

MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

Introduction

The purpose in building a collection is to make available to all people who enter the library as comprehensive an assemblage of recorded knowledge as possible within the limits of funds available and the needs of the community. A diverse collection is important. Each type of material must be considered in terms of its own excellence and the audience for whom it is intended. No single standard can be applied in all cases. Some materials may be judged primarily in terms of artistic merit, scholarship, or value to humanity; others are selected to satisfy the informational, recreational, or educational interests of the community.

The Galesburg Public Library endeavors to build a collection representing varying points of view. The choice of library materials by users is an individual matter. Responsibility for the reading materials of children and adolescents rests with their parents or legal guardians. While individuals may reject materials for themselves and for their children, they cannot exercise censorship to restrict access to the materials by others. Selection for the adult collection will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may inadvertently fall into the hands of children. An open shelf policy will be followed at all times. The library supports intellectual freedom and has adopted the following statements as policy: ALA Freedom to Read Statement, ALA Library Bill of Rights, and the "Freedom to View" statement of the American Film and Video Association.

I. Statement of Purpose

This selection policy defines the standards and outlines the responsibility for materials selection for the Galesburg Public Library. Within these guidelines, the librarians use their professional judgment to determine the materials that best meet the objectives of the library and the needs of its patrons.

II. Objectives in Materials Selections

The general objectives in materials selection are to carry out the library's goals of providing the community with a variety of significant media to meet their informational, educational, and recreational needs.

III. Responsibility for Selection

Overall responsibility for collection development rests with the Library Director who operates within this framework of policies determined by the Board of Library Trustees. Typically, the Library Director delegates or shares this responsibility with designated members of the staff. However, suggestions for materials to be purchased are always welcome from any library board member or library staff member, and patrons of all ages are encouraged to make suggestions for purchase to library staff.

All requests are given serious consideration. An attempt will be made to borrow from another Illinois library any requested item that is out of print, or that the library determines does not meet the criteria for purchase.

IV. Criteria for Selection

The general criteria considered in selecting materials include: 1) significance and permanent value to the existing collection, 2) qualifications of author or producer, 3) suitability of subject and style for intended audience, 4) quality of format, 5) currency or timeliness, if applicable, 6) demand by patrons, 7) price, 8) attention given to the item by reviewers and general news media, 9) availability of materials in other libraries, 10)

technical quality of non-book materials, and 11) local interest. In selection, consideration will be given to the work as a whole. No work shall be excluded because of specific passages or pieces taken out of context.

The number of copies purchased varies with the expected use of any item. As extensive use for individual titles is demonstrated, duplication to meet the demand is implemented.

V. Selection Tools

Because it is impossible for librarians to examine all items being considered for purchase, they depend on reliable selection aids. The librarians regularly depend on the reviews found in standard sources. Other selection aids, such as “Notable Book” lists chosen by the American Library Association, National Book Awards lists, Pulitzer Prize lists, and published lists of bestsellers may also be used as required. A variety of sources is used for non-print items.

VI. Deselection of Materials

In order to maintain a useful, vital, current and attractive collection which meets the needs of our community, examination of materials is an ongoing process. An item may be withdrawn from the circulating or reference collection by library staff for any of the following reasons:

- The item is obsolete, outdated, or inaccurate or contains information or illustrations that are outmoded or perpetuate sexual, racial, or cultural stereotypes.
- The item is physically worn or damaged beyond reasonable repair or cannot be rebound properly.
- The technical quality of the item is inferior, as when visuals are poor, faded, or off-color, or when sound reproductions are faulty or inferior.
- The item can be replaced at a lower cost than repair or rebinding.
- The item’s value to the collection has decreased as other comparable items have been added to the collection.
- The item is no longer being used with sufficient frequency to justify its space in the collection or the staff time to maintain.
- The item is one of duplicate copies of a title.

An item may be retained for many reasons, including:

- Potential future interest in the subject or title.
- The title is part of a series or a set of works by a popular or well-known author.
- The item has historical value or is of local interest.

- A. Withdrawn items may be sold with proceeds used to enhance services of the library, donated to educational or philanthropic organizations, or discarded or recycled.
- B. While the library attempts to have copies of standard and important works, it does not automatically replace all materials withdrawn. A work chosen for discard may be replaced with another copy of the same title or another work on the same subject, or may be discarded without replacement. An electronic equivalent may be considered. Factors considered in deciding whether to replace a discarded item include the number of duplicate copies; the existence of adequate coverage of the subject in the collection; demand for the specific title or subject area; and the availability of replacement

material.

VII. Scope of Collection

Through careful selection, the library strives to maintain a diverse collection of quality materials, including items of contemporary significance and permanent value, as well as a selection of materials concerning social issues and ephemeral items. Circulating materials are supplemented by reference materials for in-house use. Because the library serves a public embracing a wide range of ages, educational backgrounds, and reading skills, it will always seek to select materials of varying complexity.

VIII. Statement of Specific Policies in Selected Areas
Materials for Children and Youth

The Galesburg Public Library subscribes to the following policy: “Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*” (as adopted by the ALA Council, 2019. At the Galesburg Public Library, children and young people have access to all parts of the library; however, collections in the Children’s Department serve children and young people from birth through sixth grade along with their parents and caregivers.

Materials appropriate for the interests and needs of the ages served are chosen for these collections.

Collections in the Children’s Room include picture books, beginning readers, junior non-fiction, junior fiction, periodicals, and a wide range of non-book materials.

The Children’s Room also houses small collections of children’s books in French and Spanish, as well as a collection of books and audiovisual materials serving children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their caregivers.

Materials for Young Adults

The materials in the Young Adult section are targeted toward seventh through twelfth grade students to appeal to their popular reading, listening, viewing, and self-informative or self-developmental interests. Extra consideration is given to materials and media that have won awards for this age group.

The library staff member primarily responsible for the YA section has the responsibility of selecting both fiction and non-fiction materials for this age group. The YA materials selector also suggests graphic novels and non-print materials for purchase that may be of interest to, or have been requested by, this age group.

Materials for Adults

The materials in Adult Services are selected primarily to serve the needs of adults and high school students. The collection includes circulating fiction and nonfiction books, genealogy, archives, and reference.

A. Fiction

The fiction collection provides books for a wide range of interests of the general reading public, including classics, titles representing periods and styles of writing, current titles of a lasting nature, and those titles meeting popular demand for recreational reading.

B. Nonfiction

a. Business

The library purchases materials that are of interest to the general public.

b. Foreign Language Materials

Materials in other foreign languages are considered, as community needs dictate. Popular fiction and standard nonfiction works are purchased. Individual needs for foreign languages not purchased by the library may be served by requests through interlibrary loan.

c. Textbooks

Although the library tries to serve students' needs as much as possible, textbooks are not purchased unless they are the best source of information on a given subject. The library policy is to purchase materials that will also supplement and complement the curriculum offerings of the public and private schools within the library area.

d. Religion

The library purchases materials that are written on a general non-doctrinal level for the layman.

e. Law and Medicine

The library purchases medical and legal materials intended for the general reader. The library does not normally purchase materials intended specifically for the professional in these fields. While the library strives to provide up to date consumer health and legal information from reliable sources, the library does not dispense medical or legal advice.

f. Computers

The library purchases resources on computer software and hardware for beginners and experienced computer users. Materials cover widely used computer applications, not specialized ones, and outdated materials are removed.

C. Genealogy

The library maintains a small circulating collection of books on the basics of genealogical searching which are of value to the general public. The non-circulating collection is more extensive and consists primarily of indexes, bibliographies, and verification tools, and listings of sources for vital records in particular states and foreign countries. Histories of individual families are purchased only if they are of unusual national or local significance. This collection is provided by the Knox County Genealogical Society in cooperation with the Galesburg Public Library. Microfilm of the U.S. Census records as well as books and other special materials for this immediate geographical area are purchased by the Knox County Genealogical Society and the Galesburg Public Library, as they become available.

D. Archives

The authority and responsibility for the selection or acceptance of library materials for the archives is delegated to the library director and, under their discretion, to the archivist. The Galesburg Public Library Archives is grateful for donations of materials that pertain to local history and research. Materials from, about, or associated with the following areas are especially relevant and will be given primary consideration in rank order:

1. Galesburg
2. Knox County
3. Illinois

All donated items must be accompanied by a signed Deed of Gift and comply with the “Gifts to the Library” policy.

E. Graphic Novels and Manga

Graphic novels and manga in the Adult collection are selected to meet the interests of adult and teen readers ages 13 and up. Works are selected using standard review journals and patron input.

Non-Book Materials

The criteria for and the methods of selection of non-book materials are listed in Section IV. The acquisition of a variety of non-book materials is under constant evaluation and is subject to change. Cost of items, budget, use, and availability of new items are the determining factors in selection.

X. Complaints

Strong objection to any library materials must be made in writing according to “Procedures for Handling Complaints about Library Materials” provided at the end of this section. Examination and reconsideration of materials, if necessary, will be handled as outlined in these procedures. A copy of these procedures as well as forms for registering complaints may be obtained in the children’s room or from the adult circulation department.

XI. Revision of Selection Policy

Because the needs of the community change, this materials selection policy is reviewed and revised every two years or more often as needed.

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Revised 8-6-09, 6-7-12, 6-5-14,
4-7-16, 11-05-2020
Galesburg Public Library
Board of Trustees

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS ABOUT LIBRARY MATERIALS

1. If patrons wish to file a complaint about library materials, Form I, Complaint about Library Materials, should be completed. This form stays on file with the Department Supervisor. The Department Supervisor will examine the material, as well as critical reviews of the material. Repeated complaints about specific works or materials in general will generate a reconsideration of a specific work and/or selection policy.
2. If patrons wish to have materials reconsidered (as opposed to filing a complaint without definite action), they may fill out Form II, Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials.
3. When Form II is completely filled out and returned to the library, the Director and Department Supervisor will review the complaint and the material to determine whether the item should remain or be removed from the collection.
4. The Director will write a letter to the patron who initiated the complaint, outlining the above procedures and announcing the disposition of the material in question. The letter may also include a statement inviting the patron to the library to discuss the matter with the Department Supervisor and Library Director.
5. After an interview with the Department Supervisor and Library Director, a patron desiring further action can make a request in writing for a hearing before the Library Board of Trustees. Library Trustees have final authority regarding complaints.

FORM I

COMPLAINT ABOUT LIBRARY MATERIAL

Material: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Complaint Represents: _____ Individual _____ Organization

Reason for
Complaint: _____

Signature: _____

Took Form II: _____ Yes _____ No

Date Form II

Returned: _____

FORM II

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

Author: _____

Title: _____

Publisher or distributor _____

Request initiated by _____

Address: _____ Telephone: _____

City: _____ Zip code: _____

Request represents: Individual Organization (list name) _____

Other (list name) _____

1. Have you read or viewed the entire work? _____
If not, what parts have you read?

2. To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific; cite pages or sections.)

3. What good or valuable features do you find in the material?

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

5. What do you feel might be the result of reading or viewing this material?

FORM II

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS - PAGE 2

6. Have you read any reviews about this material? _____

If yes, please specify:

7. Do you think this material would be more appropriate for a different age group? Please explain:

8. What would you like the library to do about this material?

9. Can you recommend other material that would convey as valuable a picture and/or perspective of the subject treated? _____

If yes, please specify:

Date: _____

Signature _____