



Category: Policies and Procedures

Title: Collection Development: Selection of Materials

Original Date: July 15, 1998

Revised Date: July 17, 2023

Policy: Collection Development

Procedure: Selection of Materials

Statement:

The Carnegie Public Library recognizes that American democracy functions only if the full range of human thought and ideas are accessible to the people and if proponents of various points of view are free to fully and openly make their cases, however popular or unpopular they may be, before the individual and collective judgement of their fellow citizens.

This principle is guaranteed in the First Amendment of the Constitution which protects the free expression of ideas. It is exemplified by American public libraries which provide access to those ideas in accordance with the ALA Library Bill of Rights. The Carnegie Public Library subscribes to the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*, *The Freedom to Read*, *Freedom to View*, *Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors*, and the *ALA Intellectual Freedom Statement*.

Materials are provided which aid patrons in the pursuit of information, education, culture, and entertainment. Therefore, it is the library's primary objective to offer the best quality materials based on the community's general and special interests. The rate and direction of growth of the collections shall reflect the continuing requirements of the library's clientele. In so doing, the library shall try not to only satisfy current demands but attempt to anticipate potential needs of patrons.

The library will favor no viewpoint.



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The Carnegie Public Library recognizes that full information on issues of public concern may require access to information sources which exemplify those concerns. Individual items which in and of themselves may be controversial or offensive to some may appropriately be selected if their inclusion in the collection will contribute to the balance of effectiveness of the library.

The Carnegie Public Library believes that reading, listening, and viewing materials is an individual's private matter. While anyone is free to select or reject materials, the freedom of others to read or inquire cannot be restricted. Per the ALA's stance in the *Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors*, libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources simply because minors will have access to them. A library's failure to acquire materials on the grounds that minors may be able to access those materials diminishes the credibility of the library in the community and restricts access for all library users. Parents and guardians have the responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening, and viewing choices of their own minor children. The library staff, directors, or other official persons affiliated with the Albany Carnegie Public Library do not have supervisory duty over minors and it is the parent/guardian of a minor this is responsible to monitor their minors behavior and consumption of content, in all forms

Selection Policy:

The library shall maintain a collection of materials for all ages from pre-school to maturity. Because of budget limitations, careful selection must be made from the hundreds of thousands of books and electronic resources that are published annually. Books shall be ordered regularly consistent with the budget. Non-book materials shall be ordered as the budget permits.

The library collection will be selected and maintained by the Library Director to provide materials to assist each individual to acquire or to adapt the skills and



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knowledge necessary to participate in self-government, to become more productive, to achieve economic success and to enhance humanity and the enjoyment of life according to the full exercise of free choice.

Factors to be considered in adding specific materials to the library collection will include: present collection composition, collection development objectives, interest, demand, timeliness, audience, significance of subjects, diversity of viewpoint, budget, and effective expression. The library encourages public suggestions of items and subjects to be considered for inclusion in the library collection.

Selection tools may include but not be limited to: *Book Review Digest*, *Booklist*, *Books in Print*, *Library Journal*, *The New York Times Book Review*, book reviews, *Public Library Catalog*, *Children's Catalog*, publishers' announcements, advertisements, catalogs, patron requests, *Mark Twain Reader Select lists*, *ALA's Most Challenged Book list*, and reviews published in specialized subject publications. Selection and ordering of library materials is vested with the Library Director within the framework of policies determined by the Albany Carnegie Public Library Board of Trustees.

The Library participates in resource sharing with other institutions through its Interlibrary Loan service and access to the internet resources, in an attempt to fulfill requests for materials not added to the Library's Collection.

Electronic databases extend the collection by providing timely and versatile access to information in electronic format. Typically, the content of an electronic database is not customizable with subscription granting access to the entirety of its contents. As such, they are evaluated for inclusion in the collection based on their ability to enhance and supplement the print collection. Subscription to an electronic database does not constitute endorsement of the electronic content patrons may access.



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Collection Organization:

The library contains collections for minors and adult patrons. Materials selected for the Adult and Young Adult collections are intended for more mature readers. Items for patrons under the age of 18 are split into three separate collections according to grade level and/or age of the minor. The three sections are:

- “E” collections- intended for patrons birth to 2nd grade and/or ages 0-8yrs old
- “J” collections- intended for patrons 1st grade through 8th grade and/or ages 6 to 16yrs old
- “YA” collection- intended for patrons 9th grade and above and/or ages 16 years old and above.

There may be some variation in the age appropriateness of material in each of the library’s collections. In general, decisions to place an item in a collection area is done by looking at the age recommendation set forth by the publisher, the standards and values of the average person in our tax base, applying what contemporary nationwide community standards that fit the item, how such standards would find the material taken as a whole, and if the item has a tendency to appeal to those reading from a particular section.

Patrons are not limited by these age recommendations as they are meant as mere suggestions in helping minors find appropriate materials. All patrons are welcome to checkout any materials in any of our collections. Responsibility for a minor’s reading must rest with the parent or guardian, not the library.

Checkouts to minors from the library collections are allowed with the signed parental permission on a minor’s Library Card Application form and the Informed Consent form. Minors will be allowed checkouts without a parent present from



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each library collections that has been approved with a signed Library Card Application form and by color code designation on their cards (bronze for “E” Easy Readers, Silver for “J” Juvenile, Gold for “Y” Young Adult and no color designation is access for any collection held by the library) delineated on the Informed Consent form.

Separate collections are available for children and young people, but it is not the responsibility of the Library, its Board of Trustees, staff, or volunteers to determine which collection they should use or what item in the approved collection is suitable for an individual. Library staff do not know what a parent/guardian would consider appropriate for a minor in their care to checkout and therefore cannot be responsible for a minor’s material selection if no delineation was made on the Informed Consent for Minor form. Responsibility for a child’s reading must rest solely with the parent/guardian, not with the library.