

Hanover Town Library
Collection Development Policy

Purpose of this policy

This policy is meant as a training tool and purchasing aid for staff in the selection of library materials, as a reference for the public about the nature of the library's current collection, and as a guiding document for the collecting priorities which will shape the library's collections in years to come.

Responsibility for Selection

The responsibility and authority for selection for all materials purchased by the Hanover Town Library rests ultimately with the Librarian. Patron requests for specific materials may be considered if materials meet the criteria for selection.

Selection Criteria

The criteria considered in the selection of library materials are:

- a. existing library holdings
- b. suitability of the material to the interest of the community
- c. individual merit of each item
- d. budget
- e. popular appeal/demand

Points considered in the selection of materials:

1. Objectionable language and vivid descriptions of sex and violence when dealt with realistically within the context of a book will not be criteria for rejecting the book.
2. Material is judged based on the work as a whole, not by a part taken out of context.
3. Material selection may be based on, but is not limited to, current reviews and professional library and literary opinion as shown in journals, standard bibliographies, and other publications in the field.

4. Materials are purchased and licensed in a variety of formats, as well as for a variety of age groups as a reflection of the interest of the community. Selection of electronic books carries all the same considerations of print books, when applicable by platform.
5. The lack of a review or an unfavorable review shall not be the sole reason for rejecting or adding a title. The Librarian will consider demand, the need to balance the library collection in a specific subject area, books discussed on public media, and requests of library patrons.
6. Due to limited budget and space, the library cannot purchase all materials that are requested. Interlibrary loan, open requests and the common borrower card service will be used to obtain materials from other libraries for the use of our patrons or that are beyond the scope of our collection.
7. Realia as part of the history of Etna, the local area or a local personage may be added to the library collection at the discretion of the Librarian and according to the “Selection Criteria” in this policy. (Realia includes what is accepted or collected outside the usual library materials, usually associated with local history. Examples are antique clocks, paintings, photographs, etc.)

Multiple Copies and Formats

Multiple copies and formats of materials may be purchased based on the reservations made, the need for circulating and non-circulating copies of a particular item or items, and those local history items that are valuable and in demand. Budget and space requirements will be weighed when making the decision for multiple copies of any item.

Donations

Gifts and donations will be judged according to the “Selection Criteria” in this policy. Donations of used materials will be accepted as storage space allows. We will not accept donations of magazines, cassettes or VHS, textbooks, or damaged items. The Librarian makes the final decision about whether to add a gift/donation to the library collection. Monetary gifts may be accepted and expended following the acceptance at a public hearing of the Library Board of Trustees and the Town of Hanover Selectboard.

Weeding of the Library Collection

Weeding is an essential element of collection development that ensures the library’s materials are useful and accessible. Every library’s collection is limited by the space available to house it,

and collections should change over time to reflect changes in the community, society, and in the library's goals.

Weeding is a periodic or continual evaluation of resources intended to remove items that are no longer useful from the collection. The responsibility and authority for weeding material rests ultimately with the Librarian.

When libraries do not weed regularly, patrons have difficulty finding interesting and relevant materials. Removing outdated or worn-out items makes the collection more attractive, relevant, and inviting to patrons. In addition, weeding aids in identifying gaps in a collection so that new purchases can be made with confidence and space can be created for those materials.

Challenged Materials and Intellectual Freedom

The Hanover Town Library selects materials based on the criteria described within this policy. The Library does not advocate particular views or beliefs but attempts to provide free access of a well-balanced collection of topics, appropriate for different age levels and opinions to all members of the community. Each individual has the freedom and responsibility for making choices about what to read. As part of this "Collection Development Policy" the following American Library Association Statements are attached and will be subscribed to:

- The Library Bill of Rights, Appendix A
- The Freedom to Read Statement, Appendix B
- The Freedom to View Statement, Appendix C
- Labeling and Rating Systems, Appendix D

Should a community member object to a particular item owned by the Hanover Town Library the challenger shall be offered the opportunity of filling out a "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of a Library Resource" (See appendix E).

The request shall be reviewed by the Librarian and the material will be evaluated based on the complaint. The Librarian will issue a written decision to the challenger that may be appealed to the Library Board of Trustees. In the event of an appeal, the decision of the Library Board of Trustees is final.

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees: February 8, 2022

Appendix A

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.]

Appendix B

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; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, July 12, 2000, June 30, 2004, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.]

Appendix C

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 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 guarantees 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 by the ALA Council January 10, 1990.]

Appendix D

LABELING AND RATING SYSTEMS

Libraries do not advocate the ideas found in their collections or in resources accessible through the library. The presence of books and other resources in a library does not indicate endorsement of their contents by the library. Likewise, providing access to digital information does not indicate endorsement or approval of that information by the library. Labeling and rating systems present distinct challenges to these intellectual freedom principles.

Many organizations use or devise rating systems as a means of advising either their members or the general public regarding the organization's opinions of the contents and suitability or appropriate age for use of certain books, films, recordings, websites, games, or other materials. The adoption, enforcement, or endorsement of any of these rating systems by a library violates the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and may be unconstitutional. If enforcement of labeling or rating systems is mandated by law, the library should seek legal advice regarding the law's applicability to library operations.

Viewpoint-neutral directional labels are a convenience designed to save time. These are different in intent from attempts to prejudice or discourage users or restrict their access to resources. Labeling as an attempt to prejudice attitudes is a censor's tool. The American Library Association opposes labeling as a means of predisposing people's attitudes toward library resources.

Prejudicial labels are designed to restrict access, based on a value judgment that the content, language, or themes of the resource, or the background or views of the creator(s) of the resource, render it inappropriate or offensive for all or certain groups of users. The prejudicial label is used to warn, discourage, or prohibit users or certain groups of users from accessing the resource. Such labels sometimes are used to place materials in restricted locations where access depends on staff intervention.

Viewpoint-neutral directional aids facilitate access by making it easier for users to locate resources. Users may choose to consult or ignore the directional aids at their own discretion.

Directional aids can have the effect of prejudicial labels when their implementation becomes proscriptive rather than descriptive. When directional aids are used to forbid access or to suggest moral or doctrinal endorsement, the effect is the same as prejudicial labeling.

Libraries sometimes acquire resources that include ratings as part of their packaging. Librarians should not endorse the inclusion of such rating systems; however, removing or destroying the ratings—if placed there by, or with permission of, the copyright holder—could constitute expurgation (see “Expurgation of Library Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights”). In addition, the inclusion of ratings on bibliographic records in library catalogs is a violation of the Library Bill of Rights.

Prejudicial labeling and ratings presuppose the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is appropriate or inappropriate for others. They presuppose that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. The fact that libraries do not advocate or use proscriptive labels and rating systems does not preclude them from answering questions about them. The American Library Association affirms the rights of individuals to form their own opinions about resources they choose to read or view.

[Adopted July 13, 1951, by the ALA Council; amended June 25, 1971; July 1, 1981; June 26, 1990; January 19, 2005; July 15, 2009; July 1, 2014. 11.]

Appendix E

Hanover Town Library REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF A LIBRARY RESOURCE

The Library Board of Trustees has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library resources to the Librarian 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 reconsideration of a library resource, please return the completed form to Jeff Metzler, Librarian, Hanover Town Library, PO Box 207, Etna, NH 03750.

Name _____ Date _____
Address _____ City _____
State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Do you represent yourself? _____ An Organization? _____

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

_____ Book _____ Textbook _____ Video/ DVD _____ Display/ Exhibit _____
Magazine _____ Library Program _____ Audio Book/ Music CD _____ Newspaper
_____ eBook/ eMagazine _____ Video Game _____ Electronic Information/ Network
(please specify): _____ Other

_____ Title
_____ Author/
Producer _____

2. What brought this resource to your attention?
3. Have you read the Library's criteria for selection, as stated in the Hanover Town Library Collection Development Policy?
4. What concerns you about the resource? (use other side of sheet or additional pages if necessary) Please be specific and cite pages or sections.
5. Are there resources you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?
6. What do you think might result from exposure to this resource?
7. Is there anything good about this resource?
8. Did you read, watch or listen to the entire work? What parts, if not the entire work?
9. For what age group do you recommend this resource?

10. Are you aware of critical judgment of this resource? If yes, please summarize such judgments.
11. What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this resource?
12. What would you like the library to do about this resource?

_____ Withdraw it from the library collection.

_____ Restrict its use. To whom? _____

Reevaluate for collection development _____

Other. Please be specific _____

Signature of complainant _____