

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY STATEMENT

The Materials Selection Policy of the Parkersburg and Wood County Public Library has been compiled with the intent of clarifying for the librarians and the public the criteria used in the selection, acquisition, evaluation and weeding of library materials.

The policies stated herein should not be regarded as rigid rules or strict limitations, but rather as guideposts for materials selection activities.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

The Parkersburg and Wood County Public Library is a non-profit, public service organization dedicated to providing quality library service by making available a wide variety of materials and services to meet the informational, educational and recreational needs of all members of the community. The goal for the Library is to provide the best possible collection with the financial resources available.

The Parkersburg and Wood County Public Library subscribes to the principles that have been adopted by the American Library Association in the following statements: (see attachments)

1. Library Bill of Rights
2. Freedom to Read
3. Freedom to View

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MATERIALS SELECTION

THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR:

The ultimate responsibility for the selection of library materials, rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees. This responsibility is shared in its execution by the various department heads of the library and members of the staff as designated by the Library Director. The Library Director is answerable to the Board and the public for actual selections made by the staff and, therefore has the right to recommend or reject any book contrary to the recommendation of the staff. All staff members and patrons are encouraged to make suggestions within the framework of this policy. Request forms are provided at the circulation and reference desks of each branch of the Library.

DEPARTMENT HEADS

Library materials for the Reference, the Children's, the Audio-Visual, the Adult Non-fiction and fiction collections are selected by the respective department heads in light of available budgets within the framework of this policy.

BRANCH LIBRARIANS AND BOOKMOBILE LIBRARIAN

The Branch Librarians are responsible for the selection, maintenance and weeding of the branch collection under the general supervision of the department heads. They recommend books for consideration and forward patrons' requests for library material purchases to the appropriate department heads.

CRITERIA FOR MATERIALS SELECTION

The following factors will be taken into account when selecting materials:

- Current usefulness and popular demand.
- Permanent value of the title to the collection.
- The scope and depth of the existing subject collection.
- The authority and literary standing of the author (No author's works will be excluded from the collection solely because of his/her personal history, political affiliation, race, sex, sexual orientation, or cultural background).
- The authority and reputation of the publisher or producer.
- The technical excellence and durability of the format.
- Availability of the same title or information elsewhere within the library system.
- Favorable review in professional/literary publications.
- Availability, cost and budgetary restraints.
- Appearance of the title in special bibliographies or indexes.

Materials need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable. All materials for review/selection are considered as whole works and may not be excluded on the basis of individual sections taken out of context.

Textbooks will not be acquired to support the local educational institutions unless a textbook covers a given subject better than other available material.

STATEMENT ON CENSORSHIP

In order to meet the stated mission and goals of the Library, materials of various formats will be collected on the widest possible range of ideas and viewpoints. In doing so, the Library acquires many unpopular and controversial materials. The Parkersburg and Wood County Public Library holds censorship to be a purely individual matter and declares that, while anyone is free to reject for himself books and other materials of which he does not approve he cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others.

Library materials will not be marked or labeled to show approval or disapproval of the contents or to indicate particular philosophies outlined in the work. To take this action is to establish in a user's mind a judgment before s/he has had an opportunity to examine the work personally.

No cataloged book or other item will be placed on closed shelves, except for the express purpose of protecting it from injury or theft if previous incidents have proven the item to be in significant jeopardy while on open shelves.

Finally, the decision of what a minor may check out is the responsibility of the parent or guardian. Selection of library materials will not be inhibited by the possibility that certain controversial or graphic materials may come into the possession of children.

REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS

All requests for reconsideration of materials will be handled in the following manner:

- The staff member receiving the complaint will ask the patron to fill out the appropriate form (see Appendix A). Only active library card holders may submit a challenge, and they are limited to two titles at a time, which must be submitted separately.
- When the completed form has been received, it will be submitted to the Director.
- The challenge will then be posted for public awareness and input.
- The Director may ask members of the library staff to review the title in question. While the material is under consideration, it will not be removed from use pending final action.
- The Director will take all factors under advisement and come to a decision. This will be communicated to the complainant in writing.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the Director's decision, he/she has the right to appeal the matter to the Library Board in writing within 30 days.
- Within 90 days of receiving the appeal, the Library Board will hear both the complainant's position and the Director's position at its next regularly scheduled meeting and render a decision by majority vote.
- The Board President will inform the concerned party in writing of the Board's decision. This will include notification that the Board's decision is final.
- NOTE: Items that have gone through the reconsideration process will not be considered by the Board again for a minimum of three (3) years.

MAINTENANCE OF THE COLLECTION

Weeding is the regular, ongoing, and systematic evaluation of the library's collection and is an integral part of collection development in maintaining a well balanced collection. The following is a list of criteria used in making decisions on whether to weed, replace, or bind existing library materials. For more specific criteria on each section of the Library, refer to the professional publication *The Crew Method* published by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. A copy of *The Crew Method* will be available for public examination at the Reference Desk.

WEEDING

Outdated, worn, badly marked, or duplicate copies of seldom used materials should be withdrawn.

Titles withdrawn because of loss, damage or general condition are considered for replacement. The need for replacement depends on the following factors:

- Number of duplicate copies;
- Coverage of the subject in the collection;
- Demand;
- Availability of newer and/or better materials on the subject.

The library endeavors to bind periodicals which are of reference value. Bound sets are available only at the Main Library.

The choice of books for rebinding is made in accordance with the established policies of original selection, weeding and replacement. Factors for special consideration are:

- Value and use of the title and possibility of replacement;
- Physical condition, including quality of paper, margins, illustrations;
- Cost of rebinding versus cost of replacement;
- Number of copies available.

GIFTS TO THE LIBRARY

DONATIONS OF MATERIALS

The library is grateful for donations of materials. The criteria for book selection will also apply in the acceptance of donations of books and materials to the library, and in most instances of deciding where the book will be added. A letter for tax purposes will be provided if requested by the donor.

The library makes every effort to dispose of all gift materials it cannot use to the very best advantage. If at all suitable, it is offered to other libraries or institutions as a gift or exchange. Materials may also be given to the Friends of The Library book sale to be sold and the monies generated then used to support the library with new materials or services. Once a gift is accepted by the library, it is clearly understood that it becomes the property of the library, to be used or disposed of as is seen fit.

DONATIONS OF MEMORIA AND GIFT MONIES

Funds for the purchase of memorial books or other materials are accepted. A memorial gift plate is placed in these materials, and the gift is acknowledged to all involved parties. Library selection criteria apply, but if possible, consideration is given to suggestions from the donor concerning title, format, etc. No other conditions may be imposed relating to any gift, donation, or memorial after its acceptance by the Library.