

1. Collection Development

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to guide the librarians' efforts to implement the Library's Long-Range Plan and to inform the community about the principles upon which the library relies to acquire materials in its resource collection.

The Library serves the residents of Otsego County with the main library in Gaylord and two branch libraries located in Vanderbilt and Johannesburg. The library's circulating collection includes books, periodicals, audiobooks, videotapes, compact discs, kits and CD-ROMs. The non-circulating collection consists of reference materials and newspapers. Additionally the library subscribes to several CD-ROM reference products, and has access to electronic databases provided by the Access Michigan project. Through a cooperative effort with Michigan State University, the library provides a public access computer lab that has direct access to the Internet. Specialized databases are available through the MSU web site, although some are available only for staff.

Selection of Materials

The Otsego County Library endorses the American Library Association's Freedom to Read Statement (see page 24) and Library Bill of Rights (see page 25). The Library believes that the use of library materials is an individual and private matter. All patrons are free to select or reject materials for themselves; they may not restrict the freedom of others to read or inquire. Parents have the primary responsibility to guide and direct the use of library materials by their own minor children.

It is the intent of the Library Board of Trustees that the Otsego County Library provides a variety of print and non-print materials to meet the informational, educational and recreational needs of the entire community. The library attempts to maintain a collection of representative materials of permanent value and current interest that will promote the development and enrichment of life. The library takes no sides on public issues and does not attempt to promote any beliefs or point of view, nor does it endorse the opinions expressed in the materials held.

The Library Director, assisted by the staff, is responsible for the selection of materials. Suggestions from patrons are encouraged and receive serious consideration. Patrons suggesting that specific items be added to the permanent collection will be provided with the "Patron's Purchase Request Form" (see page 27). The Library Director will evaluate requests based on this Collection Development policy.

Patrons expressing concern about a specific item in the collection will be provided with a copy of this policy and asked to complete the "Request for Reconsideration of

Library Materials Form” (see page 26). The Library Director will evaluate the material, based on the Collection Development policy established by the Board of Trustees, and will respond in writing to the patron’s request. Any unresolved concerns will be referred to the Library Board of Trustees for final decision.

Materials Format

In this age of rapidly changing technology, libraries are able to collect ever-widening ranges of information in a variety of formats. It is the Library Director’s responsibility to assess the usefulness of information sources as they appear and to determine the format that will best serve the community’s needs while remaining within the constraints of the materials budget.

- **Books** – The library believes that books will remain an integral part of its collection. Books are purchased both by demand and to maintain a balanced, informative and timely collection. High demand items may not be purchased if they are ephemeral, not factual, or the library has sufficient material on the topic.
- **Periodicals** – The library subscribes to periodicals that reflect the interests of the community. Periodicals that are indexed in Readers Guide or ProQuest will receive priority consideration. Periodical subscriptions may be discontinued if they are deemed no longer of interest, if the information they contain may be accessed more conveniently in another format, or if subscription rates become too costly for the library to maintain. Most periodicals are retained for a period of three years.
- **Newspapers** – The library collects the county’s local publications in addition to some regional, state and national newspapers. The local newspaper is retained in paper format until the microfilm is received. All other newspapers are retained for a period of three months.
- **Audiobooks** – The library collects fiction and nonfiction cassettes of a popular nature. Due to budgetary constraints, the library cannot duplicate all high demand titles in audio format, limits purchase of unabridged titles to those of 6 or fewer tapes, and collects no audiobooks on compact disc.
- **Videocassettes** – The library collects mainly informational, documentary, and “how-to” videocassettes. Some classic films and musicals are selected for purchase. The library does not collect popular feature-length films that are readily available at commercial video rental agencies, but will attempt to identify and purchase high quality fictional titles that are not available elsewhere in the community.
- **Compact Discs** – The library attempts to collect musical titles representative of all music genres, but makes no effort to create an exhaustive musical library.
- **CD-ROMs** - The library collects these items in IBM compatible format only. CD-ROMs are chosen for their informational content and their applications. The library does not collect recreational CD-ROM titles (games).
- **Computer Programs** – These applications are available in the computer lab and are not available for circulation. The programs are chosen based upon general usefulness and ease of application.

- **Online Resources** – The library subscribes to online resources as they become available and prove valuable in a public library setting. Online resources are evaluated based on expense and the quantity of useful information provided.
- **Internet Resources** – The library provides access to the Internet. Unlike most resources in the library, the Internet is an interactive medium, which is being changed constantly. No institution or organization has control over these resources, nor complete knowledge of what is on the network. Information on the Internet may be inaccurate, illegal, or considered offensive or controversial by some viewers. The library provides an Internet Use policy (see page 49) and Computer Lab Rules and Procedures (see page 50) which users are expected to follow when accessing the Internet from the computer lab.

Juvenile Materials

The Otsego County Library recognizes children and young adults as a vital component of the community it serves. The Library maintains the same standards for the selection of juvenile materials as for adult materials with special considerations given to age appropriateness and reading levels. The Library adheres to the materials format guidelines listed above.

De-selection

Items will be removed for the collection when one or more of the following criteria are fulfilled:

- Item is damaged or worn out
- Item is outdated or no longer accurate
- Item is superseded by a new or better source
- Item is presented in a format that the library no longer collects/maintains
- Item is irrelevant or of no interest to the community
- Item is so rarely used that it is not vital to the collection
- Item is trivial

Gifts

The Otsego County Library reserves the right to use gifts of materials in keeping with its collection and selection policies. Materials considered unsuitable for the collection will be placed in the Friends of the Library book sale or discarded. The Library cannot provide an accurate appraisal of donated materials but will provide the donor with a statement listing numbers of items donated upon request.

Memorials

The Library accepts donations toward the purchase of memorial books. The Library Director will select the title in accordance with the donor's wishes regarding subject specified. The library may accept a donation for a specific book if the title meets collection needs and selection policy standards. An identifying bookplate will be placed inside the front cover of each memorial book.

ALA FREEDOM TO READ STATEMENT *Adopted by ALA in May of 1953*

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label "controversial" books, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently arise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is not valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We as citizens devoted to the use of books, and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating them wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free men will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We there affirm these propositions:

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.
2. Publishers, librarians and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation contained in the books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.
3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.
4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.
5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or author as subversive or dangerous.
6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.
7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility bookmen can demonstrate that the answer to a bad idea is a good one.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of books. We do so because we believe that they are good, possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

Library Bill of Rights

The Council of the American Library Association reaffirms its belief in the following basic policies which should govern the services of all libraries.

1. As a responsibility of library service, books and other library materials selected should be chosen for values of interest, information and enlightenment of all the people of the community. In no case should library materials be excluded because of the race or nationality or the social, political, or religious views of the author.
2. Libraries should provide books and other materials presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times; no library materials should be proscribed or removed from libraries because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Censorship should be challenged by libraries in the maintenance of their responsibility to provide public information and enlightenment.
4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
5. The rights of an individual to the use of a library should not be denied or abridged because of his age, race, religion, national origins or social or political views.
6. As an institution of education for democratic living, the library should welcome the use of its meeting rooms for socially useful and cultural activities and discussion of current public questions. Such meeting places should be available on equal terms to all groups in the community regardless of the beliefs and affiliations of their members, provided that the meetings be open to the public.

Adopted June 18, 1948.

Amended February 2, 1961, and June 27, 1967, by the ALA Council

OTSEGO COUNTY LIBRARY
REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

AUTHOR _____

TITLE _____

Type of Material _____ Date of Publication _____

Request initiated by _____ Telephone _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Complainant represents (specify)

_____ Self _____ Name of organization

1. What is your objection to this material? _____

2. Have you personally examined the material completely? _____ Yes _____ No

If parts only, specify: _____

3. What do you believe is the theme and/or major intent of this material? _____

2. What do you feel might be the result of reading or using this material? _____

Thank you. Your request will be referred to the Library Director.

PATRON'S PURCHASE REQUEST FORM

The Otsego County Library welcomes patron interest in the collection and will seriously consider all requests that fall within the guidelines of the collection development policy and budgetary limitations. The Library is, however, under no obligation to fill any individual request.

Author _____

Title _____

Format (Book, CD, etc) _____

Publisher (if known) _____

ISBN Number (if known) _____

Where did you hear about this book and why do you think it would be a good addition to the collection? _____

Request initiated by _____

Address _____ Telephone _____

County resident? ____yes____no

Are you a registered borrower of this Library? ____yes____no