



Collection Development

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the selection of library materials and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made.

OBJECTIVES

The Rowan County Public Library (“the Library”) acquires, organizes, makes available, and encourages the use of all media, print and non-print, that:

- contribute to the individual’s awareness of self, community, and society while providing insight into a wide range of human and social conditions and various cultural heritages;
- meet the informational and recreational needs of the entire community;
- stimulate thoughtful participation in the affairs of the community, the state, the nation, and the world;
- give free access to a variety of opinions and ideas; and
- assist individuals to grow intellectually and culturally.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION OF MATERIALS

The selection of materials for the collection is the responsibility of the Executive Director and is done so within the framework of the policies determined by the Board of Trustees. The Executive Director delegates selection of particular materials to qualified selectors who each oversee a different area of the collection for which they acquire and withdraw materials. The Library welcomes suggestions for selection from the staff, Board, and community, but the final decision for inclusion in the collection rests with the Executive Director.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Each type of material must be considered in terms of its own merit and the audience for whom it is intended. No single standard can be applied in all cases. The following criteria shall be used as guidelines in the selection process. The following list is not ordered by importance. An item need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable.

- Accuracy, authority, and objectivity
- Appropriateness of form, subject, and style for intended audience
- Artistic presentation
- Availability of material in other libraries
- Availability of material in print or other formats
- Breadth and depth of coverage
- Currency of information
- Local significance
- Importance as a document of the times
- Inclusion in standard bibliographies, awards lists, or bestseller lists
- Permanent value as source material or interpretation
- Popular appeal and demand
- Price
- Relationship to existing materials in collection
- Relationship to materials available elsewhere
- Relevance to community needs and interests
- Representation of an important movement, genre, trend, or national culture



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- Reputation or qualifications of the author, publisher, or other contributor
- Reviews in professionally recognized sources
- Space available on library shelves
- Suitability of physical form for library use
- Unique or controversial point of view
- Vitality and originality

All of these specific factors do not and will not apply to every item selected. The aim of this policy is to facilitate the building of a diversified library collection of merit and significance that reflects the interests and needs of the total community within the physical and budgetary constraints of the Library. Selectors consult reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids and booklists, including, but not limited to: Publishers Weekly, Library Journal, Booklist, VOYA, School Library Journal, and Horn Book.

AREAS OF LIMITED, OR NO, ACQUISITION

Obscene Materials

Materials will be excluded that are defined as obscene according to Kentucky Revised Statutes, Chapter 531.010:

“Obscene means:

- (a) To the average person, applying contemporary community standards, the predominant appeal of the matter, taken as a whole, is to prurient interests in sexual conduct; and
- (b) the matter depicts or describes the sexual conduct in a patently offensive way; and
- (c) the matter, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value.”



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Textbooks, Test Preparation, and Curriculum Support

The Library encourages students at all levels to use the books and other materials in the collection. The collection may include some textbooks and test preparation materials that are useful to the general reader, but the Library will not attempt to provide textbooks for formal courses of study. The Library is not obligated to provide multiple copies of materials for classroom assignments.

Interlibrary Loan

Interlibrary loan refers to the process of borrowing materials from other libraries. When the Library deems a requested item unavailable or inappropriate for purchase, the item may be borrowed from another library through interlibrary loan, in accordance with the Library's policies and procedures regarding interlibrary loans.

Other Areas of Limited, or No, Acquisition

- Puzzle- or workbooks that encourage filling in blanks.
- Materials that are publicized solely through infomercials or personal websites, and/or about which authoritative and evaluative information is lacking.
- Self-published/subsidy-published materials, unless they are reviewed in established publications. Exceptions are made for materials whose content is within the scope of the special collections area and meet its criteria.



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SCOPE OF COLLECTION

Adult Print Fiction and Nonfiction Collections

The Library's collection of fiction for adults includes bestsellers, genre fiction, classic literature, literary works, and books of general interest; the focus is broad and eclectic. The primary purpose of this collection is to satisfy demand from recreational readers. Newly published titles are emphasized, and multiple copies are acquired when warranted by demand.

The focus of the nonfiction collection is to meet general information needs in a wide range of topics of current and ongoing interest to the community. Materials pertaining to developing areas of knowledge are selected in as much quantity and variety as is possible without omitting items essential to maintain breadth in the collection. In subjects such as science, technology, and geopolitics, where the currency of the information is particularly important, new material is regularly selected to reflect changes in these areas.

The Library will purchase accurate, scientific, and current books on human sexuality for adults and young persons. Some areas covered include, but are not limited to: Sex education for all ages, family planning, human reproduction and childbirth, sexually transmitted diseases, and sexual orientation.

The Library attempts to include authoritative materials that introduce and explain the basic concepts, beliefs, practices, and background of all major religions. An attempt is made to include the sacred scriptures of these major religions.

Juvenile Collection

The objective in providing reading material for children is to guide the child toward the enjoyment and appreciation of reading, as well as meeting the developmental and informational needs of children from birth to approximately grade five (5) and the needs of parents, educators, and others concerned with children. Materials in a variety of print and non-print formats are selected for all levels of children's understanding and reading abilities.



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Young Adult/Teen Collection

The young adult/teen collection serves as a transition between the juvenile collection and the adult collection. Materials in a variety of print and non-print formats are selected to meet the informational, recreational, and emotional concerns of teens in grades six (6) through 12.

Audiovisual Materials

The Library maintains an extensive collection of music, audiobooks, visual recordings, and other audiovisual materials. The Library makes no attempt to provide a comprehensive collection of composers, performers, titles, or authors. When selecting audiovisual materials, the following factors are taken into consideration in addition to aforementioned selection criteria:

- Technological trends and advances
- Types of equipment customers are likely to own
- Types of materials available for purchase
- Vulnerability to damage and/or theft

Video Game Collection

The primary purpose of the video game collection is to meet the recreational demands of the community. The Library maintains an extensive collection which includes action, adventure, fighting, first-person shooter, puzzle, racing, rhythm, role-playing, sports, and strategy games. When selecting video games, the following factors are taken into consideration in addition to aforementioned selection criteria:

- Technological trends and advances
- Types of equipment customers are likely to own
- Types of materials available for purchase



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- Vulnerability to damage and/or theft

Sources for review include, but are not limited to: trade publications, general gaming magazines and websites, and console-specific publications.

Reference

The reference collection is a non-circulating collection of materials designed to provide access to factual information in authoritative forms. It includes, but is not limited to: Standard reference tools such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, almanacs, handbooks, directories, and biographical materials.

Special Collections

The Library maintains a special, non-circulating collection of genealogy and local history materials. In addition to rare or fragile books, the collection includes, but is not limited to: Maps, microform, and a vertical file of newspaper clippings.

Periodicals and Newspapers

The Library endeavors to provide access to periodicals representing a wide range of subjects and interests as well as to provide access to newspapers offering local, state, and national coverage.

Electronic Resources

The Library provides access to a wide variety of educational and recreational databases as well as access to electronic content provided by third party vendors. While some e-materials are selected by the Library, vendors frequently offer pre-selected content for its subscribers.



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Large Print

To better serve our visually impaired patrons, the Library maintains a collection of large print books, including both fiction and nonfiction.

Foreign Language

The Library maintains a small collection of foreign language materials. The Library may change the scope of its foreign language collection in response to local demographic changes.

GIFTS, DONATIONS AND MEMORIALS:

As a general rule, monetary donations will be used for augmenting the Library's materials budgets and will not normally be used to purchase materials specifically requested by the donor. Exceptions are made at the Executive Director's sole discretion and are subject to the criteria for selection.

COLLECTION MAINTENANCE

The Library will undertake a continuous inventory and weeding of all holdings in order to update the collection, to identify missing items, and to ensure the accuracy of the collections database. The collection is maintained and weeded through an ongoing process of collection analysis using established methodologies such as the CREW (Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding) method for guidance. Items are repaired, withdrawn, or replaced based on several factors, including, but not limited to:

- Affordability
- Appearance in standard lists
- Availability at other libraries



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- Availability of similar materials in the collection
- In-print status
- Number of circulations, requests and reserves
- Physical condition
- Space available

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

The Library and the Library Board of Trustees uphold the right of all individuals to freely express their thoughts and ideas, both popular and unpopular, and support the right of each individual to privately read, listen, and view the full range of published thought and ideas. In support of these ideals, the Library offers a collection of materials that is diverse, inclusive, and protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. The Library Board endorses the Rowan County Public Library Bill of Rights (Appendix A).

CENSORSHIP

The selection of library materials is predicated on library customers' right to read and to be free from censorship by others. Many items are controversial and any given item may offend some persons. The Library's collection contains a diversity of viewpoints and opinions. The presence of an item in the library does not indicate the Library's endorsement of its contents. Selection of materials by the Library will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the material in relation to building the collection and to serving the interest of the readers. The Library holds censorship to be a purely individual matter and declares that anyone is free to reject for themselves books or other materials, but cannot exercise any right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others. The decision about what a minor may or may not read is the responsibility of the parent or guardian.



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ACCESS TO MATERIAL

The Library will not restrict customers' access to material based on their origin, background, or views. Materials are freely and easily accessible to the public. Children are not limited to the juvenile collection and young adults are not limited to the young adult collection. The arrangement of materials within the library will take into consideration contemporary community sensibilities and the strategic goal of offering a welcoming environment. Responsibility for a minor's access to the collection, both physical and electronic, must rest with the parent or guardian, not with the Library. As is the case with adults, circulation to minors cannot be denied by the Library. Library staff will not express judgment on, or monitor, anyone's reading.

LABELING OF MATERIALS

Labels on library materials are viewpoint-neutral directional aids designed to save the time of users. The fact that materials are purchased, processed, and added to the collection shall in no way reflect an endorsement of the materials.

CHALLENGED MATERIALS

Due to the diverse nature of the library collection, it is possible that any individual may find information and ideas with which he or she disagrees contained in the library's collection. For this reason, the Library has a Procedure to Address Challenged Materials (Appendix B). An individual who has a concern about the inclusion of a specific title in the collection is encouraged to discuss this concern with a librarian and/or submit a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form (Appendix C).



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Appendix A: Rowan County Public Library Bill of Rights

The Board of Trustees of the Rowan County Public Library affirms that this library is a forum for information and ideas, and that we should aspire to the following:

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all patrons of our library. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
2. This library should endeavor to provide materials and information presenting a diversity of points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be prohibited or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. This library should challenge censorship, as well as efforts to abridge free access to ideas, as it strives to provide information and enlightenment.
4. A person's right to use this library should not be denied or abridged because of that person's origin, background, or views.
5. This library should make its meeting rooms and exhibit spaces available to the public on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of the persons or groups requesting their use.

The Rowan County Public Library Bill of Rights is a statement on intellectual freedom and censorship. Some provisions have incorporated language from the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights. The American Library Association's interpretations of its Library Bill of Rights are not applicable to the RCPL Bill of Rights.



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Appendix B: Procedure to Address Challenged Materials

In the event that a customer objects to the presence of particular library materials, the employee(s) receiving the objection should offer to refer the customer to a supervisor or manager. If the customer does not wish to speak with anyone else, or is unsatisfied with the explanation offered by the supervisor or manager, they should be offered a Request for Reconsideration of Material Form (Appendix C). A reminder should be given to the customer that no action will be taken on the basis of a verbal complaint alone, and that they must read, view, or listen to the material in its entirety.

The form will be given to the Executive Director, who will acknowledge receipt with a letter to the customer explaining the procedure. This begins the formal review process. Each member of the Collection Development Committee will, in turn, be provided with the material in question, and do the following:

- Examine and discuss the concerns expressed in the request.
- Examine the challenged material by reading, viewing, or listening to the material in its entirety.
- Determine if the material was selected within the parameters of the Library's Collection Development Policy.
- Determine the general acceptance of the material by reading reviews, if available.
- Weigh the values, strengths, and weaknesses of the material and form opinions on the basis of the entire work rather than on limited passages or sections taken out of context.
- Consider the material in the context of the Library's mission statement.
- Review the material in conjunction with the Rowan County Public Library Bill of Rights (Appendix A).

The Collection Development Committee will meet to discuss their findings. When a decision is reached, the Chair of the Collection Development Committee will prepare a letter of response with the Executive Director's approval, and mail the letter to the customer who initiated the request. If the Committee does not reach a decision within 60 days from the date of the request



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for reconsideration, the Executive Director will notify the customer in writing, stating that the title is still under review and that a letter will be mailed upon a decision. The Executive Director will then notify the Board of Trustees of the Committee's decision at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees.

In the event that the customer who initiated the request is not satisfied with the decision of the committee, they may appeal for a hearing before the Board of Trustees by making a written request to the President of the Board. The Board will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled in accordance with the stated policies and procedures of the Rowan County Public Library.



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Appendix C: Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials Form

Material Author:

Material Format:

Material Title:

Publisher:

Date Published:

Request Initiated By:
(Please print name.)

Address:

Telephone:

Email Address:

Do you represent yourself or an organization? (Please specify the group or organization.)



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Have you read, listened to, or viewed this material in its entirety?

How *recently* have you read, listened to, or viewed this material in its entirety?

What do you believe to be the main theme or point of this material?

To what within this material do you object? Please be specific: Cite page number(s) in book, scene(s) in movie, lyrics on album, etc.

Why do you believe this material does not comply with RCPL's Collection Development Policy?

For what age(s) would you recommend this material?

Is there anything good about this material?



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Are there conditions under which this material might be helpful to someone?

Are you aware of reviews by literary or other appropriate critics?

What would you like for the Library to do about this material? Circle one:

- Keep the material Move the material to another location within the library Remove the material

Signature:

Date:

Please be sure that this request is fully completed and signed.

Think. Connect. Library.