

Collection Development Policy

General Selection Statement

The Mark Skinner Library's collection development policy is guided by the principles of the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*

<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/statementsif/librarybillrights.htm>

and the *Freedom to Read Statement*.

<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/ftstatement/freedomreadstatement.htm>

The library will strive to develop and maintain a collection of the best and most useful materials available in view of the overall needs of the community and within the limits of the yearly budget. Materials representing as many opinions as possible will be selected in order to provide a balanced collection of varying viewpoints.

Responsibility for Selection

Ultimate responsibility for the library collection rests with the Board of Trustees.

However, collection development is a process guided through all its stages by the expertise and judgment of librarians. Therefore the Board of Trustees delegates to the Library Director and his/her designated staff the day-to-day responsibility for selection and deselection of library materials.

Selection Aides

Collection development decisions are made based on the expertise and judgment of librarians. Library staff consider review sources (such as, but not limited to *Library Journal*, *Booklist*, *Hornbook*, *New York Times Book Review*) standard lists (such as, but not limited to *Public Library Catalog*, *Fiction Catalog*, *Children's Book Catalog*), subject bibliographies and customer requests when selecting materials for the collection. Materials receiving unfavorable reviews may be selected if there is significant customer demand, if the material is of particular interest locally, or if the material fills a special unmet need in the collection.

Criteria for Selection

The library considers all acquisitions in terms of one or more of the following:

- High standards of quality in content and format
- Authority and accuracy of subject matter
- Reputation of the author, publisher, or illustrator
- Readability and popular appeal
- Timeliness or permanence
- Format, durability and ease of use
- Customer needs unmet by the existing collection

- Price and availability

No material will be rejected solely on the basis of the author's point-of-view, race or nationality. In keeping with the concept of a public library, the only technical books purchased will be those considered useful to the layman. The library will not purchase textbooks.

Gifts

Gifts of materials in good condition are gratefully accepted with the understanding that once donated the items become the property of the library. The library will not accept any item that is not an outright gift, or that carries stipulations about its use, placement or retention. A book in "good condition" has an intact cover, spine and pages, and does not contain any mold. The library will not accept outdated reference material, textbooks or Reader's Digest condensed books. Library staff will evaluate all donated items using the same selection criteria applied to purchased materials. If it is determined that the donated item does not meet the library's selection criteria, it may be given to another organization, given to the Friends of the Library for sale, recycled or discarded. The library reserves the right to decide when a gift added to the collection must be withdrawn.

If requested by the donor, library staff will supply a receipt noting the date, format and number of items donated. Staff will not provide an estimate of the value of the donated items.

Whenever the library receives a cash gift for the purchase of materials, the general nature or subject of the material to be purchased may be specified by the donor. However, the actual title will be selected by the library staff based on the selection criteria put forth in this policy.

Deselection (Weeding, or Re-evaluation) of Materials

Systematic evaluation of library materials is an essential part of collection development that helps to insure a relevant, accurate and useful collection. During the re-evaluation and review of a particular item it may become evident that the item no longer meets the library's needs. Such an item will be withdrawn from the collection. The general criteria for withdrawal of an item from the collection include:

- Outdated or incorrect information
- Availability of updated, newer or revised material
- Circulation or usage of the item
- Value of the item as a classic
- Condition of the item
- Duplication of the item in the collection

- Availability of newer items on the same subject in the collection

Deselection decisions will be based on accepted professional practice and the judgment of the library staff. When necessary, local specialists will be consulted to determine the continued relevance of the materials. Items withdrawn from the collection will be discarded, recycled, donated to another organization or transferred to the Friends of the Library for sale.

Reconsideration of Materials

In order to carry out its mission to provide information and opportunities for personal enrichment and enjoyment to all people in the community, the library will challenge any attempt to censor materials in its collection. A customer's choice of material for personal use is an individual matter. Responsibility for the use of library materials by children and adolescents rests solely with their parents or legal guardians. The library will not operate in loco parentis.

If a concern arises about a specific item in the collection, library staff will be available to discuss the concern and identify alternative materials that are available. If a customer's concern is not satisfied through discussion with staff, the customer will be given a copy of the library's collection development policy and will be asked to fill out a Request for Reconsideration of Materials Form, which will then be reviewed by the Library Director.

The Library Director will examine the material in question and assemble critical reviews of that material. Since it is the overall contribution of the work that is critical for acceptance or rejection, the Library Director will consider the merits of the entire item, not just specific passages or sections. The Library Director will then meet with the complainant who will be given the opportunity to explain his/her reason for requesting that the material be reconsidered. The Library Director will explain the library's collection development policy and provide justification for his/her decision to retain the material in the collection or remove it. If the outcome of the meeting does not satisfy the complainant, his/her request will then be taken to the Library Board of Trustees for review at the next scheduled Board meeting.

Approved by the Board of Trustees
July 5, 2005

Request for Reconsideration of Materials

Name _____
Date _____

Address _____
Phone _____

Title of item under
consideration _____

Author of item under
consideration _____

1. What brought this item to your attention?

2. What are your concerns about this item? Please be as specific as possible.

3. Have you read, listened to or viewed the entire content? If not, what parts?

4. In place of this item what material of equal or better quality would you recommend?

5. What action would you like the library to take with this item?

7/5/05