

MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

The purpose and objectives of the Columbus Public Library materials selection policy is to guide librarians and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made.

A policy cannot replace the judgment of librarians, but stating the intended policies will assist the staff at the Columbus Public Library in choosing from a vast array of available materials.

The Library sets as its major goals in materials selection: providing resources to fulfill our mission statement, the advancement of knowledge, the education and enlightenment of the people of the community, and the provision of recreational reading. The LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS as adopted by the American Library Association, is the foundation of our decision-making process.

RESPONSIBILITY OF MATERIAL SELECTION

Final responsibility for selection lies with the Library Director. The Library Director, however, may delegate selection duties to other staff members in their particular areas of responsibility.

USE OF THE LIBRARY'S MATERIAL

The Library recognizes that items may be viewed as controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection will not be made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to building a well-rounded collection and to serving the interest of library users.

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no catalogued book or other item will be sequestered, except for the express purpose of protecting it from vandalism or theft.

The use of rare and valued items may be controlled to the extent required to preserve them.

The responsibility for library usage by children rests with the parents and legal guardians. Selection will not be inhibited by the possibility that library resources may come into the possession of children.

GUIDELINES FOR SELECTION

All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the following standards. An item need not meet all of the criteria in order to be accepted. When judging the quality of materials several standards and combinations of standards may be used.

General Criteria:

- Suitability of physical form for library use
- Insight into human and social conditions
- Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
- Present and potential relevance to community needs
- Appropriateness and effectiveness of medium to content
- Importance as a document of the times

- Relation to existing collection and other material on the subject
- Reputation and/or significance of author
- Attention given by critic, reviewers and public

Specific Criteria for the evaluation of works of information and opinion:

- Authority
- Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment
- Clarity, accuracy, and logic of presentation
- Statement of challenging or original point of view

Specific Criteria for the evaluation of works of imagination:

- Representation of important movement (literary or social), genre, trend, or
- National culture
- Vitality and originality
- Artistic presentation and experimentation
- Sustained interest
- Effective characterization
- Authenticity of historical, regional, or social setting

Items having widespread demand may or may not meet the general and specific criteria contained in this policy. However, demand is a valid factor in selection, and it shall be considered an important factor.

The collection should contain the various positions expressed on important, complicated, or controversial questions, including unpopular or unorthodox positions. The public library does not promote particular beliefs or views. It provides a resource where the individuals can examine issues freely and make their own decisions.

GIFT BOOKS AND OTHER GIFT ITEMS

Gifts are accepted subject to the following limitations:

1. The Library retains unconditional ownership of the gift.
2. The Library makes the final decision of its own use or other disposition of the gift. Gift additions of books and other items must meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials.
3. The Library reserves the right to decide the conditions of display, housing, and access to the materials.

When requested, a book plate will be included in each gift to identify the donor and the purpose of the donation.

Gift items not included in the Library's collection will be entrusted to the Columbus Library Foundation and/or the Friends of the Library for disposition.

MAINTAINING THE COLLECTION

Any policy concerning the selection of library materials should consider collection maintenance.

Collection maintenance as it is used here includes:

- Keeping materials in an attractive and serviceable condition, including mending, recovering, and rebinding or replacing as needed, and retaining original covers and cover information wherever possible;
- Systematic checking of subject areas for outdated materials and for gaps in coverage, adding, replacing, or updating with newer editions as needed;
- Weeding the collection by withdrawing outdated, worn, and surplus materials, as well as withdrawing less essential materials to relieve overcrowding; and
- Complete or spot inventory to determine materials that are lost or missing.

Adopted by the Columbus Library Board on 8/11/1988; Revised 3/14/2013