007; March 19, 2013; September 17, 2013; June 17, 2014; December 20, 2016; June 19, 2018; March 17, 2020; November 16, 2021; March 21, 2023; September 17, 2024; February 10, 2026

ARTICLE 1. INTRODUCTION

The goal of materials selection for the Warren-Newport Public Library District (WNPLD) is to provide all people who enter the Warren-Newport Public Library (WNPL) with a variety of materials to meet their informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs. WNPLD strives, within the limits of its budget and space, to build a comprehensive collection of popular materials based on the needs of the community. The collection provides materials for patrons of all ages. This selection policy defines the standards for and outlines the responsibility for materials selection for WNPL.

ARTICLE 2. PHILOSOPHY OF ACCESS

Section 2.01 Access

Access to information is one of the cornerstones of democracy, and WNPLD supports the right to have access to information and ideas representing various points of view. The principles on which this policy is based are expressed in the American Library Association's Bill of Rights and in the Freedom to Read and Freedom to View statements (Exhibits A, B, and C) included in this policy.

Section 2.02 Diversity of Viewpoint

WNPLD serves a diverse population, and it is the responsibility of WNPLD to provide materials that reflect various points of view on controversial issues, as such materials become available. Controversial materials have no distinguishing labels and are shelved in the general collection. The selection of an item does not imply an endorsement of the opinion expressed or of the author.

Section 2.03 Open Shelf Policy

Policy 3001 Access to Materials states "that decisions regarding which library materials and services a person of legal age will use rest entirely with that person. It is the responsibility of the parents of a child to guide those decisions for the child, but the standards parents are free to impose on their own children shall not be imposed on other children." Selection of adult materials will not be influenced by the possibility that materials may be viewed or read by children, and an open shelf policy will be followed at all times.

ARTICLE 3. RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

Overall responsibility for selection of materials rests with the Executive Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Board of Library Trustees. The Executive Director delegates or shares this responsibility with designated members of the staff. In addition, patrons may suggest items for purchase. All requests are given consideration, but only those items that meet the standard criteria for selection (see Article 5 below) will be added to the collection.

ARTICLE 4. SCOPE OF THE COLLECTION

WNPL is a medium-sized library with a focus on popular materials. Through careful selection, WNPLD strives to maintain a diverse collection of quality materials, including items of contemporary significance and permanent value, as well as a selection of materials concerning social issues and ephemeral items. Because WNPLD serves a public with a wide range of ages, educational backgrounds, and reading skills, it seeks to select materials of varying complexity. Although WNPLD tries to serve students' needs as much as possible, textbooks are usually not purchased unless they are considered the best source of information on a given subject.

ARTICLE 5. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Section 5.01 General Criteria

The general criteria considered in selecting materials include:

- suitability of subject, style, and reading level for the intended audience;
- reputation and/or significance of author, publisher, director, and/or producer;
- attention given by critics, reviewers, professional book selection aids, and the public;
- existing and anticipated public demand;
- accuracy, clarity, and objectivity of content;
- availability of and access to the same material at other area libraries or community sources;
- consideration of the work as a whole;
- relevance to community needs;
- relation to existing collection and other materials on the subject;
- accessibility and suitability of the physical format;
- importance as a document of local historical significance;
- need for additional or duplicate materials in the existing collection;
- the physical limitations of the building; and
- cost and budget.

Section 5.02 Interlibrary Loan

If an item is out of print or does not meet WNPLD's criteria for purchase, WNPLD cardholders may request the item through interlibrary loan. (See Policy 3025 Interlibrary Loan)

ARTICLE 6. SELECTION TOOLS

In addition to their professional expertise, librarians depend on reliable selection aids and reviews found in a variety of standard sources.

ARTICLE 7. SPECIAL NEEDS

The Library recognizes the importance of acquiring materials in formats that can be utilized by patrons with disabilities. WNPLD will seek to match community demand with the existing collections of such materials and will be alert for new formats that could be useful to patrons with disabilities.

ARTICLE 8. COLLECTION MAINTENANCE

In order to maintain the best possible collection of materials, WNPLD staff weeds the collection continually. Items are withdrawn if they are outdated, if they no longer circulate, if there are more duplicate copies than are needed, or if they are in poor physical condition. Items that are withdrawn from the collection are plainly marked and may be donated to the Friends of the Library for sale.

ARTICLE 9. REVISION OF SELECTION POLICY

Pursuant to the State Statute (75 ILCS 16/30-60), and because the needs of the community change, this materials selection policy is reviewed at least every two (2) years and revised as needed.

ARTICLE 10. REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIAL

Section 10.01 Freedom to Read

All individuals have the right to choose which library materials they use. However, no one has the right to restrict the freedom of others to read whatever they wish. No book or other material in question will be automatically removed from the collection because of an objection to it. These principles are expressed in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, and Freedom to View Statement (Exhibits A, B, and C).

Section 10.02 Request for Reconsideration

A patron who resides in the Warren-Newport Public Library District and wishes to file a request for reconsideration of library materials should complete the Library Material Reconsideration Form (Exhibit D).

Section 10.03 Review Process

When the Library Material Reconsideration Form is completely filled out and returned to the Library, the appropriate Department Head will review the complaint and the material and provide a report and recommendation for the Executive Director.

The Executive Director will respond in writing to the patron who initiated the complaint within fifteen (15) business days, informing the patron of the decision regarding the material in question.

Section 10.04 Further Action
A patron desiring further action can make a written request for a hearing before the Board of Library Trustees, which has final authority.

Section 10.05 ALA Reporting
The American Library Association (ALA) Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) maintains a confidential database of challenged materials used for statistical purposes. WNPLD will report formal challenges by identifying the title, format, library type (public), and state of origin to the ALA OIF.

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.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; 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 avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens devoted to reading 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 expressions.

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 towards 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 wisest 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 which 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 literature 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 which 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 citizens 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 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 possible 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 and 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 of February 1978. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

Warren-Newport Public Library District

Lake County, Illinois

LIBRARY MATERIAL RECONSIDERATION FORM

Our Mission

Empowering our community by connecting people to information, ideas, and opportunities.

The Warren-Newport Library Board of Trustees has delegated the responsibility for selection of materials to the Executive Director and has established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those resources.

Completion of this form is the first step in those procedures. If you wish to request a reconsideration of library materials, please return a completed form to the Executive Director, Warren-Newport Public Library, 224 North O'Plaine Road, Gurnee, IL. The reconsideration request will be reviewed by the Executive Director and the Board of Trustees. All decisions of the Board are final.

Only forms that are 100% completed will be accepted. The Executive Director has up to sixty (60) days to complete the reconsideration process for each form. The material being reconsidered must be read in full by the applicant.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

WNPLD Library Card Number: _____ Email: _____

Request represents:

_____ Individual _____ Organization, list name _____

_____ Other, list name(s) _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Format: _____ Publisher or Distributor: _____

1. Have you read, viewed, or listened to the entire work? □ Yes □ No

   If not, what parts have you read, viewed, or listened to? _____

   _____

   _____

2. Have you read any professional reviews of this material? □ Yes □ No
   If yes, please specify: _____
   _____

3. What do you believe is the major theme or intent of this work?
   _____
   _____

4. What do you find objectionable in the material? (Please be specific. Cite pages or sections.) _____
   _____

5. What do you feel might be the result of reading, viewing, or listening to this work?
   _____
   _____

6. What action would you like to be taken?
   _____
   _____

7. Please explain how the action would improve service to our diverse community.
   _____
   _____

8. What other material would you recommend that would convey a similar picture and/or perspective of the subject treated?
   _____
   _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____