

6-1. Materials Selection Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy on materials selection is to guide in the selection of materials and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made.

OBJECTIVES

The Paul Sawyer Library selects, acquires, organizes, makes available and encourages the use of all media, print and non-print that:

1. contribute to the individual's awareness of self and community while providing insight into a wide range of human and social conditions and various cultural heritages;
2. enrich and support the educational, recreational, and informational needs of the community;
3. stimulate thoughtful participation in the affairs of the community, the state, the nation and the world;
4. enhance job-related knowledge and skills;
5. give free access to a variety of opinions and ideas;
6. assist individuals to grow intellectually, culturally, mentally, spiritually, emotionally and physically.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION OF MATERIALS

The selection of materials for the collection is the responsibility of the Director and is done within the framework of the policies determined by the Board of Trustees. The Director may delegate selection of particular materials to qualified staff. The Library welcomes suggestions for selection from the staff, board and community, but the final decision for inclusion in the collection rests with the Director.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Each type of material must be considered in terms of its own merit and the audience for whom it is intended. No single standard can be applied in all cases. The following criteria should be used as a guideline in the selection process. An item need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable.

1. Have received favorable assessments of critics, reviewers, and the public through awards and professionally recognized publications or media.
2. Are produced by authors, illustrators, publishers or producers of significance, skill, competence, or quality reputation.
3. Are a suitable physical form for Library use.
4. Are a suitable subject and style for intended audience.
5. Reputation and literary significance of the author.
6. Relevance to community needs.
7. Importance as a document of the times.
8. Relation to existing Library collections and other materials on the subject.
9. Accuracy and authority.
10. Popular appeal and demand.
11. Local significance.

12. Availability of material in other libraries.
13. Cost; cost per use.
14. Representation of important movement, genre or trend of culture.
15. Artistic presentation.
16. Vitality and originality.
17. Space; physical limitations of the shelving and building.
18. Availability of material in print or other format.
19. Representation of challenging point of view.
20. Permanent value as source material or interpretation.
21. Materials that are obscene by definition of state law will not be purchased.

KENTUCKY'S REVISED STATUTES, Chapter 531, "Obscene means: a) To the average person, applying contemporary community standards, the predominant appeal of the matter, taken as a whole, is to prurient interests in sexual conduct; and b) The matter depicts or describes the sexual conduct in a patently offensive way; and c) The matter, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value."

All of these specific factors do not and will not apply to every item selected. The aim of this policy is to facilitate the building of a diversified Library collection of merit and significance that reflects the interests and needs of the total community within the physical and budgetary constraints of the Library.

Knowledgeable people in specific subject areas and reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids and booklists may also be consulted.

GENEALOGY

The Library may purchase basic instructional materials, books of local genealogical interest, and subscribe to databases which patrons may find helpful in conducting individual research. Persons interested in further on-site study in this subject may be referred to the Kentucky Historical Society Library, the Archives Room of the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives or may be offered interLibrary loan services.

WEEDING THE COLLECTION

Weeding the collection is a necessary adjunct of book selection. Materials will be weeded/withdrawn from the collection according to accepted profession practices. Criteria for withdrawing materials may include but are not limited to items that are:

1. Out of date.
2. In poor physical condition.
3. Insufficiently used.
4. Available in newer editions.
5. No longer popular or in demand.
6. Little-used material that is duplicated in the region.

The first decision to withdraw an item from the collection is the decision of the Director. The Director may delegate weeding of particular materials to qualified staff. Withdrawn items may be placed in the Friends of the Library bookstore or sale.

GIFTS

The Library welcomes and encourages donations and gifts of Library materials with the understanding that the material meets the same standards of value required of materials purchased. Prior to accepting the gift, the donor will be informed that the Library may use, sell, or dispose of some or all of the gift materials. At the time of the donation of materials, the donor will be given a Gift Material Receipt if requested. For tax purposes, the appraisal of gift materials to the Library is the responsibility of the donor. The Library will set no monetary value on gifts of books or other material.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

Many books are controversial and any given item may offend some persons. The Library's collection contains a diversity of viewpoints and opinions and the presence of an item in the Library does not indicate an endorsement of its contents by the Library. Selection of materials by the Paul Sawyer Library will not, however, be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the material in relation to building the collection and to serving the interests of the readers.

With respect to the use of Library materials by children, the decision as to what a minor may or may not read is the responsibility of his parent or guardian. Selection will not be inhibited by the possibility that books may come into the possession of minors.

CHALLENGED MATERIALS

The principle of the freedom to read is of paramount importance. When a patron objects to the presence or absence of a book or other Library material, the patron should discuss the matter with the Director. If the patron wishes the material to be removed from or added to the collection, he should fill out the Library's STATEMENT OF CONCERN form, and return it to the Director. Items are considered for removal or addition only if this form is filled out properly and signed; no action will be taken based on a verbal complaint alone. The item in question will be re-examined by the Director and other Library staff involved in materials selection. The Director shall decide whether the item in question will be kept or added to the collection, moved to another part of the collection or removed from the collection and will notify the Library Board of the decision. The complainant will be notified in writing of the Library's decision. If further action is required, a committee consisting of the Library Director, selected Library staff members and members of the Board of Trustees will meet to review the material in question.

LABELING OF MATERIALS

The fact that materials are purchased, processed and added to the collection shall in no way reflect a value judgment of the materials. There will be no labeling of any item or of its computer record to indicate its point of view or bias.

ACCESS TO MATERIAL

All materials will be shelved in their proper order on open shelves except for irreplaceable or frequently stolen materials that need to be protected from theft and/or damage.

Children are not limited to the juvenile collection, although the juvenile collection may be kept together to facilitate use. Responsibility for a child's reading choices must rest with the parent or guardian, not with the Library. Children's reading cannot be monitored in the Library. Circulation of material to children cannot be monitored or limited except for materials that carry

fines. Materials that carry fines are not available for circulation on a card issued to a patron age 15 year or younger.