

NorthNet Library System Library-to-Go Collection Development Policy

May 2022 (Adopted: June 15, 2022 by NLS Administrative Council)

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I. Mission & Vision

The purpose of NorthNet Library System (NLS) is to improve the services of its constituent member libraries by maintaining existing California Library Services Act (CLSA) programs, leading research and development efforts to ensure that libraries are best positioned to respond to demographic, economic, and cultural changes through innovative and collaborative approaches to programming and services and the enhancement of collective resource building and sharing.

The NorthNet Library System's Library-to-Go collection was created and is intended to provide residents of the participating member libraries with shared access to a collection of electronically published materials in a wide range of subjects and formats. It is primarily funded with CLSA funds directed by participating member libraries to this collection, which is currently structured to support OverDrive-provided access to eBooks, eAudiobooks, eVideo and eMagazines.

II. Purpose

This policy acts as a guide for selectors in order to ensure comparability of collection depth and breadth between collection areas and similarity of selection criteria among selectors within the centralized collection management framework. This policy intends to assist selectors in building collections that are responsive to the community's informational and recreational reading needs, while still meeting the mission and goals of both NLS and public libraries.

This policy also informs the public of the principles upon which collection development and management decisions are based. This policy describes the role of selection and management in the mission of the NLS to serve a broad range of library users that reside across most of Northern California in the member jurisdictions of the NLS. It defines the scope of the collection, provides a plan for continual and strategic development, and identifies strengths in

the collection. It connects selection decisions and collection management to intellectual freedom principles.

III. Collection Development

A. Collection Responsibilities

The NLS Library-to-Go Committee is comprised of consistently active members from each NLS library participating in the Library-to-Go collection. Each library system director nominates their respective selectors who commit to both selection and monthly meetings.

The committee chair/co-chairs are approved by the NLS Executive Committee and adopted by the NLS Administrative Council. This position shall be for a two-year term, and may be renewed for an additional two years. The chair will ensure continuity of service and efficient program facilitation. The chair will monitor expenditures of the selection committee, ensure materials are ordered according to established timelines and procedures, prepare and distribute statistical reports to the consortium and serve as a central contact between committee members, the NLS, and OverDrive.

The NLS Executive Committee and Administrative Council set the direction of all of the consortia priorities and budgets.

B. Scope of Collection

The NLS Library-to-Go Collection is funded by its member library systems, primarily via CLSA funds. Member libraries have access to the digital collaborative collection and as such, their local library card holders have access to the shared collection as authorized users. The community served by this collection is incredibly diverse; the collection must reflect the needs, interests, and viewpoints of this large community in its entirety, taking into consideration access needs in a digital environment.

The collection is board, current, and popular. This collection is not concerned with being completely comprehensive and some subject areas are collected in greater depth than others, as a reflection of current use and demand. The Library-to-Go collection aims for a balance of popular materials and those in line with the institutional goals of public libraries. The materials chosen support general interest in a broad range of categories. This collection is intended to serve the general patron instead of the researcher. Titles selected reflect contemporary significance instead of long-term enduring value. No material that meets the Consortia's selection criteria shall be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of the author or those contributing to its creation. Not all materials may be suitable for all members of the community. Not all materials may be suitable for all audiences.

A variety of reading and comprehension levels are also represented in the collection, based on community need. Materials are collected in English and Spanish; languages other than these will be added as determined by community need and title availability.

C. Selection Criteria

The following criteria are taken into consideration when selectors are choosing materials. An item need not meet all of the criteria to be selected.

- Identified, expressed, or anticipated need in the general community
- Availability of titles from vendors
- Contemporary significance or popular interest
- Attention of critics and reviewers
- Prominence, authority, significance, and/or competence of author or creator
- Timeliness and accuracy of material including new editions of existing materials
- Relation to existing collections, such as titles in a series
- Statement of challenging, original, or alternative point of view
- Authenticity of historical, regional, or social setting

Public demand for an author, title or subject is an important criterion. All requests from patrons for specific authors, titles or subjects will be considered.

Title availability is another important consideration. Given the volatile world of digital rights and publishers, it is important to note that although titles may be available for purchase to consumers from various outlets, they may not be available to NLS patrons because certain major publishers do not allow public libraries to purchase digital editions of titles, and/or place embargoes on new titles for a designated time period.

In addition to content and availability criteria for selection, given the digital nature of this collection, selectors must also take into consideration format factors. The following criteria will be considered.

- Affordability
- Appropriateness of format
- Illustration rendering in books for youth or in graphic novels
- Narrator's qualifications for audio books
- Stability of content
- Titles with simultaneous use rights

D. Selection Guidelines

Currently the collection is comprised of eBooks, eAudiobooks, Video and eMagazines. Materials are selected to support a variety of computer systems and e-reader hardware in multiple prevailing formats in order to serve the differing needs of individual users.

Selectors will be instructed to select materials in all genre and format areas each month, as titles are available with an emphasis on popular demand. Each month purchases will include new materials, patron requests and multiple copies of items on hold, and management of metered access items. Monthly materials will include adult, young adult, and children's content. Materials are selected in English and Spanish and other relevant language editions as they are available.

Each year a budget will be allocated for simultaneous use packages and other special collections to be purchased.

Spending within these areas may be modified as needed to account for the availability of content and any changing needs of the consortium. The budget will be reviewed and adjusted as the availability of funds change.

It is the goal of the committee to keep the holds ratio under 10. This ratio may change as budget and size of consortium membership changes.

Current lending policies allow for 10 checkouts and 5 holds per library card.

E. Patron Recommended Materials

Input from patrons is highly valued and therefore patrons are able to recommend for purchase within the OverDrive platform. It is important to note that due to the very large population this collection serves, the recommendation process is limited by a monthly monetary limit. In addition, titles must fit the criteria for selection described in this policy and must be of interest to a larger audience. The decision to add or not add patron recommended titles is at the discretion of the Library-to-Go selection committee members and is not open to appeal.

F. Gift Policy

Given technical and licensing limitations as they stand today, the NLS is unable to accept gifts of personally purchased eBooks. NLS is unable to accept donated money for digital books or collections and refers all donations to the local library system.

G. Weeding

Although a digital collection does not have the same space constraints of a physical collection, weeding is necessary to upgrade the collection in terms of relevancy, usefulness, patron ease of searching and circulation statistics. The Library-to-Go committee will be responsible for facilitating the review of the digital collection on a regular basis and determine which titles warrant being weeded. In addition, titles may be pulled from the Library-to-Go collection at any time by publishers without prior notice or titles may not be available for re-purchase.

H. Advantage Collections

Public library systems within the NLS have the option to establish collections of materials that are only accessible by their patrons. Libraries with Advantage Collections are encouraged to, but are not required to share additional purchased content with the consortium. Advantage Collections shared by member libraries follow local rather than consortium selection criteria and guidelines. Shared content is available to other consortium members, but hold priorities are granted to the purchasing institution's patron base. All libraries choosing to spend beyond their annual content fees with either Advantage or Advantage Plus accounts are responsible for their own ordering, and will be invoiced directly by OverDrive.

IV. Intellectual Freedom

The NLS aims to provide a collection with information spanning a broad spectrum of opinions. The NLS directs patrons to the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights (Appendix B), Freedom to Read (Appendix C), and Freedom to View (Appendix D) statements. These principles guide the materials selection policies.

Selection decisions are based on the merit of works as they relate to the mission and goals of the NLS and its partners. Titles are selected to meet expressed and anticipated needs of the greater Northern California community. Selectors are located all across the NLS region to ensure a fair and balanced collection. Variety and balance of opinion is sought in all collections. NLS recognizes that some materials may be controversial or offensive to an individual, but maintains that individuals can apply their values to only themselves. Parents have the responsibility and right to guide the values of their children. An opinion represented in the collection is an expression of the Consortium's commitment to intellectual freedom and not an endorsement of a point of view or opinion.

A. Request for Reconsideration Policy

Patrons wanting to communicate their concerns beyond their local library about materials in the NLS digital collection should be directed to a reconsideration form available as Appendix A below. Any requests will be directed to the NLS Library-to-Go Chair for discussion. A recommendation for action will be made by the NLS Chair to the NLS Executive Committee.

V. Review of Policy

The Library-to-Go Collection Development Policy of the NorthNet Library System will be reviewed on a regular basis. This policy was approved by the NLS Executive Committee on _____.

Appendix A: Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials - NorthNet Library System Library-to-Go Collection.

If you have found materials or library resources about which you have concerns, please discuss with the local branch staff to understand its relevance to the NLS Library-to-Go collection. If you would like to file a request for reconsideration of the item, please fill out the form below and mail to the address provided. The request will be considered by the Library-to-Go Committee Chair and NLS Executive Committee. A response will be delivered in writing to an individual's written request within four weeks. Any challenges will be recorded with the American Library Association's [Office for Intellectual Freedom](#) for tracking and statistical reporting purposes.

Prior to filling out this form, please read in its entirety the above NLS Library-to-Go Collection Development Policy and the following supporting documents it references: The American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, and Freedom to View.

Material for consideration

Title:

Author:

Indicate type of material: eBook, eAudiobook, Video, eMagazine

Publisher:

Date/Edition:

Did you read, view or listen to the entire work? All Part

Please describe your concerns regarding this material:

What specific pages or sections best illustrate your concerns?

How did this work come to your attention?

As an alternative, what work would you recommend that would best convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject?

Contact Information (Required for Response)

Name:

Address:

City:

Zip:

Phone:

Do you represent yourself or an organization? (If an organization, please indicate)

Please provide this completed form to your local library staff or email to the Library-To-Go Committee Chair at LibraryToGo@northnetlibs.org. (Local staff please scan completed form and email it to the same address.)

Appendix B: [ALA Library Bill of Rights](#)

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.

Although the Articles of the *Library Bill of Rights* are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as [Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights](#).

Appendix C: [Freedom to Read](#)

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, 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](#)

Subsequently endorsed by:

[American Booksellers for Free Expression](#)
[The Association of American University Presses](#)
[The Children's Book Council](#)
[Freedom to Read Foundation](#)
[National Association of College Stores](#)
[National Coalition Against Censorship](#)
[National Council of Teachers of English](#)

The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

Appendix D: [Freedom to View](#)

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 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