

I found this assignment very interesting. Mainly because it seems to be a place in which many libraries are woefully lacking. When I asked my local librarian if Cambridge had a collections policy she said – “I don’t know, but I know I don’t use it if we do”. When I found it in the giant “policies binder” she said, “maybe I should make a copy of that for myself!”. However, after reading through countless examples it really does seem like a useful thing to have. It reminds people – both librarians and the public – why you do, what you do. And these days you have to remind people of that quite often – particularly if the word “budget” is involved. I approached this with a public library in mind. Policies I found very useful were: Cambridge Public Library, Hoboken Public Library, Montana State Library Policies for School Library Media programs, Boston Public Library, and the Brantford Public Library in Ontario, Canada. I looked at others too – but these seemed to be some of the more complete ones that I found.

Collection Development Policy for the Children’s Collection at the Hartman Public Library

Introduction – Purpose of Policy

Collection management policies, considered and formally adopted by the Library, are a prerequisite to maintaining a useful materials collection. These Collection Development Policies provide guidelines for the library staff in their role as selector of library material. It also serves as a method of communicating the Library’s principles to the public and other interested libraries.

The information needs of the community may change over time, and the community itself may change, leading to new areas of the collection. Technological changes provide new opportunities for information access, but must be carefully considered and chosen. All of these things must come into play when developing and revising collection policies. For that reason these policies will be reviewed no less than every five years.

Libraries Mission Statement & Goals

As a vital contributor to the quality of life of the citizens, the Hartman Public Library will connect people with the books and information they want by providing a broad and diverse collection of books and other library materials, innovative programs, a competent staff, timely service, appropriate technologies and an inviting facility.

Our goals:

- The Library’s services and programs will respond to community needs

- The Library’s collection will develop and expand in a way which reflects the communities interests and needs
- The Library will provide resources necessary for the community to make informed decisions in a changing world, by acquiring materials that cover a full range of social, political, educational, economic and other public policy issues.
- The Library will have adequate, functional, safe and inviting space for public and staff use.

Endorsement of the American Library Association policies

The library wholeheartedly endorses the American Library Association’s “Library Bill of Rights,” along with ALA’s “Freedom to Read,” and “Freedom to View” statements and their interpretations. (See Appendices A, B, and C, respectively, for full texts of these items). Freedom to read/view requires that all materials be equally accessible to all library users regardless of age, sex, economic, or ethnic/racial background. Therefore, it is the library’s policy neither to segregate material in closed collections nor to mark it with cautionary labels. Parents or guardians have the right to decide what materials are appropriate for their children and only their children.

Concerns about materials currently in the collection may be expressed by filling out a “Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials” form (Appendix D). These forms will be reviewed by the collection development coordinator, who will respond in writing to the patron. If the patron is so inclined, s/he may then appeal the coordinator’s decision, first to the library director, and then to the board of trustees. All forms must be signed by the complainant. Anonymous complaints will not be considered.

Selection Criteria

The primary goal of collection development is to provide the best possible collection with the financial resources available. The decision to select any item for the collection is based on demand, anticipated need, and the effort to maintain a wide and balanced collection.

Library materials are selected on the basis of informational, educational, cultural, and recreational value. These materials are selected in compliance with the mission and goals of the library. The following general criteria are also used in selecting materials for addition to the collection:

- 1) Importance and value to the collection and library users.
- 2) Significance of the subject matter.
- 3) Current appeal and popular demand.
- 4) Local interest.
- 5) Cost and budgetary constraints.
- 6) Authority, accuracy, and artistic quality.

- 7) Relevance to the experiences and contributions of diverse populations
8) review sources including but not limited to:

- *Book Page*
- *The Horn Book Magazine*
- *Kirkus Reviews*
- *Library Journal*
- *New York Review of Books*
- *The New York Times Book Review*
- *Publishers Weekly*
- *School Library Journal*

While most materials are acquired in English, the Library also acquires materials in other languages, principle among them is Spanish.

Varying Formats

Materials may be available in a variety of formats. Factors governing the choice of format include anticipated use, storage requirements, ease of access, cost and the format of earlier editions. When all other factors are equal, ease of access by the public should be the primary consideration.

Children's and Young Adult Materials

The children's department of the Public Library maintains a collection for children and young adults in the community from birth through grade twelve. The collection includes books, audiocassettes and CDs, periodicals, and various multimedia. The children's department attempts to purchase material in formats that are compatible with heavy use and that employ equipment that is widely available.

A juvenile reference collection is maintained for the use of children and young adults. Recognizing the extremely broad developmental range of children and young adults served, the children's department staff makes a special effort to include in the collection materials for children of every reading ability and comprehension level. The department also maintains circulating collections of materials for parents and teachers that focus on a variety of timely issues. To facilitate cooperation with school library media specialists, the children's department staff maintains a collection that provides supplementary materials for school assignments. However, textbooks and multiple copies of assigned reading are generally not purchased. Young adult collections, designed to meet the recreational and informational needs of adolescents in grades seven to twelve are also maintained.

The criteria used in the selection process for materials in the children's department are fundamentally identical to those used for adult materials. Final selection is based on favorable reviews in professional journals, inclusion in professional

bibliographies, and examination by children’s librarians. (See Appendix E for a list of sources).

Again, parents and parents only, have the right to restrict or monitor their own children’s access to library material.

Gifts and Donations

The library accepts gifts and donations. The library reserves the right to evaluate all gifts and donations in accordance with the criteria applied to purchased materials. Those which do not meet the library's objectives and policies may be refused. Bookplates may be provided for gifts, and a letter for tax purposes may be sent to the donor. No other conditions may be imposed relating to any gift or donation either before or after its acceptance by the library. Once the library has accepted a gift it is the sole owner of the item(s).

Deselection – “Weeding”

The withdrawal of materials, also called weeding, of the collection is an ongoing process directly related to collection development. Materials that are worn, damaged, outdated, duplicated, no longer accurate, and no longer used may be removed from the collection. The professional staff of the library, under the general direction and supervision of the Library Director, will be solely responsible for the weeding of the collection.

Appendices: (Appendix D is the only thing included for the purpose of this assignment)

Appendix A – Library Bill of Rights

Appendix B – Freedom to Read Statement

Appendix C – Freedom to View Statement

Appendix D – Request for Reconsideration (found in separate attachment)

Appendix E – Review Sources used by Library Staff for selection (this was something I found in a few of the policies. It isn’t just a list of titles, but a more complete bibliography. To the right person it could be quite useful, as well as informative regarding the selection process).