

THE TOPSFIELD TOWN LIBRARY

MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

The Topsfield Town Library endorses the American Library Association's Library Bill of rights and the Freedom to Read and Freedom to View statements, as appended. The goal of our materials selection process is to present a balanced collection that meets the needs of Topsfield residents and its business community, and is representative of all points of view. "Materials" includes books, magazines, audiotapes, videotapes, CDs, and other formats that may be used for reference or information.

Responsibility

While the ultimate responsibility for the materials selection policy rests with the Library Board of Trustees, the Library Director and designated senior staff are responsible for decisions regarding the ongoing selection and maintenance of the collection. Parents, guardians, or caretakers are exclusively responsible for deciding what their child may read, view, or hear. Members of the library staff cannot be expected to act *in loco parentis* in permitting or denying access to any library materials to a patron based on age.

Criteria

Decisions regarding the materials selected for the collection are based on the judgment, research, and expertise of the Library Director and senior staff. Two basic criteria are used when selecting materials: materials based on need and materials based on desire. Materials based on need ensure that the library's collection of core subject areas, classical works, topically current works, reference works, and works related to Topsfield/Essex County are kept up-to-date. Materials based on desire ensure that the library's collection includes works that are popular among the patrons, fit well with the existing collection, and follow trends in the greater Topsfield area.

The tools used for selection criteria include the *Library Journal*, *Kirkus*, *Publisher's Weekly*, *American Record Guide*, and other such supplementary sources. In addition, authority of the author, literary quality, content, availability, cost of securing and media type is considered.

These tools are applied to purchasing materials that include:

- Popular works
- Contemporary works
- Works of permanent value
- Works that fit in with the existing collection
- Works required to keep reference or other nonfiction-related information current

In no case is any material excluded on the basis of race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, or political or religious views. The library will provide, whenever possible, reasoned, well-written materials on all sides of controversial issues. These

shall not be proscribed or removed from library shelves because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

Children's and Young Adult Selection Criteria

The criteria used for the adult collection apply to the children's and young adult collections. The collection is carefully selected for children of all ages, with an emphasis on materials that provide an enjoyable reading experience, stimulate a child's imagination, and provide a wide range of information. Materials are purchased in print and nonprint format, including but not limited to books, magazines, CDs, tapes, videos, puzzles, and games.

Local school libraries serve the curriculum needs of students. The Topsfield Town Library does not duplicate these resources or follow all changes in curriculum; however, the library does try to provide complementary and supplemental reading matter for students, as well as additional class-related materials to assist those seeking to complete their assignments outside of school hours.

Maintenance

An intricate part of collection development is weeding the collection on a regular basis. Decisions regarding the duplication of materials, replacement and repair of materials, and the weeding of the collection is done by the department heads and supervised by the Library Director. Maintenance criteria include accuracy of information, community interests and needs, financial factors, physical conditions of the materials, and space requirements will be considered.

Gifts

The library gladly accepts donations of materials compatible with the collection. Gifts will be evaluated according to the same criteria used for purchased materials. Normally the Director will advise a donor if the offered material seems unsuited to the collections or could still benefit the library as part of the Friends of the Library book sale. Memorial gifts will be acknowledged by the addition of a nameplate identifying the donor or person in whose honor the gift was made. Such gifts become the property of the library; donors may not restrict the use of a gift or stipulate the gifts location in the collection or method of exhibition. Donors may not specify an option to reclaim donated materials.

Objections

Any patron who has a concern regarding the content of the material in the library's collection should submit their concern in writing to the Library Director, who will promptly review and respond to it. Should the patron have any questions relating to the Director's response, he or she will be referred to the library's Board of Trustees. Any action taken by the Trustees will follow the guidelines presented in this materials selection policy.