

Chapter 5

Collection Development

The Baright Public Library is a community institution that attempts to meet the informational, cultural, recreational, and educational needs of all the community's residents. The Library maintains an open, unbiased environment and upholds the public's right of access to information. Collection development is an ongoing activity, and the collection evolves as the needs of the community change and as technology provides additional or alternative resources.

Section 1: Selection Responsibility and Guidelines

The Baright Public Library community includes people from diverse educational, cultural and economic backgrounds who display a variety of interests, needs, values, and viewpoints.

The library director and other designated staff members have the responsibility to select materials and electronic resources by adhering to accepted professional practices and working within review procedures.

Selections are based on general knowledge of subject areas, familiarity with the materials in the collection, an awareness of the selection tools available, and recognition of community needs as identified by circulation, customer requests, local interests, and trends.

Selectors recognize the importance of informed citizens who know their heritage and the issues facing the community. Library customers will find materials to stimulate their imaginations and enhance their leisure time. Library staff support the library's mission to provide educational, informational, cultural, and recreational library materials to reflect our popular culture. Selected materials will serve the full range of ages, cultures, lifestyles, education, reading, and technology skills of citizens. To reflect the complex culture shared by the community, the collection includes diverse points of view and a choice of formats, treatments, and levels of difficulty. A balanced collection is achieved through the diversity of materials rather than an equal number of items. The library staff work within the constraints of budget, availability, and physical space.

The Library does not collect materials to support local school curricula except when these materials will also serve the general public. The Library will collect supplementary and enrichment materials that support lifelong learning and provide a starting point for those seeking more advanced information or materials.

The collection is generally not archival, and items are expected to be used frequently. The library staff assesses the collection regularly to ensure that the collection is current.

The Library's Nebraska Collection represents some state and local history, and does not

take the place of the collections of the Ralston Archives Museum.

As the Library strives to have a collection that represents the diversity of our service population, some materials in languages other than English are acquired. Bilingual materials and English subtitled DVDs are acquired to support lifelong learning and recreational reading. Materials will be evaluated using the same guidelines and policies used for English-language materials.

All materials are evaluated using the following criteria:

- Content fits within mission and strategic plan of the Baright Public Library
- Popular Demand
- Cost
- Timeliness
- Scarcity of material on the subject and availability elsewhere
- Suitability of form for library use
- Quality or sustainability of the format
- Representation of diverse points of view and broad knowledge base
- Relevance to community needs
- Consideration of the work as a whole
- Technical quality
- Physical limitations of the building

Materials in electronic format are evaluated using the following additional criteria:

- Added value over other formats
- User-friendly interface
- Remote and in-house accessibility
- Unlimited access, when possible
- Customer access based on library card number
- Vendor-provided usage statistics
- Maintained over a variety of computer platforms

An item need not meet all the criteria to be acceptable.

Materials are purchased in print and non-print formats to maintain a current collection, to recognize the needs of citizens, and to maintain fiscal responsibility.

Multiple copies of popular books may be purchased to meet short-term demand. Regardless of an item's popularity, the library may choose not to select it if the available format is not durable enough to withstand reasonable library use or if it would require excessive staff time to maintain.

The library director will allocate funds, based on the annual budget, to the different collections based on current needs.

Objections to items in the collection should be made in writing to the library director following the "Request for Reconsideration of Materials" policy. Materials that no

longer meet the needs of the community and no longer support the library's collection will be withdrawn and disposed of in accordance with the library's "Deselection of Materials" policy.

Section 2: Intellectual Freedom

The Library Board believes that censorship is an individual matter and declares that while anyone is free to reject materials of which they do not approve, no one can exercise the right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others to read. The Board believes that access to all materials legally obtainable should be assured to the public, and policies should not unjustly exclude materials even if offensive to the Library staff or a Board member personally or to some members of the community.

The Board declares that materials meeting selection criteria will be accessible to all customers. The responsibility for monitoring a child's reading, listening, and viewing rests with the parent or legal guardian. Selection of materials for the Library is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain materials that their parents consider inappropriate.

The Board defends the principles of the freedom to read. The Board declares it will adhere to and support the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to View, and the Freedom to Read statements as adopted by the American Library Association. (See Appendix.)

Section 3: Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

The library welcomes comments and suggestions regarding the continued appropriateness of materials in the collection, especially with regard to outdated materials. Suggestions and recommendations will be considered and utilized by the library in the ongoing process of collection development.

Individuals may take issue with library materials that do not support their own views or values on a subject or that are not compatible with their beliefs. Staff is available to discuss concerns and to identify alternate materials that may be available. If a customer's concern is not satisfied through discussion with staff, a formal written request for reconsideration of materials may be submitted to the library director. Copies of this form are available at the circulation desk or from the library director.

The Baright Public Library is not a judicial body. Laws governing obscenity, subversive materials, and other questionable matters are subject to interpretation by the courts. Therefore, no challenged material will be removed solely based on a complaint of obscenity or any other category covered by law until a local court of competent jurisdiction has ruled against the material. No material will be knowingly added to the library collection that has been previously determined to be in noncompliance with local laws.

For a request for reconsideration to be considered, the form must be completed in full. The customer submitting the request must be a resident of Ralston and hold a valid borrower's card. The library staff and the director consider each request in terms of the criteria outlined in the library's materials selection policy and the principles of the ALA Library Bill of Rights and related statements, printed reviews, and other appropriate sources. The director will respond, in writing within 30 days of receipt, to the customer's request for consideration. The response will indicate the action to be taken and reasons for or against the request. Appeals are directed to the Board for final decision. An item will be evaluated for reconsideration only once in a 12-month period.

Section 4: Assessment and Deselection of Materials

In order to maintain the collection in optimum condition, materials that no longer fit the mission and service priorities of the library will be withdrawn from the collection. The director will use her/his judgment in removing from the collection materials which are no longer relevant, current, accurate, or are not in a condition suitable for circulation. Circulation history and community interest will be considered as well as the same criteria used in materials selection. Decisions will be made based on acceptable professional practices, such as those described in The CREW Method, and the professional judgment of the director or designated staff.

In accordance with local law, materials no longer useful to the library may be given to other libraries, sold for the benefit of the library, or discarded.

Section 5: Gifts and Donations

The Library seeks and accepts unrestricted gifts of books and other materials with the understanding that they will be added to the library collection only as needed. Donations should be clean and in good physical condition. The library does not accept donations of old magazines, textbooks, or encyclopedias.

All donations are accepted without restrictions or special conditions and immediately become the property of the library. They cannot be returned. Some donations will be added to the collection. The same principles of selection that are applied to purchases are applied to gifts. The rest will be donated to the Baright Public Library Foundation for their annual book sale. Donations added to the collection may subsequently be withdrawn from the collection under the same criteria that are applied to purchased items.

Some gifts cannot be used to full advantage because of duplication or insufficient value. The donor of any gift should understand that the Library retains unconditional ownership and makes the final decision on the acceptance, use, and disposition of all donated items and funds.

Items donated by specific groups or organizations that are added to the collection may have a nameplate indicating the donor. No other information will be placed on this nameplate.

Items donated in memory of individuals will be considered for addition to the collection based on established selection criteria. Memorial nameplates may be added at the discretion of the Library Director and the donor. These items may be withdrawn from the collection under the same criteria that are applied to purchased items.

Upon request of the donor, the library will provide a receipt for tax purposes. The library cannot assign a dollar value to donations.

Unrestricted real and/or fiscal gifts should be made to the Baright Public Library Foundation.

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