



Putnam County District Library

Collection Development Policy

The purpose of this policy is to guide staff members in building and maintaining the Putnam County District Library's (PCDL) collection and to explain to the public how collection decisions are made.

Collection development is an ongoing activity at the PCDL. The collection evolves as material formats, community needs and interests change. The PCDL fulfills its mission by selecting materials for the enlightenment, cultural development, and enjoyment of all members of the public. This includes persons of all ages and many levels of interest and ability.

An author's origin, gender, background, or viewpoint will not cause his or her work to be summarily excluded from the collection. Selection and deselection of materials will not be based on anticipated approval or disapproval, but rather upon the merits of the work in relation to the community's needs and interests. The library makes an effort to have information on all sides of controversial issues. Censorship is an individual matter. Every person has the right to reject items for him or herself, but no one has the right to censor or to restrict the freedom of others to read, view, and listen.

All libraries are likely to contain materials which any given patron may find objectionable. Additionally, a library's collection may not contain all the materials which some patrons feel are important. All opinions are welcome, and this policy establishes procedures which allow patrons to make their opinions known in either case.

The responsibility for monitoring a child's reading, listening, and viewing rests with the parent or legal guardian. Selection of materials for the entire library is not restricted by the possibility that children may find materials that their parents consider inappropriate.

The PCDL does not label materials except to aid the public in finding them in the library. Thus, stickers such as "new" or "mystery" may be used; judgmental statements as "This material contains language which some may find offensive" will not.

The PCDL supports the principles set forth in the Library bill of rights and Freedom to Read statement adopted by the American Library Association (See Appendix A and Appendix B).

Responsibility for Selection of Library Materials

Final responsibility for the collection rests with the Director, subject to the policies and mandates of the Board of Trustees. The Youth Services Librarian oversees the selection and deselection of all juvenile and young adult materials including movies rated G or PG and music for all library locations. The Reference Librarian oversees the selection and deselection of all non-fiction and reference materials for all locations. The Director oversees the selection and deselection of all fiction, adult music and movies rated PG-13 or R materials for all locations. In some instances, direct selection of materials is delegated to staff members who are qualified by education, training or job classification to perform this duty.

Collection Objectives

The PCDL affirms the following collection development objectives:

1. To provide patrons with equal access to information regardless of their age, gender, race, background, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation, economic status, or any other factor.
2. To meet patrons' informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs by providing equitable access to a well-balanced, unbiased collection of materials in a variety of formats and reading levels.
3. To support patrons' intellectual freedom by building an unbiased collection representing many points of view.
4. To remain responsive to the community's changing needs and interests.
5. To organize, maintain, and administer the collection in a responsible manner.

Principles of Collection Development

The collection is targeted to the local community, addressing the needs of both current and potential library users. To best serve the community, selectors have a professional responsibility to be inclusive, not exclusive, when choosing items. It is improper for a selector to include or exclude an item solely on the basis of his or her personal opinions or beliefs.

Items are evaluated as a whole, not on the basis of a particular section or sections. Thus, an item will not be included or excluded from the collection because of:

1. The author's race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, or views.
2. Depictions or descriptions of violence or sexual activity.
3. Controversial content.
4. Endorsement or disapproval by an individual or community group.

The content, not the format, is the most important consideration. Limited space may make it necessary to have needed information on microfilm or other electronic data-storage device rather than in the original or "hard" copy.

Collection Scope

Both circulating and reference materials will be collected at the General Interest/Initial Study level for all subject areas. This level is defined as follows:

The library system shall house a selective collection of print and non-print materials which is adequate to support general interest, high school and some undergraduate introductory courses, and the beginning stages of independent study. The emphasis is on recent materials intended to meet the general reading interests of the lay person and the student. It should be comprehensive enough to support broad subject areas, but is not designed to provide support for all sub-topics in subject areas. The collection includes recognized significant works from the past, a broad selection of the works of the more important

writers and some major works of secondary writers. Current editions of major reference works providing broad subject coverage and some reference sources covering selected sub-topics are purchased. Periodical subscriptions include the general titles plus some that cover specialized or important aspects of the subject. Growth and development are gradual.

Because the PCDL currently serves patrons in eight (8) locations, it is occasionally necessary to obtain multiple copies of important or popular titles and/or authors.

The vast majority of printed materials are collected in English. The library collects a limited number of Spanish language titles. The library does not attempt to provide a wide selection of recreational reading materials in any foreign language. Foreign language dictionaries and instructional materials are collected to aid patrons in learning other languages. Foreign films in the original language with subtitles are preferred over dubbed versions, unless reviews indicate that the subtitles are difficult to read. A small collection of materials is maintained to aid those for whom English is a foreign or second language.

The PCDL purchases large print books to assist patrons with visual disabilities. The library attempts to purchase both popular and classic titles in this format.

The PCDL does not acquire textbooks, professional or academic journals, or other curriculum-related materials except as such materials might also serve the general public (for example, basic science books). Nor does the library attempt to duplicate titles or items in sufficient quantity to meet the assigned informational demands of local institutions, schools, and colleges or non-institutional reading groups. However, multiple copies of titles are available with advance notice from other library systems.

General Selection Criteria

Because its ability to purchase and store materials is limited by both budgets and buildings, the PCDL has established criteria for the purchase and retention of materials. The criteria include, but are not limited to:

1. Current patron interest
2. Timeliness
3. Educational significance
4. Accuracy or representative of a particular point of view
5. Contribution to the breadth of representative viewpoints
6. Value commensurate with cost and/or need
7. Reputation of the author/publisher/producer

Whenever possible, selectors will base purchases upon reviews found in professional library review sources. Since not every item is reviewed, publishers' and producers' catalogs sometimes provide the only available information about a title. While catalogs are valuable resources, selectors must remember to consider a publisher's reputation and exercise caution about accepting a copywriter's evaluation of a work. Many professional library organizations and journals release annual lists for the most outstanding

items. These lists, representing the collective opinion of the library profession, are valuable selections resources and selectors are encouraged to consult them.

Selection by Format

In addition to the general selection criteria stated above, selectors will consider additional criteria depending on an item's format.

Audio-books

Audio-books will meet the same criteria as printed books. Additionally, selectors must consider the availability of replacement CDs should a portion of the audio-book become damaged.

E-Books

E-Books will meet the same criteria as printed books. Currently, the PCDL belongs to the Serving Every Ohioan (SEO) Consortium and purchases E-books for a shared catalog. Selectors must consider the parameters of this collection when choosing E-books.

Books

Printed books comprise the bulk of the collection. Fiction will include not only the classics and bestsellers but also competent or successful works in a wide range of genres. Non-fiction titles will be considered based on the significance and relevance of the subject, accuracy, timeliness and effectiveness of presentation. Selectors will consider a book's construction and durability while making purchase decisions.

Electronic Resources

Electronic resources and databases are chosen based on the resources' scope, ease of use, and interface in addition to gaps in the collection and patron interest.

Government Documents

The PCDL is not a depository library and cannot collect all documents published by the federal government or the State of Ohio. The library does acquire a small number of government documents likely to be of use to its patrons.

Periodicals

Magazines and newspapers are purchased for up-to-date information, coverage of local news, the ability to meet the community's interests, and for use in the selection of other materials.

Video/Audio Recordings

Video and audio recordings are selected for artistic and technical quality, in addition to public interest and the effectiveness of the format in presenting material on a specific topic.

Both fiction and nonfiction videos for adults and children are included in the collection. Current releases are included as well as classics and foreign titles. The goal is to have a wide range of quality items, especially titles or types not available elsewhere in the community. As a rule, the library purchases all films that have won major awards (Academy Award Golden Globe, etc.). Such awards are an indication of quality. Public performance rights are purchased for films that can be used for multiple library programs.

Based on reviews, selectors may elect to buy several titles in a series but not the entire series. This applies to series with stand-alone episodes and not to those which are continuous.

Many videos include the MPAA Rating (G, PG, PG-13, R and NC-17) on the original package. This packaging is generally preserved in the library's processing procedures. The presence of an MPAA Rating gives consumers some decision-making information, but patrons should understand that it is just one rating source. MPAA ratings are both private and anonymous; studios choose to receive them on a voluntary basis. The rating does not have the force of law, and reflects cultural attitudes prevalent at the time of the movie's production. A movie that would get one rating this year could get another rating next year. For this reason, the PCDL will not affix any additional rating codes to the video package. Additionally selectors will not summarily include or exclude a title from the collection solely on the basis of an "R" rating. Selectors must choose titles based on each work's merits and not merely rely upon the subjective MPAA rating system.

Standing Order Plans

Titles on standing order have three (3) characteristics in common:

1. The titles are seldom reviewed
2. The titles are often issued on a regular basis
3. The titles are important enough to the collection that receiving them automatically without evaluating individual volumes is better than missing them.

Examples of items on standing order are travel guides, annual reference books, books by best-selling authors, and books in a series.

Deselection of Library Materials (Weeding)

The PCDL will weed its collection on a regular basis to ensure that the collection remains fresh, current, useful, and attractive. Trained staff members will weed the collection by using professional judgment and generally following the principles established by the CRW Manual, a widely-accepted set of detailed weeding guidelines. Each selector will supervise weeding of the collection section for which he or she is responsible. Materials will not be weeded from the collection without the appropriate selector's knowledge.

Materials removed from the library's catalog due to loss may be considered for replacement. Materials discarded because of poor conditions may be considered for replacement or repair. Discarded materials become surplus property and may be sold by the Friends of the Library organizations for fundraising purposes.

Donation of Materials

Gifts and donations of materials are always appreciated. Donations become the property of the PCDL. Donated materials will be reviewed by the appropriate selector to ensure that they meet the selection criteria outlined in this policy before they can become part of the library's permanent collection. The library reserves the right to dispense with donated materials in any manner that it deems appropriate. The library regrets that it cannot provide donors with appraisals of their donation's value.

Memorial Items

The library seeks to serve Memorial donors by building the best collection possible. Items selected to fulfill Memorial requests must meet the selection criteria outlined in this policy. An item's longevity is a

very important consideration when selecting Memorial titles. Selectors will choose titles of enduring value in high-quality, durable formats.

While the library will attempt to select titles matching an honoree's interests, the library cannot always fulfill requests for specific titles.

Occasionally, it may be necessary to weed a Memorial item due to its condition or relevancy. Memorial books will be weeded according to the criteria and method outlined in this policy.

Request for Reconsideration of Materials

The PCDL recognizes that materials in its collection may be controversial and that any given item may concern a patron. In such instances, the library can best serve the concerned patron by using existing selection criteria to include materials that reflect his or her viewpoint in the collection rather than removing the disputing materials.

Should a patron decide to formally request that an item be removed from the library's collection, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The patron will receive professional and courteous service throughout the reconsideration process.
2. The patron will be directed to the Library Director or a supervisor. This individual will acknowledge the patron's concern and briefly explain the selection and reconsideration process. The patron should also be given a copy of the library's collection development policy.
3. The patron will be asked to complete a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form (see Appendix C). A completed "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form must be submitted to the Director for the process to proceed.
4. The Director will appoint a committee of three (3) staff members to review the disputed item. This committee will include the staff member responsible for selecting the materials in the area of the disputed item.
5. The staff committee will review the disputed item, ensure that it meets the selection criteria in the library's collection development policy, and collect any available published reviews of the item. Within three (3) weeks, the committee will submit a written recommendation concerning the item to the Director.
6. Within one (1) week of receiving the committee's recommendation, the Director will make a decision regarding the material and provide the patron with a written response. Copies of the response will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees.
7. The patron may appeal this decision to the Board of Trustees within 30 days of receiving the Director's response. The Board of Trustees will be notified of the appeal at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board of Trustees will be furnished with the material in question, the committee's recommendation, and any available published reviews.
8. After review of the disputed item and any supporting materials, the Board of Trustees will make the final decision regarding the Request for Reconsideration.

9. Material under review should remain available to the public during the reconsideration process.

Request for Addition of Titles

The library exists to serve the community of Putnam County, and therefore welcomes suggestions for titles that the library should acquire. Any patron may request that a title be purchased for the library collection. The majority of requests are informal. Patrons may also make a formal request by filling out a "Request for Addition of Title" form (see Appendix D). The following procedure will be used to handle the request:

1. The patron will receive professional and courteous service throughout the process.
2. The completed "Request for Addition of Title" form will be given to the selector responsible for choosing books in the area of the request.
3. The selector will research the title to determine if it should be added to the collection.
4. Within two (2) weeks, the patron will be informed of the decision whether or not the library will add the title to its collection.
5. If the patron is dissatisfied with the decision, he or she may appeal in writing to the Director.
6. The Director will decide whether or not to purchase the title and inform the patron of the decision within 30 days of receiving the appeal.
7. If the patron is dissatisfied with the Director's decision, he or she may make a final written appeal to the Board of Trustees. The library will inform the patron of the Board's decision, usually following the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

Appendix A: The American Library Association 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 that 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.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Appendix B: The American Library Association's "Freedom to Read" Statement

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 or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

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

We therefore 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 that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation 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 should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

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.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

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; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

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, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. 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.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

Appendix C: "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" Form

PATRONS REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

Author: _____

Publisher: _____

Title: _____

Form of material (ie: book, video, recording, etc.): _____

Request initiated by: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

1. Whom do you represent:

a. Myself

b. Organization _____

2. Did you read, see, listen to or otherwise use the material in its entirety?

a. Yes

b. No

c. If No, which parts?

3. Have you seen or heard reviews of this material

a. Yes

b. No

c. If yes, please name the source: _____

4. What do you think the material is about? _____

5. To what in the work do you object? (Please be specific)

6. What do you feel might be the result of reading, viewing, or hearing this work?

7. For what age group would you recommend this work? _____

8. Is there anything good about the work?

9. What would you like the PCDL to do about this material?

10. In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject?

Signature _____ Date _____

The PCDL appreciates your interest. Your comments will be forwarded to the Director, who will respond to you by letter.

Appendix D: "Request for Addition of Title" Form

NEW BOOK REQUEST

Pub Date _____

Author: _____

Title: _____

Patron: _____ Staff Initials: _____

Phone: _____ Date: _____

ISBN: _____ Price: _____