

SCHULTZ-HOLMES MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Collection Development Policy

The Schultz-Holmes Memorial Library publishes this collection development policy to:

- better inform its patron constituency about the foundations for selecting materials for the library.
- encourage its patron constituency to take an active role in recommending items for the collection.
- guide the Library Director in the selection of materials and in the maintenance of the library's collection.

The collection development policy for the Library is guided by the principles of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights (appended) and both the ALA's and Michigan Library Associations' statements on intellectual freedom and obscenity. At times this collection policy will use these statements as the library's own. The library is also guided by established best practices in the acquisition and retention of materials. These best practices are described in the policy.

The library believes the collection should represent all disciplines and, insofar as possible, a variety or range of points-of-view. The collection should meet the intellectual, informational, and recreational needs of the entire, diverse community. The library not only must consider the present needs of the community but also must attempt to anticipate the future needs in order to give timely service. The library acknowledges commonality and seeks to provide materials that would appeal to a large percentage of patrons. The library also acknowledges difference and seeks to provide materials that acknowledge difference, some geared toward explaining differences to a general audience and some geared toward an appeal to smaller groups within the library's diverse patron population.

Intellectual freedom is the right of every person to seek and receive information about any topic from multiple points of view. It includes the right to hold, receive, and share ideas and information. All people have the right to intellectual freedom, including children and teenagers (MLA).

Because libraries do not have infinite money or space, librarians have to make decisions about what materials to buy. Collection development is the process librarians use to make these decisions when they purchase materials for the library. The library considers how their choices affect the intellectual freedom of their communities when they select materials. This consideration includes ensuring the community has access to materials on a wide variety of topics, from a wide variety of perspectives, even if members of the community disapprove of certain topics or perspectives themselves (MLA).

Criteria and Authority for Selection

The primary criteria for selection will be the quality of presentation, the needs of the community, and the needs of the collection. Quality of presentation demands that material come from established, reputable publishers and would generally eliminate self-published or quasi-self-published items from consideration since both the vetting process and financial investment of a reputable publisher would create a quality of presentation difficult for self-published works to meet. Additionally, the library simply lacks the staff necessary to review all requests for consideration of self-published works. The Library Board of Trustees entrusts collection development and materials selection responsibilities to the Library Director or the Director's designee, who has authority to select materials according to this policy.

Acquisitions

Acquisitions which are not the result of donations, either of the items themselves or of the money used to purchase items, are purchased with funds allocated to the purpose in the library's annual budget, with funds available from payments for lost books, or with funds allocated from the Library's trust fund by the Library Board of Trustees. In order to ensure compliance with and oversight of its own collection development policy, the library discourages donations of physical materials or the submission of physical materials in lieu of replacement costs for lost or damaged items. The library cannot guarantee a donated item will fit within the parameters of the collection policy and, therefore, cannot guarantee it will add the donated item to the collection. Likewise, in the case of physical item substitution for replacement costs, the library would still incur costs for processing the submitted item before adding to the collection. Furthermore, a lost or damaged item might be near the end of its anticipated shelf life (see Weeding below). Payment of replacement costs would return decision-making to the library as required by this collection development policy.

Procedures for Selection

No library can make everything available, so the library must make selection decisions. Selection is an inclusive process, where the library affirmatively seeks out materials which will serve its mission of providing a broad diversity of points of view and subject matter. By contrast, censorship is an exclusive process, by which individuals or institutions seek to deny access to or otherwise suppress ideas and information because they find those ideas offensive and do not want others to have access to them. There are many objective reasons unrelated to the ideas expressed in materials that a library might decide not to add those materials to its collection: redundancy, lack of community interest, expense, space, etc. Unless the decision is based on a disapproval of the ideas expressed and desire to keep those ideas away from public access, a decision not to select materials for a library collection is not censorship. (ALA)

The presence of any particular materials in a library collection does not imply endorsement of the ideas expressed in those materials. The library is simply doing its job as a neutral provider of information from all points of view—if the library “endorses” anything, it is your right to have access to a broad selection of materials. If you don’t find materials to your liking, ask your librarian to help you! Libraries strive to serve the interests of the entire community. If your library is unable to purchase the material you want, it may be able to obtain it for you on interlibrary loan. Your library is there to help you find the information you need or want. Just ask (ALA).

Library materials selection will be made by creating an initial list resulting from a combination of

- staff consultation of current review sources (*Book List*, *Library Journal*, etc.). Collection development often involves reading reviews in professional periodicals to assess quality (MLA).
- standard lists (Toledo *Blade* bestsellers, People Magazine Picks, local school and college recommended reading, prize winners, and Baker & Taylor selection lists—Booking Ahead, Monthly Stars and the New Release Calendar, among others)
- requests by patrons and recommendations by the library staff.

The initial list is generally far too large to purchase in its entirety. Guided by an assessment of the library’s needs according to this policy and available funds, the library director makes selection decisions considering any and all input but is under no obligation to select material from any of these sources. The absence of inclusion in any of these sources does not eliminate material from consideration.

Popular demand is a major consideration in book purchases with the understanding that local demand (or lack thereof) will trump national or regional demand. Materials receiving unfavorable reviews or no reviews at all may be selected if there is significant patron demand, if the material is of particular interest locally, or if the material fills a special unmet need in the collection. No materials will be rejected solely on the basis of the author's point-of-view, as range of points-of-view should be represented in the collection, provided the material meets the other requirements of the policy, including quality of presentation and collection need.

The library recognizes the place of non-print formats in the collection as legitimate educational and recreational resources for the community it serves. The library monitors the development of new formats and, within budgetary and technical limitations, adds these to the collection. Choice of new formats or the abandonment of outdated formats will be based on patron demand, community trends, new product development, and positive critical reviews.

Gifts

Library policy concerning gifts will be posted in the library and otherwise made available to the patron community.

All gifts must meet the criteria of the library's collection development policy. Direct gifts of books and other library materials will be accepted only on the condition that the Library Director has full authority as to their disposal. If requested by the donor, staff may supply a receipt noting the date, format, and number of items donated. Staff will not provide an estimate of the value of the donations. If a donated item does not meet the selection criteria, it will be sold in the annual book sale to benefit the library or donated to another institution. In cases of badly damaged material, the item will be recycled.

When the library receives a cash gift for the purchase of materials, whether as a memorial or for any other purpose, the general nature or subject area of the materials to be purchased may be provided by the donor. The library director or the director's designee in accordance with the needs and selection policies of the library, however, will select specific titles. Donors also have the option of contributing to a trust fund maintained by the Library Board of Trustees. Persons who pay for gift books will have their names--and the name of the person in whose honor or memory the book is purchased--entered on a library bookplate to be placed in the book.

Once the library accepts a gift or donation, the item becomes the property of the library and becomes subject to the same use or disposal criteria as all other items.

Weeding

Weeding is a continuous process and is a part of a sound collection development program. The following guidelines describe a minimum schedule for weeding of various library materials.

Damaged materials and duplicates will be withdrawn as the need arises.

Paperback books, sound recordings of popular music, audio books, video materials, fiction, and general non-fiction will be reviewed at least once each year. Reference materials will be reviewed periodically and at least every two years.

The general criteria for weeding or retention include the following:

- Circulation or usage of the item
- Unneeded duplicates
- Availability of other items on same subject in the collection
- Availability of updated, newer, or revised materials
- Condition of the item
- Historical value of the item
- Item's place in a series

- Possible future usefulness
- Cost of replacement, if necessary

It is critical that outdated information, especially in law, business, finance, medicine, technology, and the sciences be discarded.

Withdrawn materials will be sold in the annual book sale, donated to another institution or recycled, depending on the condition of the materials.

Censorship and Challenged Materials

Censorship is the suppression of ideas or information because a particular person or group of people does not like the idea in question. Censors believe that because they find a particular idea objectionable, no one should have access to information about that idea. Censors often try to use political power to enforce censorship. A book challenge (or a **material challenge**, because not every piece of media that gets challenged is a book) occurs when someone requests or demands that the library remove one or more items in the library collection or move the items to another section of the library (MLA).

Materials are usually challenged because a person does not agree with the content or ideas the material presents, or because they believe the material is not located in an age-appropriate section of the library. While banning a book or other material from the library would result in the material's removal from the library or digital platforms, a book challenge might result in restriction or moving the material to a different area of the library. Restriction still infringes upon the intellectual freedom rights of community members, with such restrictions often based on age. All people have the right to intellectual freedom, *including minors*. When materials deemed age-appropriate by a publisher as the result of a vetting process and marketed for that audience are restricted, children and teenagers are being denied their rights on the basis of age (MLA).

The removal or restriction of materials infringes upon the intellectual freedom rights of community members. In the case of nonfiction, removal and restriction of materials makes it difficult for people to locate reliable, factual information from a variety of viewpoints on a variety of subjects. In the case of fiction or other artistic expression (such as music and film), removal and restriction make it difficult for people to engage with a wide variety of media that may reflect their own experiences or the condition of the wider world. Curtailing this access is often the explicit goal of censors (MLA).

The library believes materials should be shelved and otherwise made available to the audience for which they are created. The library will not intercede between a parent and child, rejecting any authority to act in loco parentis and encourages parents to monitor and supervise what their own children are reading. Likewise, the library must protect the rights of those families who welcome certain material found objectionable by others because all residents of the service area fund the library through taxes. The library collection must reflect many viewpoints with the decision to engage those viewpoints falling on each individual patron or their parents.

While more about accessing materials once they are in the library, the library maintains a Freedom of Access policy which touches on some of the same principles as the Collection Development policy. Following both ALA's Freedom to Read policy and ALA's interpretation of that policy, the library's Freedom of Access policy states:

“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. (ALA)

Children and young adults unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information through the library in print, sound, images, data, social media, online applications, games, technologies, programming, and other formats.

1. Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them.
2. Libraries and their library governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections, because only a court of law can determine whether or not content is constitutionally protected. Article VII of the *Library Bill of Rights* states, “All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use.” This includes students and minors, who have a right to be free from any unreasonable intrusion into or surveillance of their lawful library use.
3. The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries cannot authorize libraries and their governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians. As “Libraries: An American Value” states, “We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services.”
4. Libraries and their governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Libraries and their governing bodies shall ensure that only parents and guardians have the right and the responsibility to determine their children's—and only their children's—access to library resources. Parents and guardians who do not want their children to have access to specific library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their own children. Libraries and library governing bodies should not use rating systems to inhibit a minor's access to materials.
5. Libraries and their governing bodies have a legal and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the communities they serve have free and equitable access to a diverse range of library resources and services that is inclusive, regardless of content, approach, or format. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Libraries and their governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors. (ALA)

In as much as it is impossible to determine a person's maturity by his chronological age, it is also impossible to determine what the person should or should not read, watch or hear. Therefore, all circulating materials other than movies will be available for loan without regard to the age of the cardholder. The library does restrict R-rated movies to adults only (unless the responsible parent requests an exemption), following the guidelines established by the film industry itself. Censorship by parents should occur at home, not at the public library. We encourage all parents to examine their children's books library material, including books, audiobooks and music downloaded from online services. Different parents have very different feelings about what their children should or should not access. It is impossible for us to know how each child's parents feel; therefore, we cannot censor for all parents, nor is it feasible to block specific materials from specific patrons on special request. When children obtain their own library cards, their parents know that the children have the privilege and the responsibility of choosing what they are to obtain from the library. If parents do object to their children having access to certain materials, it is their responsibility, not the library's, to keep these materials from their children.

The library board recognizes, too, that the internet provides different challenges and different opportunities. Therefore, use of the Internet is governed by a separate Internet Policy which is also available for review."

Pornography and Obscenity

In particular, when censors discover library materials that include sexual content, they often rush to claim that librarians are peddling pornography. It is important to know that pornography is *not* a legal term and has no legal criteria, which is why censors like to use it to describe everything from developmentally appropriate sex education books for children to books that include depictions or discussions of queer sexualities (MLA).

Every person has the right to moderate their own engagement with sexual content in media. Parents may guide their children's media consumption based on what they feel comfortable with, but they are responsible *only for their own children* and may not dictate what other children and adult community members can access (MLA).

Sometimes censors cite obscenity laws in their efforts to have materials removed. Unlike pornography, obscenity *is* a legal term and is determined using a three-pronged test known as the Miller Test (named after the 1973 Supreme Court case *Miller v. California*). In order to be classified as obscene, material must meet *all three* of the following criteria:

1. Whether the average person, applying contemporary adult community standards, finds that the matter, taken as a whole, appeals to prurient interests
2. Whether the average person, applying contemporary adult community standards, finds that the matter depicts or describes sexual conduct in a patently offensive way

3. Whether a reasonable person finds that the matter, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value (MLA).

Remember that the work must be evaluated as a whole (not based on a single scene or comic panel), and that library collection development policies exist to ensure that librarians are acquiring material that *does* have literary, artistic, political, and scientific value (MLA).

The Schultz-Holmes Memorial Library will not knowingly put pornography or obscenity on its shelves. Such works are not published by the established publishers upon which the library depends for its purchases. While online content generally comes from third-party providers, the library has made clear to those providers its policy to exclude pornographic or obscene materials.

In Michigan specifically, librarians and teachers are exempt from a state law prohibiting dissemination of sexually explicit material to minors because this dissemination is part of their jobs as educators and upholders of intellectual freedom (MLA).

Efforts to censor library materials must be challenged by the library in carrying out its responsibility to provide for the intellectual, informational, and recreational needs of the entire community. The patron's choice of library materials for personal use is an individual matter. The library maintains that the responsibility for the use of materials by children and adolescents rests with their parents or legal guardians. The library refuses any expectation that it will act in loco parentis.

Therefore, the library rejects:

- censorship by prior restraint in the form of removing an item for all patrons or relocating an item to a location other than the location maintained for the item's intended audience.
- any expectation that the library or library staff will act as a judge of what is suitable for a particular audience, including content warnings other than those offered by the item itself, for example, DVDs which carry industry-provided content ratings.

One of the reasons the library relies on standard publishers that meet the library's requirements of quality of presentation is that those items have been properly vetted and previously categorized by professionals for audience-appropriateness.

The First Amendment guarantees freedom of expression, including freedom of speech and freedom of the press, both of which are vital to a citizen's ability to exercise their intellectual freedom. In the case of public schools, the Supreme Court ruled in the 1982 case *Island Trees School District v. Pico* that public school library books cannot be removed or restricted based on their content, because such a removal would be a violation of the First Amendment rights of students. There is even less authority to

restrict access to information in a public library. When the analysis of Pico is applied to public libraries, the bar against content-based removal becomes even clearer (MLA).

The library, however, does recognize that opinions of appropriateness differ. If a complaint concerning a specific item in the library's collection is made, the person or organization making the complaint will be given a copy of the library's collection development policy. If, after reviewing the policy, the person or organization wishes to file a formal challenge, they will be given a copy of the Patron's Request for Reconsideration of Material (appended).

The request will then be taken to the Library Board of Trustees for review at the next scheduled Board meeting. If the item was chosen according to the underlying principle of including all points of view, was purchased using the procedure outlined above, and meets the standards of quality of presentation, the default recommendation will be to keep the item in the collection. The item may not be removed for convenience or expediency nor in violation of the parts of this policy supporting intellectual freedom and refusing any *in loco parentis* status for the library. The opinion of the Library Board of Trustees is final.

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

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