



MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

PURPOSE

The mission of the Dwight Foster Public Library as adopted by the Library Board of Trustees (1999) is as follows:

The mission of the Dwight Foster Public Library is to help people achieve their full potential by being a leading resource for information, education, culture and recreation.

To fulfill that mission, the Dwight Foster Public Library will provide all area residents ready access to a broad collection of materials in a variety of formats that record our knowledge, ideas and culture within the limitations of space and budget. It is the responsibility of the Library to satisfy the diverse education, information, and entertainment needs of its library patrons through the selection, acquisition, organization and preservation of library materials and to provide skilled guidance in their use. The library is directed in this process by the following objectives:

- To assemble, preserve and administer, in organized collections, books and related educational, recreational and cultural materials, both print and non-print, in order to promote, through guidance and stimulation, the communication of ideas, an enlightened citizenship and enriched personal lives;
- To serve the community as a center of reliable information in print, non-print, and electronic formats;
- To facilitate continuing education, both formal and informal, for all ages;
- To seek to continually identify community needs, to provide programs of service and materials to meet such needs and to cooperate with other organizations, agencies and institutions which can provide programs or services or materials to meet community needs;
- To encourage the development of reading skills;
- To stimulate thoughtful participation in the life of the family, the community, the country, and the world.

SELECTION OF MATERIALS

The Dwight Foster Public Library Board of Trustees shall delegate to the Director the authority and responsibility for selection of all print and non-print materials. Responsibilities for actual selection shall rest with appropriate trained personnel who discharge this obligation consistent with the Library Board's adopted selection criteria.

Involved in the choice of materials are the experience and knowledge of those staff members selecting materials, their familiarity with the community, its needs and demands, other library resources, the existing collection, other libraries' collections, the library's materials budget and the physical limitations of the library building.

Materials will be judged on the basis of the content and style of the work as a whole, not by selected or random passages or scenes which in themselves may be offensive.

Reviews in professional journals are used in the selection process and are sought whenever possible. However, the lack of a review or an unfavorable review shall not preclude the library's acquisition of a title. If the title is in demand or is determined to fill a particular need of the library, it may be acquired.

In addition to reviews, the library uses standard lists of basic works, visual inspection, publisher's catalogs, and bibliographies. At times, the library staff may consult subject area specialists to obtain advice on building certain subjects or areas of the collection.

Some factors influencing selection of an item include (but are not limited to): factual accuracy and reliability of information, timeliness, current usefulness, significance of the subject, popular interest, permanent value, relevance to the existing collection, qualifications of author or illustrator, style and readability, reputation of the publisher, arrangement of the material, format and physical qualities, and price.

Non-book materials are an integral part of the library's holdings; these include but are not limited to: periodicals, videos, audios, compact discs, CD-ROMs, films, filmstrips, and access to electronic information. The selection of non-book materials is governed by the same criteria which apply to books. In addition, special consideration is given to the technical quality of non-print materials (e.g. sound quality in recording, searching engine in electronic information, color reproduction in videos, etc.)

Demand is a valid factor in material selection. Materials selected by these criteria will be of popular interest and in high demand or of significant current interest, not always of enduring value. An item in heavy demand may be duplicated if prolonged use is anticipated; however, the Dwight Foster Public Library will not duplicate heavily at the expense of a first copy of important, though less-called-for material needed in the permanent collection.

The library recognizes its responsibility to have available a representative selection of materials on subjects of interest to its users. No library material shall be excluded because of race, nationality, or the political or social view of the author.

The library takes no sides on public issues, and does not attempt to promote any beliefs or points of view, nor does it endorse the opinions expressed in the materials held. The library recognizes its responsibility to provide various points of view, within the limitations of space, budget, and availability, and to enable people to make their own decisions.

Suppliers for library materials will be at the discretion of the Library Director and trained staff. Speed, pricing structure, availability, and service will all be considerations.

ACCESS

The library assures free access to its holdings for all patrons who are free to select or reject for themselves any item in the collection. Individual or group prejudice about a particular item or type of materials in the collection may not preclude its use by others.

Library materials will not be sequestered except for the purpose of protection from theft or damage.

Children are not limited to the juvenile collection, although the juvenile collection is kept together to facilitate use. Responsibility for a child's reading or viewing must rest with the parent or guardian of the child, not with the library. In this, librarians can be important allies to the family. Professional members of the library staff are trained to help all patrons identify and seek materials which are appropriate to their expressed needs and viewpoints. The collection is designed to serve the whole community.

THE LIBRARY AND THE FAMILY

Most parents acknowledge and vigorously defend their own right and responsibility to guide their own children's moral development. The library supports the family in this.

However, some people demand that the library collection exclude difficult or controversial materials from which they wish to shield their own (or somebody else's) children.

It is precisely at the point that a child encounters difficult or disturbing information—whether in daily life or in a book, video, etc. that the parent must do his or her part.

That the task may occasionally seem overwhelming begs the issue. To sanitize a library collection to avoid the possibility of such moments dodges the point.

Through library materials, some subjects can be approached with children in a context which will aid the parents in preparing the child for adulthood. The timing of such encounters as a child grows up is a serious matter. It is not entirely controllable. Nevertheless, guidance in these matters is the parents' responsibility.

CHALLENGED MATERIALS

The Dwight Foster Public Library Board subscribes in principle to the statements on library philosophy as expressed by the American Library Association in the [Library Bill of Rights](#) and the [Freedom to Read statement](#). Copies of both documents are linked.

When a citizen objects to a particular selection, the objections shall be made in writing and the following procedures will be adhered to in processing the complaint:

- Be a resident of the City of Fort Atkinson OR a non-librariated area of Jefferson Co. Residents' taxes from these areas pay for the materials held by the library; therefore, only residents may request that a materials be reconsidered.
- Be a Dwight Foster Public Library card holder.
- Patron reads *Materials Selection Policy* and [Library Bill of Rights](#);
- Patron completes the *Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials* form;
- Patron returns the form to the library;
- Following a 45-day grace period, the Director will present the form to the Library Board of Trustees at its next regularly scheduled meeting; (Library Board of Trustees members are to study the item in question during the 45-day grace period.)
- Patron requesting the evaluation will be invited to attend the board meeting at which the material and the request will be discussed;
- Library Board will make a final decision in regard to the item;
- Patron requesting the evaluation will be notified in writing of the Library Board of Trustees' decision.
- If a material, work, or book has been reconsidered for the collection, the Library Board will not review it again for 12 months.

REPLACEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

The library keeps its collection vital and useful by retaining or replacing essential material, and removing on a systematic and continuous basis those books which are worn, outdated, of little historical significance, or no longer in demand. Proceeds resulting from the sale of single items valued over \$100 will go to the City of Fort Atkinson. Other discarded items may be given to other libraries or organizations, but are usually given to the Friends of the Dwight Foster Public Library. These discarded items are then sold by and for the benefit of the Friends of the Dwight Foster Public Library. Items unsuitable for the Friends of the Library book sale, items which have not sold after a period of time, and other discarded items may be disposed of.

GIFTS

The library will encourage and gratefully accept gifts with the understanding that gifts of materials will be added to the collection only if they meet the same standards required of purchased materials. Gift materials are considered with the explicit understanding that such factors as currency, duplication, lack of community interest, processing costs, unsuitability for library use, or inadequate shelf space may prevent their addition to the collection. Gift materials not meeting the same standard as purchased materials may be given to other organizations, sold, recycled, or discarded.

A letter for tax purposes will be sent to the donor if requested at the time the donation is made, acknowledging receipt of the gift by specifying no value.

Whenever a gift is no longer needed, it will be disposed of in the same manner as material purchased.

All gift items become the library's property from the time of the receipt until the time of disposal.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

The library assumes the responsibility for acquiring and maintaining certain materials of local historical interest. Local newspaper and county census records on microfilm will be acquired and maintained. The published works of local authors/illustrators will form an important part of this collection.

Works authored by or owned by Lorine Niedecker, Fort Atkinson poet, will be acquired and maintained for historical interest. Works written about Lorine Niedecker will also be acquired for the collection.

Newbery and Caldecott Medal books will be acquired for and maintained in the Waterman Memorial Collection.

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