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## **POLICY**

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### **COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT**

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#### **I. MISSION STATEMENT OF THE MIFFLIN COMMUNITY LIBRARY**

The mission of the Mifflin Community Library is to create and promote free and equal access to knowledge for our community through dynamic media, technology and programming in a safe, welcoming environment.

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#### **II. GENERAL SELECTION POLICY**

Mifflin Community Library is a free library serving Cumru Township and the Boroughs of Kenhorst, Mohnton, and Shillington (the Mifflin Community). The library selects materials in accordance with guidelines stated by the American Library Association in its *Library Bill of Rights*, *Freedom to Read* and *Freedom to View* statements.

- A. Authority for selection of materials is delegated by the Library Board to the Library Director and the professional staff.
- B. The selection of materials is characterized by flexibility, open-mindedness and responsiveness to the changing needs of the citizens of the library's service area.

A work will not be excluded from the library's collection solely because it represents a particular aspect of life, because of frankness of expression, or because it is controversial. All acquisitions, whether

purchased or donated, are evaluated by the following standards. Clearly, however, an item need not meet all of the criteria to be acceptable, nor will any single criterion be decisive.

Neither the order of the general criteria nor the order of items in a list of specific criteria indicates relative importance.

A. The following general criteria are used:

1. Present and potential relevance to community needs
2. Suitability of subject, style and reading level for the intended audience
3. Importance as a document of the times
4. Reputation and/or significance of author, publisher or producer. (Self-published items will be purchased **only** if they have received a positive review in a reputable review journal or publication and if they are available in a format that is appropriate for public library use (i.e., picture books must be available in hardcover format. Exceptions may be made for local history publications only).
5. Positive review in one or more appropriate professional journals
6. Positive critics' and staff members' reviews
7. Relationships to existing materials in the collection
8. Within limits of budgets for materials
9. Not available, or with limited accessibility, from other lending sources
10. Insufficient materials available on the same subject
11. Author or illustrator is local
12. Format is appropriate to Library use and is not easily damaged
13. Enhances a specific collection within the Library
14. Author or producer is already represented in the collection
15. Literary and artistic merit
16. Accuracy of content
17. Popularity with library patrons

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### III. SPECIFIC SELECTION POLICIES BY COLLECTION

In addition to the general criteria listed in Section II.D, each of the Library's special collections also employs its particular criteria to select appropriate materials.

#### A. REFERENCE COLLECTION

##### 1. PURPOSE

To select and maintain a reference collection that meets the needs of Mifflin Community Library users. Reference materials do not circulate.

##### 2. SPECIFIC CRITERIA

- a. Materials that provide facts and information in demand or are of potential use by those to be served by the Library or by staff.
- b. Materials which can be updated should be current, whenever possible.
- c. Materials should not duplicate items already held or available gratis on existing electronic sources unless the new item is more timely, easier to use and/or more comprehensive.

- d. Materials should complement existing materials.
  - e. Academic and/or technical level should be within the range of users and staff.
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## B. PERIODICALS COLLECTION

### 1. PURPOSE

To supplement and complement the materials in the Library. This collection is intended to be more timely and more frequently updated than other collections. Most materials circulate; exceptions include the most recent issues of all newspapers and the most recent issues of all magazines. E-magazines are also available through the Berks County Public Libraries consortium.

### 2. SPECIFIC CRITERIA

- a. Offers ease of information retrieval, such as, but not limited to, inclusion in a standard print or online periodical index or abstracting resource
  - b. Contributes to a balance and range of information
  - c. Provides lasting value
  - d. Has high quality of writing and/or design
  - e. Is within both budget and space constraints for the collection
  - f. Back issues of titles are maintained for a period of time determined by the Library Director.
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## C. LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION

### 1. PURPOSE

To collect, protect and make available for research, materials relating to the history of the Mifflin Community and Berks County.

### 2. SPECIFIC CRITERIA

- a. May include appropriate books, photographs, manuscripts, maps, microforms, oral history tapes, dated newspaper clippings, scrapbooks, Governor Mifflin High School yearbooks, pamphlets, monographs and serials.
- b. Relates to the Mifflin Community and Berks County—materials pertaining to history of other geographical areas ordinarily are neither sought nor accepted.
- c. Includes materials in any language.

### 3. EXCLUSIONS

The Local History Collection does not accept restricted collections or duplicates of materials in our holdings; undated and unidentified photographs of people; newspapers available on microforms; or books by Mifflin Community authors that are outside the scope of this collection policy.

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## D. ADULT COLLECTION

### PURPOSE

To provide the community with current information on subjects of topical as well as continuing interest; differing points of view on contemporary and controversial issues; historically significant

points of view; materials for instruction in areas of interest; and materials for entertainment and recreation. Areas of specific emphasis include current popular fiction, career guidance, health information for personal health choices, and financial investment, retirement and estate planning information. E-books are also available through our district library center, Reading Public Library.

#### E. LARGE PRINT COLLECTION

##### PURPOSE

To provide special materials in large print format, specifically pertaining to populations with special needs, such as the elderly and visually-challenged.

All materials are treated as part of the adult circulating collection, and may be circulated to homebound residents and long-term care facilities upon request.

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#### F. MEDIA COLLECTION

##### 1. PURPOSE

To help meet information needs of Mifflin Community citizens by providing access to, and assistance in locating, information and materials in non-print formats such as DVDs, compact discs, playaways (MP3 players), ebooks, and other information resources and technologies that may emerge.

##### 2. SPECIFIC CRITERIA

###### a. DVDs

- (1) Has won or been nominated for an appropriate award such as an Academy Award
- (2) Is significant in film history
- (3) Cast or director is particularly important
- (4) Is suitable for an intended audience--for entertainment or self-improvement

###### b. Compact discs (Music)

- (1) Has won an appropriate award, such as a Grammy Award
- (2) Is suitable for an intended audience--for entertainment or self-improvement

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#### G. CHILDREN'S COLLECTION

##### PURPOSE

To provide materials in various formats to meet the needs of children for recreation, information and personal learning, as well as to supplement their formal education.

This collection is primarily a circulating collection, except for the newest editions of encyclopedias, some dictionaries and other general reference works. Earlier editions of such materials do circulate whenever updates become available. Sturdily bound materials are preferred over paperback ones.

Programs such as Storytimes and Summer Reading will be offered to supplement and to enhance use of the collection.

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#### H. YOUNG ADULT COLLECTION

## PURPOSE

To provide materials in various formats to meet the needs of teens for recreation, information and personal learning, as well as to supplement their formal education.

This collection is primarily a circulating collection.

Programs will be offered to supplement and to enhance use of the collection.

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## IV. GIFTS

All gifts are subject to evaluation by the general and specific criteria listed in the policy for the relevant collections. Donors are informed that any gifts to the library may or may not be added to the collection. Any item which is not added may be donated to another institution where it might be used, or it may be sold in the library book sale. Monies from such sales are used to benefit Mifflin Community Library services and programs. The Library does not accept restricted collections or duplicates of materials in our holdings. Acceptable items should be clean and devoid of waterspots, stains, mold, mildew, markings, mutilations, odors, bug infestations, yellowed, torn or missing pages, and damaged bindings. (See Appendix I)

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## V. COLLECTION MAINTENANCE

As materials become worn, dated, damaged or lost, replacement will be determined by the appropriate staff members, who will determine whether or not:

- A. The item is still available and can be replaced.
  - B. Another item or format might better serve the same purpose.
  - C. There remains sufficient need to replace that item.
  - D. Updated, newer or revised materials better replace a given item.
  - E. The item has historical value.
  - F. The item is available locally on Interlibrary Loan.
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## VI. REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

The Mifflin Community Library staff and Board Members support intellectual freedom and subscribe to the principles of the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights* and its statements *Freedom to Read* and *Freedom to View*. The library staff apply the selection criteria described in this Collection Development Policy and thus endeavor to provide books and other materials that reflect the diversity of viewpoints within the community.

Library patrons may nominate books or other materials to be either added to or removed from the collection. When a request for reconsideration is made by a patron, this procedure is followed:

- A. A member of the library staff explains the selection policy to the patron. If the patron wishes s/he may then submit a written "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" to the Library Director.

- B. The completed form is reviewed by the Library Director who objectively reviews the resource in question to ascertain that the selection criteria and principles stated in Section I – V were applied in the selection process and then makes a written response to the requester within 14 days of the date that the reconsideration form was submitted. The Library Director shall also notify the Library Board President of each "Request for Reconsideration" submitted.
- C. If the requester is not satisfied with the decision of the Library Director, s/he may appeal in writing to the Library Board President, who then convenes a Reconsideration Committee. This committee will consist of:
  - 1. Two members of the Library Board
  - 2. The Library Board President
- D. In reviewing the "Request for Reconsideration," the Reconsideration Committee employs the selection criteria (described above in this document) and considers other appropriate information, including professional reviews and recommendations, comments from the library staff, and comments from the requester. Library resources are not removed from the collections during the review period. Copies of the materials in question may be checked out as evaluation copies for use of the Reconsideration Committee, appropriate staff or the Library Director.
- E. Within 30 days the Reconsideration Committee will recommend an action to the Library Director, who will reach a decision and inform the requester and the committee in writing of that decision.
- F. Should the requester wish to appeal this decision, s/he may make a final appeal in writing directly to the Library Board, which will issue a final decision in writing within 30 days to the requestor.

#### APPENDICES

- 1. MCL Guidelines for Donations of Resource Materials
- 2. *Library Bill of Rights*
- 3. *Freedom to Read Statement*
- 4. *Freedom to View Statement*
- 5. Request for Reconsideration Form

*Reviewed and approved by the Mifflin Community Library Board of Directors on January 25, 2023.*

# GUIDELINES FOR DONATION OF RESOURCE MATERIALS

## Mifflin Community Library

- All gifts are subject to evaluation by criteria outlined in our Collection Development policy and may or may not be added to the library collection.
- Items not added will be either sold on the in-library book sale shelf, at the annual (November) Friends of MCL Book Sale or donated to Friends of Berks County Libraries for their book sale (Book Bonanza).
- The Library does not accept restricted-use items or collections.

### ITEMS ACCEPTED AT MIFFLIN COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Due to storage and shelf space constraints, only items that meet the following criteria will be accepted at the Library. (Collection criteria and collection dates for the annual Friends of MCL book sale will be announced separately.)

#### **IMPORTANT!**

**CONDITION IS THE PRIMARY FACTOR. ANY ITEMS DONATED MUST BE IN PRISTINE CONDITION (IE, NO HIGHLIGHTING OR PERSONAL NOTES, MUSTINESS, YELLOWED PAGES, TORN COVERS OR PAGES, ETC.). EXCEPTIONS TO THE DATES LISTED BELOW WILL BE MADE FOR LOCAL HISTORY ITEMS AND CLASSICS.**

#### **BOOKS**

**Adult Fiction (hardcover or paperbacks)** - published within the past 3 years only  
(No Reader's Digest Condensed Books please!)

**Adult Non-Fiction/Biographies (hardcover only)** - published within the past 5 years only

**Large Print Books (hardcover only)** - published within the past 3 years only

**Children's Picture Books & Easy Readers (hardcover only)** - no date restriction

**Juvenile or Young Adult Fiction & Non-Fiction (hardcover or paperbacks)** -  
published within the past 5 years only

#### **AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS**

**No videotapes or books-on-cassette will be accepted.**

**DVD's** - children's or family movies or how-to instructional DVDs in their original, pristine cases (no home-recorded copies please!)

**Books-on-CD or Playaways** - adult or children's published within the past 5 years only

**Musical CD's** - adult or children's popular or classical artists of general interest

**Magazines** - check with the librarian about individual titles (storage space is an issue)

## Appendix 2

### Library Bill of Rights

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/>

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.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.



## Appendix 3

### The Freedom to Read Statement

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/statementspols/freedomreadstatement>

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.

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

*A Joint Statement by:*

American Library Association  
Association of American Publishers

## Appendix 4

### Freedom to View Statement

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/statementspols/freedomviewstatement>

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 guarantee 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 January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council**



REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

Book  Periodical  Recording  Video  Other

For what age group do you feel this item was produced?

What would you like the Mifflin Community Library to do about this item?

Re-evaluate its inclusion in the collection

Other:

What parts of the item did you read/hear/view (please be specific):

To what in the work do you object?

Language  General tone  Attitude of author

Historical/factual/scientific distortion  Other  Specific passages (please list):

Other comments (attach additional sheets if necessary):

Request initiated by \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return to Mifflin Community Library, Attention: Library Director, at the above address.*