

MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

NEWTON FREE LIBRARY

330 Homer Street

Newton MA 02459

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. DEFINITION

A written materials selection policy is a formal statement of standards intended to guide the librarians in their selection of library materials and to inform the public about those standards.

B. LIBRARY MISSION

The Newton Free Library's mission is to provide the widest possible range of library services for the educational, cultural and recreational enrichment of all members of the Newton community.

C. MATERIALS SELECTION GOAL

The professional staff selects materials on a wide variety of subjects from many sources, including gifts. Different points of view are always considered. Purchases are made for all ages, in various languages and in a variety of formats. Additional copies are purchased in anticipation of and in response to reader interest and demand.

Selection is based on recommendations in authoritative reviewing media and on requests from the public. Additional guidelines include permanent value, contemporary significance and relevance to the existing collection. To suit a variety of tastes, experimental forms and ephemeral materials may be acquired as well as those which may offend or bore one library user, but be meaningful or entertaining to another. The library selects rather than censors, and upholds the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights (Appendix A), The Freedom to Read Statement (Appendix B), and The Freedom to View Statement (Appendix C) which are appended. It is neither possible nor desirable to be exhaustive in any one subject area, but every effort is made to anticipate the needs of the public.

D. MATERIALS SELECTION RESPONSIBILITY

The Library Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for all library policy. Responsibility for materials selection rests with the Library Director. Initial selection of material and collection development is the responsibility of the professional library staff.

II. MATERIALS SELECTION SOURCES

The professional staff is involved in selecting materials for the Library. The various selection committees, Adult Nonfiction and Reference, Adult Fiction, Children's Materials, and Audiovisual Materials, carefully review their choices and requests from patrons.

A few standard aids used for selection include:

Allmusic (www.allmusic.com)

Amazon.com

Book Page

Booklist

Bookmarks

Boston Globe
Boston Herald
Bulletin for the Center of Children's Books
Choice
Downbeat
Economist
Horn Book
Internet Movie Database (www.IMDB.com)
Kirkus Reviews
Library Journal
New York Times Book Review
Publisher's Weekly
School Library Journal
Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA)
Wall Street Journal

Subject specific periodicals such as Nature, Fine Homebuilding, etc.
Publishers' catalogs
Vendor websites

Professional staff monitors TV and radio stations (public and commercial stations) for announcements/interviews with authors of new books that do not necessarily appear in standard review sources.

The basic standard library collection is maintained and updated with the assistance of many established bibliographies, such as:

American Reference Books Annual	Magazines for Libraries
Children's Catalog	Public Library Catalog
Fiction Catalog	Readers' Advisor
Leonard Maltin's Movie Guide	

All requests from the public and the staff are given careful consideration.

III. NONFICTION COLLECTION

The library's role as a source of information requires an extensive and continually updated collection of materials and databases in all subject areas in order to answer the brief question, as well as to provide the detail needed for extended research.

The selection of titles for the nonfiction collection is done with the assistance of the entire reference staff and many authoritative bibliographical sources.

Nonfiction titles are judged on accuracy of information, clarity of presentation, authority of the author, reputation of the publisher, publication date, suitability to the existing collection, and other general selection guidelines outlined previously.

Occasionally a work may be added despite an unfavorable review or a format not generally chosen (e.g. textbooks) if it fills a gap in the collection where a better work is unavailable or if the work has received many requests.

Works are selected to provide a range of viewpoints on issues, recognizing the individual's right to read or not read unorthodox or controversial opinions.

Reference Collection

The Reference Collection contains print resources and online products. Reference librarians make recommendations about materials/formats to be purchased in their specific subject specialty, as well as recommendations in other subject areas. The Reference Department's Technology Committee evaluates and recommends online products. The Minuteman Library Network, Massachusetts Library System, and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners provide many of the online products. In all cases, librarians recommend the specific products to be purchased by these organizations. In addition librarians evaluate and select Internet websites to include in the subject listings on NFL website. All these formats compliment each other and help reference librarians provide a wide range of resources to aid in the delivery of quality reference services.

Newton Collection

The library has a special responsibility to gather, preserve, microfilm, digitize, and make available to the public, current and historical information about Newton. The materials, acquired through purchase or gift, include, but are not limited to, newspapers, directories, maps, atlases, sound recordings, pamphlets, pictures, photographs, postcards, trade cards, microforms and video recordings. Particular emphasis is placed on acquisitions from the various city departments and local educational and cultural organizations. The entire collection offers a picture of the city and its development since its beginning some 350 years ago. Works of local authors writing about Newton are also included.

Massachusetts Collection

The library maintains a special collection of Massachusetts historical materials. Many of the books are out-of-print and difficult to replace. Titles are transferred occasionally from the regular collection because of their special Massachusetts interest. The holdings include many Massachusetts town/city histories, the complete New England Historical and Genealogical Register, the Massachusetts Historical Society: Proceedings and Collections, and a number of family genealogies.

IV. FICTION COLLECTION

The library maintains a balanced, well-rounded fiction collection that satisfies the interests of a variety of readers in the community. Every attempt is made to acquire the best works of the past and present. No single arbitrary standard is used in selecting fiction. Each work is judged on individual merits and the needs of the collection as a whole.

The library maintains a separate unclassified mass-market paperback collection. Most titles are duplicates of the regular holdings.

V. CHILDREN'S COLLECTIONS

The library maintains a children's collection targeted to children from birth through eighth grade, as well as parents, teachers and caregivers. This collection includes, but is not limited to, fiction, nonfiction, reference, and foreign language materials as well as music, spoken word recordings, videorecordings, online products, video games, and electronic reading and viewing devices. The principles which guide the selection of materials for children are fundamentally the same as those for adult materials. Great emphasis is placed on a quality collection which will encourage pleasurable reading, provide information, expand the individual's world, encourage and satisfy curiosity, and provide supplemental materials for school assignments. In order to be responsive to the needs of our diverse community, some items may not be considered appropriate for all children. Responsibility for a child's reading choices rests with parents and/or guardians, and neither the library staff nor other library patrons shall make these decisions for other people's children.

VI. YOUNG ADULT COLLECTION

The principles, which guide the selection of materials for young adults, are fundamentally the same as those for adult materials. Great emphasis is placed on a quality collection which will encourage pleasurable reading, provide information, expand the individuals' world, encourage and satisfy curiosity. Additionally, materials are selected to support the schools reading lists and curriculum. Games and other media are also purchased to meet the interests of young adults.

The library does not assume that all young adult materials will be suitable for every individual. Responsibility for a young adult's reading choices rests with parents.

VII. SPECIAL LIBRARY SERVICES COLLECTION

The library maintains a large and diverse collection of materials for patrons with special needs. This includes large type books and periodicals. Talking books requiring special cassette or digital players are received on loan from the Library for the Blind and Visually Handicapped. Closed-captioned descriptive videos are also available. Other materials available for the visually and hearing impaired include two large screen PC's providing access to the Internet and the library catalog with voice and type enhancement programs, track ball mouse and large type keyboards. The library has a TTY for the hearing impaired, two Optelec low vision devices (includes a portable), "Personal PA" FM sound enhancing system, magnifiers, brailers, games and radio reading service receivers.

VIII. PERIODICALS

The selection policy stresses a variety of periodical titles in all subject fields. Patron requests and descriptive reference bibliographies such as [Katz: Magazines for Libraries](#) are important aids to selection. Those titles, which are most needed for reference or research, are bound or duplicated in microform for long term use.

The library also has access to many full-text databases provided by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, Massachusetts Library System, and the Minuteman Library Network as well as the Newton Free Library.

IX. NEWSPAPERS

The acquisition of newspapers is focused on the local Newton and Boston publications. In addition, the library provides national and international news coverage by subscribing to the New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, Investors' Business Daily, the Financial Times of London, and foreign language newspapers. The selection goal is to provide current information to meet reference, research and educational needs of patrons. Because of their importance as permanent reference materials, all Newton papers, current and retrospective are also acquired in microform, as well as the New York Times and the Boston Globe. Online access is available for many newspapers.

X. FOREIGN LANGUAGE MATERIALS

The library aims to meet the demand of patrons for foreign language materials. These collections include books, newspapers, periodicals, online resources and audiovisual materials.

XI. MUSIC SCORES

The library maintains a large and diverse circulating collection of music scores. Each year additional new scores are purchased representing a cross-section of music genres for both voice and instruments.

XII. AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS

Selection of music, spoken word recordings, videorecordings, online products, electronic reading and viewing devices, and games is guided by reviews in current periodicals and review sources, websites dedicated to the various media, and by patron requests. Music of all eras and genres is collected. Feature films in English and other languages are collected, both current and classics. Non-fiction videorecordings - topical, historical, instructional, musical and dramatic performance, TV broadcasts, travel and the visual arts are also collected.

Formats widely used by the public are purchased, and as the industry abandons formats (e.g. videocassette) the library ceases to purchase items in that format. Collections in abandoned formats are kept, however, as long as the public shows interest in them. As new formats become available (e.g. downloadable audiobooks and video) the library will attempt to include them in the collection.

XIII. ESL AND LITERACY COLLECTION

The library purchases a wide selection of materials, both print and audiovisual, and is selected by the program coordinator with a view to the needs of both tutors and learners working in the program. The material is catalogued and color-coded according to levels of English proficiency.

XIV. MAP AND PICTURE FILE COLLECTIONS

The picture file is a collection of illustrative materials without text. The map file contains maps from countries all over the world and the fifty states. Also included are bicycle maps for the Massachusetts Area. Pictures and maps from these collections circulate.

XV. GIFTS

Gifts of books and other library materials are judged on the same basis as those that are purchased. It is understood that these gifts may not necessarily be added to the collection but may be sold in the Friends' Book Sale, transferred to another institution, or discarded. No conditions may be imposed relating to any gift. No monetary evaluation can be applied to these gifts.

XVI. INTERLIBRARY LOAN

Since the library is unable to select and purchase everything that might be desirable, network transfers and interlibrary loan procedures are used to augment the local collection. As a member of the Minuteman Library Network consortium, Newton may borrow from any of the member libraries on a network transfer basis. Newton may also borrow from libraries outside the network through the Massachusetts Library System (MLS) on an interlibrary loan basis.

XVII. INTERNET

The Newton Free Library's Policy for Public Use of Internet Terminals (Appendix D) and Blog Policy (Appendix E) are attached.

XVIII. COLLECTION ANALYSIS

A systematic removal of materials no longer useful to the library is essential. Collection analysis is the continuous examination and thorough analysis of library materials for the purpose of maintaining and strengthening the collections. Discarding of these materials requires judgements as important as those used in original selections, with major emphasis placed on consulting established general and subject bibliographies. Duplicates, worn or mutilated materials, older editions and outdated works may be withdrawn. New copies and or new editions are considered as replacements. The Friends of the Library will sell some withdrawn materials.

XIX. RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

The library is committed to the principles stated in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and the ALA's Freedom to Read and Freedom to View statements. The library will acknowledge comments and challenges regarding the appropriateness of selection or non-selection of individual titles. The patron is invited to document specific objections on a special reconsideration form, a copy of which is appended to this policy (Appendix F).



Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Date: _____

If you have found materials or library resources about which you have concerns, please complete this form to assure prompt, complete consideration by Library staff.

MATERIAL FOR CONSIDERATION

Author/Producer: _____ Publisher: _____

Title: _____

Dewey number (if any): _____ Date/Edition: _____

Type of Material:

Book Magazine/Newspaper Video/DVD/CD Electronic Database Audio/CD

Other: _____

Please describe your concerns regarding this material:

Did you read, view or listen to the entire work or a portion of the work? All Part

What specific pages/sections illustrate your concerns:

How did this material come to your attention (optional):

CONTACT INFORMATION

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Organization Represented: _____

Telephone: _____

Please send completed form to: Newton Free Library, 330 Homer Street, Newton, MA 02459

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