



Rapides Parish Library
Alexandria, Louisiana

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The purpose of this policy on collection development for Rapides Parish Library is to guide in the selection, retention and removal of materials and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made, based on the Rapides Parish Library Mission Statement:

The mission of the Rapides Parish Library is to promote lifelong learning, enhanced quality of life, and literacy through print, audiovisual and electronic resources. The Library staff ensures that all citizens receive the maximum value from available informational, educational, cultural and recreational resources.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF SELECTION

The Rapides Parish Library strives to ensure a free and equal opportunity to all residents of Rapides Parish, both children and adults, to secure reliable materials, information and professional guidance, which will enable them to enhance and broaden their cultural, educational, vocational and recreational lives, and thereby to contribute to the development and enrichment of the community.

The Library supports the principles of the Freedom to Read Statement and Library Bill of Rights (see appendices) and provides, within financial and spatial limitations, a large, responsive and stimulating collection of material to assist in the personal and social development of citizens irrespective of age, race, religion, national background, or economic, social or professional status. All materials are selected by this Library in accordance with these basic objectives.

The Library also recognizes the purposes and resources of other libraries in the community and shall not needlessly duplicate functions and materials. For items that the Library opts not to acquire, we will try to obtain them through interlibrary loan.

The Library will generally avoid the selection of materials that include hate speech, which is defined as speech, gesture or conduct, writing or display that may incite violence or prejudicial action against an individual or group.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR MATERIALS SELECTION

This Library Board adopts as part of its policy the following paragraphs from the Library Bill of Rights:

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.”



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Final responsibility for collection development is and shall be vested in the Director. However, the Director may delegate to such members of the staff as are qualified by reason of training, the authority to interpret and guide the application of the policy in making day-to-day selections. Unusual problems will be referred to the Director for resolution.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF SELECTION

The following basic standard criteria are considered in recommending titles for purchase and establishing the overall value of a title.

1. Customer interest
2. Literary merit
3. Authoritativeness: Authors' reputation and significance as writers, or their knowledge of the subject
4. Importance of subject matter to the collection
5. Timeliness or permanence of the title.
6. Appearance of title in special bibliographies or indexes
7. Existing subject matter in the collection
8. Absence of subject matter in the collection
9. Cost of the item and available shelf space
10. Community standards

The Library develops collections aimed at the special needs and interests of children (preschool through age 12) and teens (ages 13-17).

The Library believes that individuals should have access to more than one point of view and that the individuals' personal taste will dictate what they choose to read. It follows that free access to different points of view must be offered. The Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some people. Serious works which present an honest picture of some problem or aspect of life will at times be controversial, but they will not be excluded because of visual format, coarse language or frankness.



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SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Louisiana and Local History

The Library has the responsibility of collecting, organizing, and making available extensive information about Rapides Parish, the parish's various communities, and Louisiana.

The Library acknowledges a particular interest in local and state history. Therefore, it will seek to acquire state and municipal public documents, and it will take a broad view of works by Louisiana authors as well as works relating to the State of Louisiana, whether or not such materials meet the standards of selection in other respects. However, the Library is not under any obligation to add to its collections anything about Louisiana or produced by authors, printers, or publishers with Louisiana connections if it does not seem to be in the public interest to do so.

Motion Pictures

The Library purchases and accepts as gifts motion pictures that fit within the overall materials selection guidelines. The Library applies the ratings assigned by the Motion Picture Association of America to films.

When a film is unrated, the professional staff of the Library will assign a rating, using the same criteria as the MPAA.

Textbooks

The Library acquires textbooks and other curriculum related materials when such materials serve the general public.

GIFTS

Unconditional gifts, donations and contributions to the Library may be accepted by the Director on behalf of the Library Board of Control. No gifts or donations conditionally made shall be accepted without the approval of the Director.

The same standards of selection will govern the acceptance of gifts as govern purchase by the Library. If material is useful but not needed in this Library's collection, it may be disposed of at the discretion of the Director.

MAINTAINING THE COLLECTION

Systematic examination of materials in terms of usefulness to the public as defined in this policy is necessary in order to maintain relevant resources. Adjustments



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are based on level of public demand; physical condition of the item; other titles available on the same subject; use of the materials; currency of information; and availability of space.

REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION

The selection of library books and materials is predicated on the library customers' right to read, and similarly, their freedom from censorship by others. Many titles are controversial, and any given item may offend some persons. Selections for this Library will not, however, be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the material in relation to the building of the collection and to serving the interests of the readers.

This library holds censorship to be a purely individual matter and declares that--while all are free to reject for themselves books and other materials of which they do not approve--they cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others.

With respect to the use of the library materials by children, the decision as to what minors may read, view or listen to is the responsibility of their parents or guardians. The Library staff will not serve in loco parentis. Parental opinions on what is acceptable reading for children vary widely. Selection will not be inhibited by the possibility that books may come into the possession of minors.

Approved by Rapides Parish Library Board of Control October 17, 1995
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