

Collection Development and Materials Reconsideration Policy

 www.stanislauslibrary.org/about_policy_collection.shtm

The purpose of this collection development policy is to provide guidance for the selection, acquisition, maintenance, and retention of materials, and to outline roles and responsibilities related to collection development.

With the Stanislaus County Library's mission as its foundation, the library collects a broad range of materials of interest and use to area residents. Stanislaus County is a dynamic and diverse community, including individuals of every age, ability, educational background, culture, religious belief, and ethnicity. This diversity is reflected in the wide range of interests, concerns, and priorities residents pursue. The library contains materials that affirm many personal values; it also provides a place to experience and explore alternative views. The library therefore strives to support the broad range of educational, informational, and recreational needs and interests of our users. Doing so requires the inclusion of a wide range of perspectives and viewpoints.

RESPONSIBILITY

The ultimate responsibility for the collection rests with the County Librarian (EDC § 19146). The County Librarian delegates the selection of materials to staff librarians trained in the principles of materials selection, and knowledgeable in their selection areas. The overall management of the collection is coordinated by the Head of Collection Services.

PHILOSOPHY

The Stanislaus County Library affirms its support of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America. The library further endorses the following American Library Association statements:

- Library Bill of Rights
- Freedom to Read
- Freedom to View
- Libraries: An American Value

MATERIALS SELECTION

Scope

The Stanislaus County Library serves a diverse community and the library therefore acquires materials of wide-ranging interest to the general public. Materials selected are intended to meet the educational, cultural, informational, and recreational needs of the customers. Given this broad focus, the library is unable to meet more specialist research needs, such as those of college and university students. Circulating materials are available in a variety of formats and reading levels to meet individual needs. Except in the case of local material, we do not attempt to maintain historical collections. The scope of each category of the collection is further defined in subject area profiles maintained by the Head of Collection Services.

Criteria

To be selected for the collection, materials must meet some, but not necessarily all, of the following criteria:

- Popular interest
- Critical reviews, accuracy, literary merit
- Local or national significance
- Importance of the subject matter to the community
- Enduring value
- Clear presentation and readability for the intended audience
- Author's reputation and significance as a writer
- Reputation and standing of the publisher
- Scarcity of material on the subject
- Availability of the material elsewhere
- Need for materials reflecting all sides of issues
- Quality of the physical format
- Price, budget and space considerations

Other considerations may be applicable in specific subject areas. For example:

1. Textbooks are purchased only if the material is the best way to provide information to the customer.
2. Teacher resource materials, such as lesson plans and workbooks, are not usually purchased.
3. Self-published materials are subject to the same review criteria as other materials.

Selection Tools

Standard review sources may include, but are not limited to: Booklist, Horn Book, Kirkus Reviews, Library Journal, New York Times Book Review, Publishers Weekly, and School Library Journal. Professional and trade journals, subject bibliographies, bibliographies of “best” materials, and reviews from other reputable sources may also be used.

Purchase suggestions from customers are also considered. Customer suggestions are referred to the appropriate selection librarian and those that meet the library’s selection criteria will be added to the appropriate selection list.

Non- Print Formats

Knowledge is communicated in many forms. The library collects formats that are viable, useful and affordable, and may discontinue ordering formats no longer available or in demand. Non-print materials may be provided in physical (CDs, DVDs), downloadable, or streaming formats. Non-print formats are selected utilizing the same criteria and selection tools as print materials.

We currently purchase the following non-print materials:

- Audio books - The library seeks to provide a recorded collection that parallels many areas of the general collection. Unabridged versions of books will be purchased except in those cases where unabridged versions are not available and demand is high.
- Video - The library provides a collection that is responsive to the diverse interests of the community. The library’s collection includes:
 - Documentaries
 - Instructional and educational materials
 - Material based on or related to literature
 - Feature films and television that reflect the interests of the community

Newspapers and Periodicals

Newspapers and periodicals (magazines) are available in print and digital formats. Selection decisions for these items are based on the same criteria, regardless of format.

The library subscribes to local, regional and national newspapers. Selection and retention is based on:

- Customer interest and use
- Need to provide information from a variety of viewpoints

- Accessibility through online databases
- Availability and cost

The library subscribes to a range of periodicals addressing a wide range of interests. Selection and retention is based on:

- Customer interest and use
- Subject need
- Need to provide information from a variety of viewpoints
- Accessibility through online databases
- Availability and cost

Multiple Copies

The library purchases multiple copies of titles when quality, projected demand, and/or ongoing demand suggest the need. The library does not purchase classroom sets of materials.

Gifts

Gift materials are subject to the same selection and deselection criteria as purchased materials. Because of the number of gifts received for consideration, gifts which are not selected for addition to the library's collection cannot be returned to the donor, and may be sold through the library book sale shelves. The Library does not appraise the value of gift materials for the benefit of the donor.

- Books – The library will only consider the following gifts for addition to the collection:
 - Fiction in excellent condition
 - Nonfiction in excellent condition that is not more than 2 years old.
 Other materials left at libraries are sold through library book sale shelves as space permits.
- Audiovisual material – Only shrink-wrapped items are accepted for consideration. Non-shrink-wrapped audiovisual materials are discarded.
- Funds to purchase materials – The library welcomes gifts of funds to purchase materials. Donors may specify the branch location, collection, age group, and/or general subject areas where funds should be spent. Due to the variability of the publishing industry, the library cannot accept funds for specified titles or lists of titles. Materials purchased with gifts or donations are subject to the same selection and deselection criteria as other library materials.

COLLECTION EVALUATION AND MAINTENANCE

Library staff engage in continual materials evaluation in order to maintain a current collection that is relevant to the community's diverse needs and interests.

The Stanislaus County Library has established a set of criteria to determine when an item should be deselected and removed from the system. The following deselection criteria apply to all materials, including those that are gifts:

1. Items that are damaged or in poor physical condition
2. Items that are out-of-date, misleading, or inaccurate
3. Duplicate copies that are no longer in demand
4. Formats that are no longer desirable
5. Items that do not meet current interest of the community

Weeding guidelines are kept for each subject area. The Head of Collection Services retains and reviews guidelines with selection librarians and coordinates the weeding of the collection.

Weeded materials in reasonable condition are sold on an ongoing basis from library book sale shelves. Some weeded materials may be donated to other County agencies for use by community members.

RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS

Libraries in America are cornerstones of the communities they serve. Free access to the books, ideas, resources, and information in America's libraries is imperative for education, employment, enjoyment, and self-government.
(Libraries: An American Value)

The library promotes and protects free access to reading and knowledge. The library strives to collect materials representative of the widest variety of viewpoints. By representing multiple points of view within the collection, the library will inevitably contain materials that are offensive to some members of the community. Inclusion of material in the library's collection does not constitute endorsement of the ideas reflected in that material.

While individuals have the right to restrict their own reading and that of their children, they do not have the right to restrict others' access to library materials. Responsibility for materials selected and read by children and adolescents rests with their parents or legal guardians. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in guiding their children's use of the library.

Materials are not labeled to show approval or disapproval of the content. Access to material is not restricted, except to protect it from damage or theft.

The library will reconsider any material in its collection upon written request of a customer, following the steps below:

- Reconsideration forms are available at all branches and at all public desks
- Once returned, Reconsideration Forms are forwarded to the Head of Collection Services
- The Head of Collection Services will establish a review committee, consisting of:
 - Head of Collection Services (Chair)¹
 - Selection Librarian responsible for the appropriate subject area
 - Regional Children's Librarian (for Children's and Teen materials) or Regional Library Supervisor/LIII (Adult Materials)
- The committee will review the challenged material in its entirety
- The customer will receive notification of the committee's decision in writing within 30 days
- The customer may choose to further pursue his/her concerns by contacting the County Librarian

¹If the library appoints a Head of Children's Services, that incumbent shall replace the Head of Collection Services as Chair of a reconsideration committee evaluating Children's or Teen material.

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