

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

RUTLAND FREE LIBRARY

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PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The Collection Development Policy governs the selection and maintenance of the collection for Rutland Free Library. The purpose of the policy is:

- To describe criteria for selection and deselection of library materials
- To transparently describe the library collection and how it is managed
- To establish a framework for continuous evaluation and improvement of the collection

BACKGROUND AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

The library's collection is the body of materials selected for, managed and/or made accessible by library staff for library patrons. Materials are purchased in the most appropriate format(s) for library use. New formats are considered for the collections when need and interest from the community has been established, budget support is available, and the format can be successfully adapted for library circulation or use considering such factors as space, logistics, and staff time and skills.

Library users will have access to a library collection that meets widely separate and diverse interests, backgrounds, cultural heritages, social values, and needs. The library recognizes that the library is a community resource for people of all ages, genders, races, creeds, national origins, sexual orientations, and political or social views. It is a physical and virtual

community center where ideas and information are freely exchanged. A variety of viewpoints is represented in the library collection and the library upholds the right of the individual to obtain information, though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others. The existence of a particular viewpoint in the collection is an expression of the library's commitment to intellectual freedom and not an endorsement of the particular point of view.

The Board of Trustees has adopted and regularly reviews the following American Library Association policies relating to intellectual freedom:

-Library Bill of Rights (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>)

-Freedom to Read Statement

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

-Freedom to View Statement

(<http://www.ala.org/vrt/professionalresources/vrtresources/freedomtoview>)

SELECTION CRITERIA

Final authority for the collection rests with the director, who operates within the framework of policies set by the Rutland Free Library Board of Trustees. Selection of library materials is the job of professional librarians qualified by reason of education and training. Criteria used include but are not limited to the following:

- Support for the library's mission and roles
- Content of the work and its significance or contribution to the diversity or breadth of the collection
- Evaluation of the work in professionally recognized critical review sources
- Authority, significance, reputation, and qualifications of the author, creator, producer, or publisher of the work
- Accuracy, timeliness, and effectiveness of the material
- Expressed and/or perceived interest or demand for the material in the collection based on requests or other data
- Local interest or community relevance in subject or author
- Writing style (easy to read, scholarly, etc.)
- Geographic coverage
- Effectiveness and suitability of the format or physical form for public library use
- Price
- Limits of space
- Ease of use
- Literary merit, artistic quality, originality, and creativity
- Contemporary significance and/or long-term value

An item need not meet all criteria in order to be selected.

Online collections are regularly managed by the vendors, consortia, and the Vermont Department of Libraries, and those decisions are out of the library's control.

The following review media, among others, are consulted in the selection of materials:

- *Booklist*
- *Publishers Weekly*
- *Library Journal*
- *School Library Journal*
- *New York Times Book Review*
- *Kirkus Reviews*

The nature of the media and the technical quality of production are additional factors to be considered in selecting audio, video, electronic, and other nonpaper formats.

Self-published materials are generally not selected unless they meet the same criteria as other materials purchased for the collection, have received positive professional reviews, or are in particularly high demand. In general, a self-published item is more likely to be added if it:

- features local connections, has relevance to the greater collection, and/or has wide audience appeal
- has received a positive review in one or more library review journals or Vermont media
- is available for purchase through an established distributor, and cataloging records are available

An emphasis is placed on developing popular subject areas with materials to support the informational, recreational, and educational needs of library patrons. The library recognizes that people communicate and learn in different ways.

Fiction is acquired to respond to the recreational reading, listening, and viewing interests of a public with differing tastes, interests, and reading skills.

Nonfiction material is acquired on a wide range of subjects with a variety of perspectives. Nonfiction materials assist library users in their formal and informal lifelong learning.

All materials are selected for the collection on the merits of a particular work in relationship to the needs, interests, and demands of the community and follows the principles of intellectual freedom and equal access for all.

The value of each item is considered in its entirety and within the context of the collection, not on specific passages.

DESELECTION (WEEDING) CRITERIA

Items may be removed or replaced. The collection undergoes systematic weeding and withdrawal in an attempt to keep the collection relevant and accurate. To maintain attractive, active, current, and useful collections, librarians will examine materials to assess their relevance to the whole collection, the public, and their adherence to this policy. Items are regularly removed due to age and poor physical condition; other reasons include no longer meeting the Selection Criteria listed above. Evaluation techniques are used to measure collection usefulness in terms of scope and depth, as well as strengths and weaknesses. Materials withdrawn from the collection may be sold in the Friends of the Library book sales.

Criteria used in evaluating whether an item or collection should be removed from the collection may include:

- Accuracy
- Duplication
- Current or potential use
- Obsolescence
- Physical condition
- Completeness (sets)
- Physical shelf space available
- Age and condition of item
- Comparison of the collection with accepted core collection lists
- Relevance to observed and anticipated community needs and desires
- Long-term or historical significance or interest
- Its format or method of use is discovered to pose a physical threat to users health and/or safety (ie- shared, frequently handled newspapers during a contagious disease outbreak.)

CONSORTIA

The Rutland Free Library belongs to consortia in order to increase resources and/or benefit from a vendor discount or group purchase. For example, ebooks and downloadable audio are available to Rutland Free Library patrons through The Palace Project and Listen Up! Vermont. This policy only covers materials selected by the Rutland Free Library and not materials selected by the consortia to which the library belongs.

AREAS OF THE COLLECTION

Reference Materials

Reference materials respond to the information needs of all ages. Reference materials may include print material, maps, and electronic resources. These print reference materials are currently for use in the library only.

Vermont Room [see separate policy]

The Vermont Room Collection is a non-circulating collection of historical and genealogical materials pertaining to the state of Vermont, its history, geography, industries, transportation, arts, crafts, culture, customs, and people. Emphasis in all of our acquisitions is placed on Rutland City and county as well as southern Vermont.

This policy works with the overall Collection Development policy. In areas not covered by this policy, please refer to the larger policy as the governing document.

Periodicals

Periodicals are selected and evaluated annually to provide materials on current issues and for general reading. The library selects newspapers of local, state, and national interest, depending on the place of publication, the breadth of coverage, and the degree of fulfillment of reference or recreational needs. Newspapers representing special groups, such as associations, religious, philosophical and political groups or organizations, may be added sparingly, taking into consideration public demand and collection balance.

Young Adult

As with the general collection, materials are not marked or labeled to show judgments as to the suitability of the content. The library makes its collections available to all. The responsibility for the reading of minor teens rests with their parents or legal guardians.

The young adult collection is intended primarily to serve Rutland area youths from seventh through twelfth grades, as well as their parents/caregivers, and teachers.

Children's

The children's library offers developmentally appropriate materials that meet the informational and recreational needs of children ages birth through twelve.

Children's materials are selected to encourage a child's joy in being read to and to encourage a child's joy of reading. Materials support recreational reading, encourage reading skills, supplement educational needs, lead to appreciation of literature and reflect diversity.

Some materials in the children's collection might not be considered appropriate by all adults for all children. While some books are too mature for one child, other children may be ready for them. Only each child and their parent or caregiver can decide what material is suitable for that child to read.

Local Creators Shelf

The library may display donated materials with a strong Vermont connection: Works by Vermont creators, or about Vermont or Vermonters shall be considered. Items in the local creators section will not duplicate items in the permanent/curated collection.

The Local Creators Shelf is specifically for materials that are not selected for the general collection. The materials on the Local Creators Shelf may not be required to meet selection criteria as outlined elsewhere in this collection policy, and therefore would not be part of the main curated collection. By its nature, the Local Creators shelf is transitory and items may not be held for an extended period.

Donated / self-published works will be considered for the Local Creators Shelf, but not all donations need be accepted for placement. In general, unpublished documents will not be considered. The library may choose to not fully catalog the materials. Beyond any exceptions noted in this paragraph, items are still subject to the library's overall policies on donations, review, and weeding. Responsibility for this display lies solely with the director.

“Local” may be defined as:

- Born in Rutland, Rutland County, or Vermont
- Grew up in the area
- Currently live in the area
- Majority of writing years lived in the area
- Long-term volunteer to library or community
- Educated in Vermont
- Work in Vermont
- Professor at a Vermont college

All items donated for the Local Creators Shelf become property of the library to dispose of as it sees fit, according to our Gifts and Donations policy, below.

INTERLIBRARY LOANS AND REQUESTS FOR PURCHASE

Rutland Free Library is committed to providing access to the widest array of information while reducing unnecessary duplication of materials and collections. Consortium and interlibrary loans are an adjunct to, not a substitute for, collection development. The library currently does not support interlibrary loan requests for media items.

GIFTS AND DONATIONS

All books and other items given as gifts for the collection will be received with the understanding that they are accepted subject to the approval of librarians, using the same criteria used for purchased materials. Materials not of use in the library collection may be disposed of as the library sees fit. The library does not appraise donated books or other gifts.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS

The Rutland Free Library Board of Trustees recognizes the right of individuals to question the inclusion of materials in the library collection. ***For a formal review, individuals must complete the form below.*** Please note the library may not have direct control over the inclusion or exclusion of specific titles within shared and digital collections. Additionally, according to Vermont Act 150, Rutland Free Library's material selection and deselection processes must comply with the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and state laws prohibiting discrimination in places of public accommodation.

Procedure for the Reconsideration of Library Materials:

- An individual (Library User) with a concern about the inclusion of an item in the library's collection is required to discuss their concern with the Library Director.
- If speaking with the Director does not resolve the concern, a Library User may initiate a formal request that an item be removed from the library collection or relocated within the library collection by completing a Request for Item Reconsideration form and submitting to the Director.
- The item in question may remain in circulation during the review process.
- The library will review only one request for reconsideration of materials at a time and will do so in the order in which the requests are received.
- The Director will notify the Library User that their Request for Reconsideration form has been received and will inform the Library User when they anticipate processing the form.
- The Director or delegate will review the Request for Reconsideration form and the material in question. They will review the item and evaluate whether the selection of the item conforms with the library's Collection Development Policy and Materials Selection criteria. Where possible, the librarian who purchased the item will not be the one to review the item.
- The Director will notify the Library User of the library's decision regarding the request within 30 library business days of the beginning of the review process, stating the reasons for the decision to the Library User who submitted the request.
- If the Library User is not satisfied with the decision, they may submit a written appeal to the Director of the library within 10 library business days of receipt of the decision letter. The Director will bring the request for appeal to the Board.

- The Board President will notify the Library User if their appeal will be heard or not, and when. A granted appeal will be heard either by the Board or a delegate Board subcommittee.
- The decision of the Board is final and will be provided to the Library User in writing. Once an appeal has been considered by the Board, the item will not be reconsidered for three years from the date of decision.

RUTLAND FREE LIBRARY

REQUEST FOR ITEM RECONSIDERATION

ITEM:

Title:

Author:

Publisher:

Format (Book, DVD, audiobook, digital, etc.):

Where in the library is the material located now?

Material's library barcode number: 35701_____

REQUEST INITIATED BY:

Name:

Address:

Telephone:_____Email:_____

QUESTIONS:

1. Did you read, listen to, or view the entire work?_____ If not, what parts did you examine?

2. What concerns you in this work? (Please be specific; cite pages or location.)

3. What do you feel might be the result of reading, listening to, or viewing this?

4. What do you believe is the theme of this work?

5. Are you aware of the judgments of this work by literary/cinematic critics?

6. What would you like the library to do regarding this work?

___ Remove the material from the collection entirely

___ Relocate the material to another area of the collection, specifically:_____

___ Other:_____

7. Do you have a suggestion for a title of an alternative selection for the information contained in the material?

Signature_____ Date_____

REVIEW

The Collection Development Policy will be reviewed and updated as needed by the librarians, the director, and the library board. Policies are reviewed every three years at a minimum.

revised 4/20/15

Revised 9/2020

Revised 2/22/24

Request for Reconsideration of Materials rev 5/2025