

Kennebunk Free Library Collection Policy and Procedures

Introduction

Kennebunk Free Library's mission is to inspire and enable our communities to discover, learn, and connect. The Library

- develops and promotes the use of resources including books, technology, films, informational materials, programs, displays, and community exhibit space that contribute to literacy, informed citizenship, and lifelong learning;
- provides educational opportunities and engagement for people of all ages;
- offers expert and personal assistance; and
- provides inviting and accessible facilities.

The library collection is a major tool for fulfilling its mission. To develop the library's collection to its fullest within financial and other practical constraints, the Board of Trustees appoints a Library Director who will delegate the below.

- Study Kennebunk Free Library's service community to discover its members' needs that are to be met by materials of the library
- Analyze the library collection to determine how well it serves the community within the scope of the library mission
- Assess materials available from a variety of sources to find new materials suitable for inclusion in the library collection
- Determine the best arrangement, maintenance and access options for the collection, and assist in providing these options
- Develop procedures to provide for the above activities and materials
- Support the ALA Library Bill of Rights, The Freedom to Read Statement, and the Freedom to View Statement through provision of library materials and collection activities.

Affirmation of Intellectual Freedom

Kennebunk Free Library values a free and inquiring society and affirms its support of the The Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association (ALA), the ALA Freedom to Read Statement, and the ALA Freedom to View Statement appended to this policy as guiding professional documents for the collection development choices made by staff at KFL. All challenges will be submitted to the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom database. All personal information is kept confidential.

Selection

The library recognizes its duty to provide a wide range of materials on all levels of difficulty, diversity of appeal and points of view. Library materials are all items in any format including print, non-print, and online or electronically transmitted resources used by patrons of the library.

All members of the community and staff are encouraged to suggest materials for consideration. It is the responsibility of the appropriate personnel employed by the library to select materials for inclusion in the collection. These selectors are the Library Director, the Assistant Director/Head of Adult Services Librarian, the Children's Librarian/Head of Youth Services, and other staff designated by the Director.

Selectors use their training, knowledge, judgment, and expertise along with the following criteria (listed in no particular order) to select materials for the collection:

- timeliness
- accuracy of information (non-fiction)
- demand in the subject area
- quality of the writing/production
- popular appeal
- authoritativeness/reputation of the publisher/producer
- reputation and significance of author or subject
- availability elsewhere in the Minerva Consortium
- cost
- recommendation in reliable review sources
- condition of the item (i.e., in good repair)

Donated materials are judged by the same standards. Multiple copies of high demand materials are purchased as needed up to four copies for any one title. Worn or missing items are replaced periodically. Outdated materials no longer useful are withdrawn from the collection.

In selecting materials for purchase, library staff will place principle above personal opinion, and reason above prejudice, to select materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection. Library staff will evaluate the existing collection and using the Selection Aids cited below and other appropriate sources, select materials to meet the demands and needs of the library service population.

Selectors use a variety of aids when evaluating materials for inclusion in the collection. Reviews found in professional and general periodicals are a primary source for material selection. The selection aids named at the end of this paragraph should be used as a starting point in the search for library materials, rather than as any limitation to the selection process. These sources include lists only, recommended lists, and annotated sources. All should be used critically. A representative sample of selection aids consulted by library staff include but are not limited to: *Booklist*, *Bookmarks*, *BookPage*, *Kirkus*, *Library Journal*, *New York Times* bestsellers list, *School Library Journal*, and *Voices of Youth Advocates (VOYA)*.

Any source, be it patron, subject specialist, or popular medium, will be considered if it leads to appropriate materials.

Requests for Reconsideration Procedures

Objections may be raised by a community member about a collection item, exhibit, or piece of artwork on display. In the event a complaint about materials in the collection is made, the following procedure will be used:

1. The complainant will be heard by the staff person who selected the challenged material. If that person is not available, the complaint will be directed to the staff member in charge of the building at the time. This staff member will listen to the complainant, provide them with a copy of the Collection Policy, and take their contact information and let them know the selector will be in contact with them. All complaints will be documented and reported within 24 hours to the Library Director via the Incident form.

2. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response given by staff in step (1), the complainant may fill out a Request For Reconsideration of Library Materials, Exhibits, or Artwork form and return it to the Library Director. For a request for reconsideration to be evaluated, the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials, Exhibits, or Artwork form appended to this document must be completed in full. Anonymous or incomplete forms will not be processed.
3. The Library Director will then appoint a committee to review the challenge and make recommendations. This committee will be composed of a professional librarian not on KFL staff, two KFL Trustees, and two members from the community at large. The Director will provide appropriate resources to the committee for their evaluation of the challenge. The committee is advisory only, and will report its findings to the Library Director within four weeks of receipt of a completed, signed Request for Reconsideration form.
4. The Library Director will carefully weigh the recommendations of the committee and decide on the disposition of the material. They will communicate the decision in writing to the selector, the Board of Trustees, the committee and the complainant no later than one week after receiving the findings from the committee.
5. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response from the Director, they may appeal to the Board of Trustees at a regularly scheduled meeting within sixty days. The complainant is to notify the Director at least ten days prior to the Board meeting in order to be placed on the meeting's agenda. The complainant will be given up to ten minutes to present an appeal and ten minutes will be allowed for clarifying questions from the Board. The Board will have two months to respond to the appeal and will do so in writing. The decision by the Board will be final.

No materials challenged will be removed from public use during the complaint review.

Maintenance, Preservation and Weeding Procedures

1. De-selection or weeding of materials follows the selection criteria outlined above. Ideally, the collections will be inventoried and weeded as is practical with staffing and time constraints. The weeding procedure stated here may be applied to the entire collection, or to a segment of the collection.
2. Shelf read the collection. Staff and volunteers are assigned areas in the stacks to clean, order and check that items are in good repair. Worn or defaced materials are removed for repair, rebinding, replacement or discarding. The same analysis is followed with books returning from circulation.
3. Shelf check for missing titles. These missing titles are searched for repeatedly by staff and volunteers. After three months, the missing title is reordered or its record is cleared from the catalog.
4. Discard incorrect or superseded non-fiction materials. In rare cases, superseded Reference works may be added to the general circulating collection if they are considered useful.
5. Items that have not circulated or have low circulation numbers within recent years may be eligible for weeding. The thresholds for number of years and number of checkouts may be

determined by collection managers in consideration of collection size, condition, relevance, currency, and other factors as informed by professional guides such as Continuous Review Examination and Weeding Method (CREW).

6. Items in good repair that are discarded **may be** offered to the Friends of the Library for their book sale.

Cooperative Collecting Procedures and Agreements

The library participates in four cooperative groups: the 1.) Minerva consortium, 2.) an informal cooperative circle with Louis T. Graves Memorial Public Library in Kennebunkport and Wells Public Library in Wells, 3.) the Maine Reciprocal Borrowing Program, 4.) and the Maine Shared Collections Cooperative (MSCC).

The library became a member of the Minerva consortium in June 2014 and the Maine Shared Collections Cooperative (MSCC) in May 2016 and adheres to their policies and by-laws.

In 2019, the library joined the Maine Reciprocal Borrowing Program, allowing patrons from participating libraries to check out items from other participating libraries in person using their home library's card. KFL follows the MRBP rules and procedures for reciprocal lending.

Some expensive reference sources collected by Graves Library or Wells Library are not collected at KFL, and the three libraries strive to avoid duplication of unique collecting aspects of their sister institutions, e.g., not duplicating Graves Library's Kenneth Roberts collection.

Digital Collections

Content purchased by the Library for any of its digital platforms will be selected according to the same criteria as outlined above. However, considerable emphasis is placed on patron demand and wait times in comparison to statewide platforms as well as on pricing.

Weeding of digital collections will be conducted according to the same criteria as outlined above when possible, but may be superseded by publisher restrictions on length of ownership and/or caps on checkout numbers. Publisher restrictions and platform operations may result in automatic weeding of titles without staff involvement.

Content on some digital platforms, such as Kanopy, Comics Plus, and CloudLibrary are not under the control of Kennebunk Free Library staff. Neither the ability to select or remove titles from these platforms is available to staff.

**Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials, Exhibits, or Artwork
at Kennebunk Free Library**

Request for Reconsideration Initiated

By: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Requestor Represents: _____ Self or _____ Group/Organization (list below)

Name of Group: _____

Title of Work/Exhibit: _____

Author/Creator: _____

Publisher (if applicable): _____

Date of Publication/Exhibition: _____

1. To what do you object? Please be specific, cite page numbers, details, quotations. You may use the back of this page if needed.

2. What do you feel might be the result of access to or viewing of this work/exhibit?

3. What would you like the Library to do with this work/exhibit?

4. Did you find anything good about this work/exhibit? If so, what?

5. Did you read, view, or listen to the entire work/exhibit?

6. Have you read or are you aware of reviews of this work/exhibit?

7. What do you believe is the intent or purpose of the creator of this work/exhibit?

8. In its place, what item of equal quality would you recommend that would convey an appropriate perspective on this topic?

Signature

Date

Additional space for answers:

ALA 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.

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.

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