

Materials Selection Policy

Objective of selection

Within the limitations of space and budget, the library selects materials which meet the educational, informational, and recreational needs of the citizens of the community. It is an objective of the library to provide a resource where the individual can examine many points of view and make his or her own decisions. Materials selection attempts to provide items which will facilitate informal self-education of all the people in the community.

Responsibility of selection

The responsibility of selection lies with the staff and the library within their areas of responsibility. The ultimate responsibility for selection lies with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board.

General Criteria

1. Relevance to community interest
2. Current significance
3. Attention of critics, reviews and the general public
4. Number and nature of requests from public
5. Common sense
6. Reputability of author and publisher
7. Suitability of format for library use

It is impossible with limited staff to review each item which the library selects for addition to the collection. Therefore, selection of materials is accomplished primarily thru reviewing periodicals hands-on examination. Particular importance is given to reviews which are directed to the library market, such as *Library Journal*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Booklist*, *Horn Book*, *School Library Journal*, and other reviewing media. An item will also be purchased if there is sufficient patron interest and request for a title.

Materials with an emphasis on sex, or containing profane language should not be automatically excluded if the item presents a true-life situation which deals with characters and situations realistically presented. This library has a comprehensive reading public which it has an obligation to serve, the same as any other patron. "Best Seller" lists are constantly being referred to by many of our patrons so the library should strive to maintain at least one copy of best sellers, even though sometimes these books do not meet the selection standards set fourth in this policy. Responsibility of the reading habits of children rests with the parent or legal guardian; therefore, selection should not be inhibited by children. The library will not knowingly purchase material which has been declared illegal by the Courts of the Michigan or Country.

With regard to books dealing with sex education, the library will purchase books written for the adult, young adult, and child. The materials selected for these groups should have a minimum of two reviews backing up the librarian's selection. Recognized book lists such as *Best Books for Young Adults* and *Notable Children's Books* are also used for consideration. If possible, the librarian should personally review each title keeping in mind the needs of the community served. The letter designation (E, J or YA) on material does not limit its use. It is not intended to restrict readership to and age or interest group. Since the level of sophistication varies within each community, materials for the less mature and the poorer reader, as well as for the person already comfortable with adult materials should be provided. We support the American Library Association's assertion that:

The librarian who would restrict the access of minors to materials and services because of actual or suspected parental objection should bear in mind that he is not *in loco parentis* in his or her position as a librarian

The American Library Association holds that it is the parent -- and only the parent -- who may restrict his children -- and only his children -- from access to library materials and services. The parent who would rather his child did not have access to certain materials should so advise the child.²

Auxiliary collections

The paperback collection in the library is heavily used. Popular works are selected. The librarian must be familiar with the broad range of current adult, young adult, and juvenal titles.

Paperbacks are purchased most frequently through publisher's pre-selected lists. Most books are reprints of hardbound titles. However, a great many titles are paperback originals and not reviewed in almost all reviewing sources. Upon examination of the paperback titles, if an item is deemed unusable for the collection, it will be given to another library, sold in a book sale, or discarded.

The library has a responsibility to provide patrons with factual information about the religions of the world. Materials whose sole purpose is persuasive or solicitous for a religious group will not be selected. The library will attempt to have religious literature of an authentic historical and/or educational content. These books must meet the general criteria set fourth in this policy.

Summary

The library's aim is to present the community with a well balanced collection that meets the educational, informational, and recreational needs of the citizens of the community. This is done with careful consideration keeping in mind the selection of high quality, informative, and readable materials within the library's budget, space, and criteria set fourth in this policy.

Adopted November 1982 (revised September 2011)

² American Library Association. Office of Intellectual Freedom, Intellectual Freedom Manual (n.p.; American Library Association, 1974), pt. 1, pp. 14-15.

Request for Reconsideration of Library Material

If a patron finds any portion of the library's collection objectionable, he or she may file a formal request for reconsideration of the materials by completing a Request for Reconsideration of Library Material form, which can be requested at the circulation desk. A completed reconsideration form will be reviewed by two staff members and the director who will respond to the patron in written form describing the action the library will take in regard to the challenge. The Materials Selection Policy will act as the basis for the response. If a patron is not satisfied with the staff response, the request for reconsideration may be taken to the Board of Trustees. The Board will decide what course of action to take.