

WOODSTOCK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Policy Manual

Section:	9.	Materials Selection
Subsection:	9.1	
Paragraph:	9.1.1	Selection Policy

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Selection Policy:

To establish general guidelines for the selection of materials in accordance with the Library's purpose and goals

- the general principles of intellectual freedom
- the constraints of the budget and the available space

To define the responsibility for the selection of materials

To establish criteria for recommendations to purchase material

- for handling challenges to items presently in the collection
- the assessment of gifts and donations to the collections
- guidelines for the withdrawing of items from the collections

To serve as a written guide for staff and others who are interested.

Community to be Served

The Library must serve all parts of its community. The diversity of the citizens of the City of Woodstock is reflected in the composition of the Library's collection.

Statement of Intellectual Freedom

The Woodstock Public Library Board endorses the following statements from the Canadian Library Association and the Ontario Library Association concerning the principles of intellectual freedom.

The Library recognizes any laws dictated at the federal, provincial or municipal level including the Criminal Code of Canada injunction regarding sedition (Section 60-63), hate propaganda (Section 281. 1-8) and obscenity (Section 159) as

well as the classifications assigned to films and video by the Ontario Film Review Board.

Principles of INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM Adopted by the Canadian Library Association June 27, 1974; amended November 17, 1983 and November 18, 1985:

All persons in Canada have the fundamental right, as embodied in the nation's Bill of Rights to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom is essential to the health and development of Canadian society.

Libraries have a basic responsibility for the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those, which some elements of society may consider unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee the right of free expression by making available all the library's public facilities and services to all individuals and groups who need them.

Libraries should resist all efforts to limit the exercise of those responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups.

Both employees and employers in libraries have a duty, in addition to their institutional responsibilities, to uphold these principles.

Statement of the Ontario Library Association regarding INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM-May 29, 1963; amended 1998.

In affirming its commitment to the fundamental rights of intellectual freedom, the freedom to read and freedom of the press, as embodied in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Library Association declares its acceptance of the following propositions:

- (1) That the provision of library service to the public is based upon the rights of the citizen, under the protection of the law, to judge individually on questions of politics, religion and morality.

- (2) That intellectual freedom requires freedom to examine other ideas and other interpretations of life than those currently approved by the local community or by society in general, and including those ideas and interpretations which may be unconventional or unpopular.
- (3) That freedom of expression includes freedom for a creator to depict what is ugly, shocking and unedifying in life;
- (4) That free traffic in ideas and opinions is essential to the health and growth of a free society and that freedom to read, listen and view is fundamental to such free traffic;
- (5) That it is the responsibility of librarians to maintain the right of intellectual freedom and to implement it consistently in their selection of books, periodicals, films, and recordings, other materials and in the provision of access to electronic sources of information, including access to the internet.
- (6) That it is therefore part of the library service to its public to resist any attempt by an individual or group within the community it serves to abrogate or curtail access to information, the freedom to read, view and listen by demanding the removal of, or restrictions to library information sources in any format.
- (7) That it is equally part of the library's responsibility to its public to ensure that its selection of materials is not unduly influenced by the personal opinions of the selectors, but determined by the application of generally accepted standards of accuracy, style and presentation.

SELECTION

Responsibility

Responsibility for the selection and discarding of materials resides with the Chief Executive Officer who implements the policies approved by the Board. This responsibility is delegated to department heads and other appropriate levels of staff.

Coordination of Other Resources

Selection of materials must take into account the existing resources in this library, and other libraries and information sources in the area.

Limitations of Budget and Space:

Those selecting material must always be aware of the limitations of library budgets and space.

Criteria for Evaluation of Materials:

Materials in all formats are judged by the following criteria. An item need not meet all the criteria in order to be acceptable. No item is automatically included or excluded from the library collection only because it contains frank or coarse language or deals with controversial topics.

The following criteria are from Library Collections by Richard K. Gardner (McGraw0Hill. 1981).

Authoritativeness

-What is the background and reputation of the author or creator? Of the publishers/ of the sponsored body?

Accuracy

-How accurate is the information presented? (Expert opinion is usually needed here).

Impartiality-Are all sides of a question presented fairly, or is there evidence of bias.

Currency of data

-How up-to-date is the information? In revised editions, how much revision has been done?

Adequate scope

-Are all important aspects of the topic covered, or are some slighted or left out?

Depth of Coverage

-Does the work go into detail, or is it superficial?

Appropriateness

-Is the work presented at a level (vocabulary, visual, etc.) that can be comprehended by the intended user?

-How suitable is the medium for the presentation of this subject?

-Is the work suitable for group or individual use? Or both?

Relevancy

-Is the work relevant to the users' experience? Can they relate to it?

-How useful will the data be to intended users?

Interest

-Will the work hold the users' interest by appealing to the imagination, sense of curiosity, human needs, etc.?

Organization

-Is the work developed in a logical fashion?
-Are all parts pertinent?

Style

-Is the style of presentation appropriate to the material?
-Is the style comprehensible to the intended user?

Aesthetic qualities

-Does the work offer a genuine artistic experience?

Technical aspects

-How faithful to the original are illustrations, visual mater, or sound?
-What is the degree of clarity? Is everything in focus?
-What is the relationship of the size of the images to the original? Is this clearly indicated in some way, or is there possible confusion?
-Are all elements well synchronized?
-Are transitions from one scene to another (in a film) well done?

Physical Characteristics

-Is the typeface well chosen and of the right size?
-Are the paper and binding or the film or vinyl of good quality?
-How easy is it to use the work? to repair the work?
-How durable is the work?

Special features

-Are bibliographies, appendices, notes and guides to the material included?
-Is the work part of a multimedia package, with supporting elements available?

Library potential

-How does this fit into the collection that already exists?
-Does it balance another work of differing viewpoint or merely add more of the same? How frequent will this work be used?

Cost

-Is there a less expensive substitute that will serve the same purpose?
-Would it be less expensive in the long run to purchase this item or to rent it?
-What are the costs of any equipment needed to use this work?

- Does the library already own such equipment?
- What are the processing costs? The storage costs?
- How permanent is the content of this work? Will it soon become obsolete because of the visual matter or content?
- Is the medium well established in the marketplace, or is it one that may be changed or replaced in the near future?

Sources of Selection Information

The primary sources of titles to be considered are published reviews in both professional journals and popular reviewing media. Other sources such as publishers' and vendors' catalogues, lists and promotional material, bibliographies and displays will be used as appropriate.

The Library does not usually participate in approval plans or base purchase decisions on sales visits.

Specific Collections:

Canadian and Woodstock Material

Woodstock Public Library is committed to emphasizing works about Woodstock and Canada as a whole and to collecting works by Canadian and Woodstock authors.

Collections at the Woodstock Public Library usually cover the full extent of the policies identified here. These collections provide in depth resources for the City as a whole.

Local History Collection Parameters

The geographic boundaries of Oxford County define the basic collection area. Burford and Oakland Townships prior to 1850 are thus included. Special emphasis is placed on Woodstock records. Some records have been gathered from adjacent areas, and from some larger areas that contain significant listings of Oxford County subjects. All types of records are appropriate, except those gathered primarily for preservation and not suitable for research use.

Donation Procedure for the Local History Collection

First incoming gifts are assessed in order to establish their suitability to our particular collection. Some materials might make more appropriate holdings for one of Oxford County's excellent museums. Other materials may be too fragile or bulky to suit our circumstances and/or our mandate. Any problematic items will be discussed with the donor at this point, then, where appropriate, returned or redirected, as the donor prefers. Once materials have been accepted for our collection a consent form will be prepared, with a table of contents attached, for

signing by both parties to the agreement. After this has been signed, the donation is complete.

Fiction:

Fiction in a variety of genres (eg. Mystery, science fiction, westerns) is provided to cover a wide range of interests. The collection includes classics, best-sellers and items in popular demand.

Languages Other than English:

Collections are supplied through participation in deposit programs made available through the National Library of Canada and the Southern Ontario Library Service. The collections are provided for recreational reading.

Hi-Lo Collection:

A small collection of easy-to-read books with a limited vocabulary but on topics of interest to adults is provided for those learning reading skills of the English language.

Paperback Collection:

Paperback collections include extra copies of titles in heavy demand as well as titles only available in this format. They provide popular browsing collections composed mainly of fiction.

Periodical, Circulating:

The library provides a balanced collection of current general interest and popular periodicals for circulation.

Young Adult Collection:

This collection exists to bridge the gap between the Children's Collection and the Adult Collections. The emphasis is on recreational reading and includes books, which address the specific needs and interests of readers in this age group.

Reference Collection:

Reference material is selected with the aim of satisfying promptly the majority of the information needs of the community.

Vertical Files:

Selection of material for the vertical files is based on its values as supplementary material. The files include government pamphlets and material containing information usually not found in books.

Periodicals are selected based on demand, subject balance, representation in the Library's periodical indexes and availability in other libraries in the area.

Back files of both newspapers and periodicals are kept (mainly in microform) and are determined largely by representation in the Library's indexes.

The Library is a selective depository for both Canadian and Ontario government publications. Publications of the City of Woodstock are collected. Publications of other governments and the UN are also considered for the collection.

Children's Collections,

Audio-Cassettes:

The Children's Department cassette collection consists of music, fingerplays, storytelling and children's musical activities in English and French. The department also provides a collection of book cassette combinations for children in English and French.

Children's Literature collection:

The Children's Department houses a collection of anthologies, literary criticism, essays, and bibliographies about children's literature for students of children's literature from high school and post-secondary institutions.

Fiction:

Collections of fiction titles are provided to meet the recreational reading demands of children. The collection ranges from board books and picture books to junior novels.

French Language Collection:

The Children's French Language collection consists of fiction to meet recreational reading demands.

Non-Fiction:

Collection of non-fiction titles are provided to meet the recreational and educational interests of children from preschoolers to Grade Eight.

Parent's Shelf

The Children's Department houses a collection of titles of interest to parents and teachers about children and reading and parenting issues such as activities for children, health, cooking, etc.

Periodicals:

A wide selection of magazine titles in English is offered to meet the recreational interests of children. All of the periodicals circulate and magazines are kept in the Children's Department for one year. After that period those indexed go to storage and others are withdrawn.

Non-Print Materials

Audio-cassettes:

Books on tape, for general use are collected to complement the book collections. These are generally abridged versions of popular books and instructional material.

Compact disc:

A basis collection of music on compact disc includes classical, jazz, folk, electronic, musical shows and classic popular recordings.

Videocassettes:

The videocassette collection includes instructional titles, feature films and documentaries. Children's video tapes include entertainment features in animated cartoon format, children's literature on tape, instructional material and children's feature films.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

Opposition to Ideas and Means of Expression:

The Woodstock Public Library is a resource where many points of view and modes of expression can be examined without hindrance. Few ideas and opinions have universal acceptance or condemnation in a pluralistic society. The use of language, either descriptive or expressive, can in itself stimulate controversy.

The Woodstock Public Library Board, therefore, recognizes the right of individuals to express opposition to author's ideas or their creative exercise of language in materials selected for the library. However, the Woodstock Public Library will not engage to satisfy patrons by removing items purchased in compliance with the principles of this policy. Selection of material cannot be influenced by any anticipated approval or disapproval of its intellectual content by sectors of the community.

Responsibility For Children's Reading:

Responsibility for reading and viewing by children rests with their parents or legal guardians. No item will be excluded from the library collection only because it may come into the possession of children.

Personal Background of Authors/Creators:

The Woodstock Public Library Board will not exclude an item from its collection solely because of the originator's race, religion, national origin or their sexual, social or political views.

Selection of Items as Endorsement of Content:

Selection of an item by the Woodstock Public Library Board does not constitute endorsement of the viewpoint expressed in that item.

Prejudicial Marks or Expurgation of Materials:

The Woodstock Public Library Board will neither undertake to mark items in order to show approval or disapproval nor expurgate any materials.

Rare, Scholarly or At Risk Items:

The Woodstock Public Library may control the use of rare, scholarly or at risk items in order to protect them from damage or theft.

At risk items include those which because of their format (e.g. Art books), their subject matter (e.g. computer books) or books on short-term demand (e.g. course or project materials) could be stolen or mutilated.

Textbooks:

The Library does not purchase textbooks specifically related to courses of study. Some textbooks may be purchased.

Scholarly Materials:

The Library does not normally purchase materials intended for audiences above the university undergraduate level.

Donations and Gifts

The Library accepts gifts of books, pamphlets, periodicals, recordings, and other materials only if they are suitable for the needs of the Library. The same principles of selection which are applied to purchases are applied to gifts. If they are accepted, the materials are the property of the Library and will be handled according to Library procedures and regulations. If the materials are judged to be not suitable for the collection, they will be disposed of as the staff see fit.

Recommendations for Purchase of Materials:

Recommendations from the public for the purchase of books or other materials are referred to the department concerned and are considered according to the Library's general selection policies.

MAINTENANCE OF THE COLLECTION

In order to maintain a collection which is useful, materials which are no longer needed or in poor physical condition must be removed. Criteria used in evaluation for selection of materials are used when considering material to be withdrawn.

Other considerations to be taken into account in discarding materials are physical condition, obsolete information which may be mistaken or dangerous, material no longer in demand, the number of duplicate copies and the availability of replacement copies.

Effective Date: June 20, 1994
Motion No. Date: 94-56 June 20, 1994
Amended Dates:
Projected Review Date:
Responsibility: Chief Librarian/Board