

# Materials Selection Policy

This policy governs the selection and maintenance of the Broome County Public Library's collection of materials. It may be revised as changes occur in the needs of our service population and in the emphasis of the Library's objectives to provide information and research.

The Broome County Public Library recognizes its responsibilities to collect materials, to organize and make available its resources, and to give guidance in the use and interpretation of materials. This selection policy is in accordance with the Library Bill of Rights, adopted June 18, 1948, amended February 2, 1961, June 27, 1967 and January 23, 1980, inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996 by the American Library Association Council (See Appendix A).

## **Objectives in materials selection**

1. To provide materials for information, recreational and educational functions.
2. To collect basic materials of permanent value.
3. To collect materials of contemporary or timely significance. Selection is based on the particular wants and needs of the community.

## **Goals in materials selection**

1. To stimulate thoughtful participation in the life of the family, the community, the country, and the world.
2. To encourage maximum use of the collections by the greatest number of people.
3. To support the educational, civic, and cultural activities of individuals, groups and organizations.
4. To foster intellectual, artistic, and spiritual growth.
5. To promote the use of library materials for recreation and enjoyment.

## **Responsibility for materials selection**

The ultimate responsibility for materials selection lies with the Director, subject to the policies of the Board of Trustees. The Director may delegate the authority to interpret and define the applications of this policy in making day-to-day decisions.

## **Guidelines for selection**

Selection begins with a presumption in favor of liberty of thought. Selection seeks to protect the rights of the library's public. The aim of a material's selector is to promote the diversity of opinion and expression and to act as a channel of communication for others. Selectors will look for the materials values, strengths and virtues which may overshadow minor objections (See the Freedom to Read Statement, Appendix B).

1. As far as practical, all points of view concerning the issues of our times should be represented.
2. This library does not practice censorship. No materials will be marked to denote approval or

disapproval of their contents. Although library materials may be deemed controversial or objectionable, they will not be excluded because of language or frankness. Materials relating to an existing need or interest will not be removed from the collection.

3. Selection of materials will not be controlled by the fear that they will come into the possession of children. Most parents vigorously defend the right to guide their own children's moral development and thought processes. The library supports this right.

However, some people will demand that the library exclude complex or controversial materials in an effort to shield their own or someone else's children. It is precisely at the point that a child encounters difficult, complex or disturbing information that adults must assume their roles as parents. GUIDANCE IN THESE MATTERS IS SOLELY THE PARENT'S OR GUARDIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY.

4. It is not necessary or desirable for the library to try to acquire all materials on any subject. Rather, it is the goal of the library to represent a wide range of knowledge in a fair and impartial manner.
5. The resources of academic and special libraries in Broome County will be recognized and this library will not needlessly duplicate these materials.
6. The Broome County Public Library recognizes the functions of local schools and colleges to provide materials to support their curriculums. BCPL accepts partial responsibility for providing supplementary materials for students. However, text books or curriculum-related materials will be selected only if they are of use to the general reader. Consideration will be especially given to the needs of people engaged in self-education.
7. Legal and medical works will be acquired only to the extent that they will be useful to the lay person. Such materials will be purchased only after a careful search for an authoritative recommendation.
8. The public which we serve encompasses a wide range of ages, education, and reading skills. Materials of varying degrees of difficulty will be selected to represent these diverse elements.
9. Special attention will be paid to area authors, and state and local history. However, this library will not select such materials if they are not of permanent value to the interests of the community or the library collection.
10. Whenever possible, materials will be selected based on review(s) from a variety of sources common to this library or from review(s) available to residents of our service area. (See Appendix C for a listing of sources frequently used in the materials selection process).

Also, the following criteria may be used in selection:

- a) Timeliness.
- b) Reputation of the author.
- c) Scarcity of subject matter.
- d) Reputation of the publisher.
- e) Importance of subject matter to the collection.
- f) Content and Treatment.
- g) Technical qualities.
- h) Format.

11. Demand for a specific material item or materials in subject areas is one of many selection criteria. Overall, value to the collection and community needs, as well as the goals, objectives and guidelines of this policy, will also be taken into consideration.
12. At the Library's discretion, materials may be reviewed by individuals specially trained or knowledgeable in the material's content or purpose.

### **Gifts**

Gift materials will be accepted with the understanding that this library reserves the right to utilize them in accordance with this selection policy. Gift materials may be added to the collections, sold, given to other libraries or discarded.

Gift items will be formally acknowledged, if the donor wishes. This library will not estimate the value of gift donations for income tax considerations. The responsibility for this process lies with the donor.

### **Maintenance of Collection**

This library does not automatically replace all materials withdrawn from the collection because of loss, damage or physical wear. Need for replacement is weighed with regard to these factors:

1. Number of duplicate copies.
2. The existence of adequate coverage of a subject.
3. More up-to-date or authoritative coverage of a subject.
4. Current demand for the particular subject or title.

To maintain the effectiveness of the library's total collections, this library will systematically remove materials which are considered no longer useful. This procedure will be carried out by professional librarians with expertise in specific subject areas and/or expertise in delivering services and materials to the public.