



John Curtis Free Library

534 Hanover Street, Hanover, MA 02339

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www.johncurtislibrary.com

MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

OBJECTIVES

The John Curtis Free Library provides free library services to all individuals in the community, meeting their educational, informational, and recreational needs. It accomplishes this by providing a constantly updated, well-organized collection of materials in a format and at a level appropriate for the user; by offering access to other libraries' collections through membership in the Old Colony Library Network (OCLN) and through inter-library loans; and by providing a courteous and efficient staff of sufficient numbers to do the work of organizing the library's holdings and to offer assistance in the use of those materials.

OBJECTIVES OF MATERIALS SELECTIONS

Materials are purchased to meet the Library's objectives, providing service to the whole spectrum of the community's population. The library encourages the continuous learning process through the use of its collections and provides recreational materials for leisure time.

School assignments for elementary and secondary school students are seen as the primary responsibility of school libraries. The public library provides materials to satisfy the general informational, recreational, and cultural needs of children and young adults, keeping in mind the wide range of reading levels represented by the various age groups.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

The responsibility for the selection of materials rests with the Library Director and/or designee who operate within the framework of policies determined by the Board of Trustees. Basic to the Library's Materials Selection Policies is the *Library Bill of Rights* and the *Intellectual Freedom Statement* and their amendments and interpretations as adopted by the American Library Association and endorsed by the Board of Trustees of the John Curtis Free Library.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

A. General Philosophy

Materials in the adult collection are selected for a mature audience. A separate collection is available to young people; materials in multiple formats are maintained for children from pre-school through teens. Responsibility for the selection of children's materials rests with the Children's Librarian; reading appropriateness is solely at the discretion of parents and guardians. Selection of materials for the adult collection is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain materials their parents consider inappropriate.

The library recognizes that some materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend. Selection will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to the current collection and to serving the needs, interests, and demands of the library's users.

The librarians utilize professional judgment and expertise in the process of selecting materials and are aided by authoritative professional reviews, standard lists of basic works, recommendations of professional journals and bibliographic essays prepared by subject specialists.

Recommendations from the public are welcome and will be given careful consideration in terms of overall objectives and the existing collection.

B. Criteria for Selecting Non-Fiction Materials

1. Current usefulness or permanent value
2. Authority and competence in presentation
3. Importance as a record of the time
4. Relation to the existing collection
5. Relative importance in comparison with other works on the same subject
6. Physical qualities and price

C. Criterial for Selecting Fiction Materials

1. The quality of writing
2. The extent of public interest in a given title, author or genre
3. The originality of the work
4. The authenticity of the historical, regional, or social setting
5. Community needs or demands
6. Relation to an existing collection
7. Physical quality and price

D. Criterial for Selecting Non-print Materials

Selection for non-print materials should be governed by the principles and criteria applied to print materials, in addition to consideration of the appropriateness of the medium to the material.

E. Gifts

The Library welcomes gifts of books and other materials with the understanding that it will evaluate them in accordance with the criteria applied to purchase materials. Gifts are accepted with the understanding that if they are deemed unsuitable or unnecessary to the collection, they may be sold or disposed of in some other manner. The Board of Library Trustees reserve the right to approve substantial gifts.

When the Library receives a cash gift for the purchase of materials, the selection will be made by the Librarian in consultation with the donor.

E-1. Special Collections

It is the policy of the Library not to accept special collections that are to remain together as an entity. Some exceptions may be made in the case of historically significant or locally relevant collections. The donor must agree that once donated, the materials will become the sole property of the John Curtis Free Library and as such will be retained or disposed of as needs dictate.

E-2. Personal Property

Gifts of items for permanent display or preservation are not normally accepted. The Library can, however, accept such items if the following criteria is met:

1. The item(s) is specifically and clearly related to the Library or local history
2. There is adequate and appropriate space to display and/or house the item
3. The item(s) can receive proper care and attention

4. The item does not require special facilities, control, or staffing

All personal property, art objects, paintings, prints, maps, antiques and other collectibles, if accepted, are accepted only on the condition that they may be sold, kept, given away or discarded at the discretion of the Board of Library Trustees and the Library Director. Specific requests for disposition of an item will be taken under advisement of the Board, and the gift will be returned if it is not deemed suitable to the goals and objectives of the Library. An appropriate deed of gift or similar document transferring sole and exclusive ownership of the items(s) to the Library will be required. Any proceeds derived from the disposal of a gift may be used by the Library in a way consistent with the original gift.

E-3. Acknowledgement

The Library attempts to acknowledge each gift with a letter or receipt. Gifts will be formally acknowledged if requested by the donor.

To remain in compliance with the current tax law, the U.S. Internal Revenue Service prohibits libraries from being involved in the appraisal process. The responsibility for the appraisal or the estimation of the value of the gift donations rests with the donor. Neither the Board nor the Library Director will assess or suggest a value for non-monetary gifts for income tax or other purposes; any letter of acknowledgement will not contain a statement of value.

Gifts that do not further the mission of the John Curtis Free Library, or which result in the incurrence of excessive expense or administrative support are subject to acceptance or refusal at the discretion of the Board and the Library Director.

E-4. Gifts to Library Staff

Individual Library staff cannot accept valuable gifts or any form of currency for the services they provide as library staff. Patrons are encouraged to make contributions to the Friends of the John Curtis Free Library. This policy is in compliance with the Massachusetts Conflict of Interest Law for Municipal Employees, ensuring that staff will treat all members of the public equally, and that no preferential treatment is shown or expected.

F. Maintaining the Collection

In order to maintain the collection in its most attractive and useful condition, the collection should be periodically examined for the purpose of weeding, binding, or repair of materials.

The Library staff will use judgment in removing from the collection materials which are no longer useful, or are not in a condition suitable for circulation. Materials no longer useful to the library may be sold or otherwise disposed of.

Factors considered in weeding:

1. Physical condition
2. Poor library circulation (not listed in standard lists)
3. Subject matter no longer of current interest
4. Multiple copies of titles no longer in great demand
5. Old editions replaced by later revisions
6. Publication date
7. Information no longer valid due to new knowledge

G. Use of the Library's Materials

Library materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no book or other item is sequestered, except for the purpose of protecting it from theft or injury.

The use of rare and scholarly items of great value is controlled to the extent required to preserve them from harm.

The library assumes no responsibility for any damage that may be caused to a borrower's equipment due to use of audio or video materials, or of computer software that is packaged as part of a print item.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING REQUESTS FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF SPECIFIC MATERIALS

The Library welcomes the opportunity to discuss the interpretation and application of these materials selection principles and policies with Hanover residents and Old Colony Library Network cardholders. Materials will not be removed from the collection unless it can be shown to be in violation of these principles.

The library will review decisions regarding specific materials upon written request. A form for this purpose is available at the circulation desk.

The Director and the Board of Trustees will read and reconsider the material in question. All available critical evaluations of the questioned material will be reviewed. The review will be treated objectively; passages will not be taken out of context and the material will be evaluated as a whole.

Should this evaluation substantiate the original decision, the title in question will remain on the shelves. If the criticism is considered valid, the Board of Trustees and the Director shall either

remove the item or re-assign it as they deem appropriate. No materials will be removed from use until a final decision has been made. The final decision will be with the Board of Trustees. The complainant shall be advised of the Board's decision.

REVISION OF POLICY

This policy may be revised as times and circumstances require.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on December 14, 1998; revised and amended March 3, 2022.

Jeanne Cianciola, Chair Jeanne Cianciola

Emily Blampied, Secretary Emily Blampied

Tammy Tedeschi, Treasurer Tammy Tedeschi