

HARRISON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Materials Selection Policy

I. Objectives

The Harrison Public Library (the “Library”) provides free service to all individuals in the community, both children and adults. The Library’s stated mission includes providing outstanding information and resources. This is achieved in part through the provision of expertly selected books and other materials to aid the individual in the pursuit of education, information, pleasure, personal enrichment, or research.

II. Responsibility for Materials Selection

Ultimate responsibility for materials selection policy lies with the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees delegates to the Library Director the selection of library materials and the development of the collection.

Definitions

The words “book,” “library materials,” or other synonyms as they may occur in this policy have the widest possible meaning; therefore, it is implicit in this policy that every form of permanent record is to be included, whether printed or in manuscript, bound or unbound, photographed, or otherwise reproduced. Also included are audio records on tapes, discs, or otherwise, films, and pictures in the forms of photographs, paintings, drawings, etchings, etc.

“Selection” refers to the decision that must be made either to add a book to the collection or to retain one already in the collection. It does not refer to reader guidance.

III. Criteria for Selection of Material for Adults

The goal of selection is to collect books and other library materials that meet the objectives of the Library as noted above.

Library materials are selected by the Library Director with the assistance of Library staff. Competent reviewing media and basic lists of standard works are consulted as an aid in selection. Recommendations from the public are welcomed.

The Library will review decisions regarding specific materials upon written request. A form for this purpose is available at the Circulation Desk.

Basic to the Library’s Materials Selection Policy is the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to View Statement adopted by the Council of the American Library Association which are appended.

Within standards of purpose and quality, the Library’s collections will be built to meet the needs and interests of the community.

Every book (or other library material) must meet each of the following criteria as are applicable in order to be included in the collection.

- A. Current usefulness or permanent value.
- B. Authority and competence in presentation.
- C. Importance as a record of the times.
- D. Relation to the existing collection.
- E. Relative importance in comparison with other works on the subject.
- F. High standards of quality in content, format and binding.
- G. Availability of material elsewhere in the community. In developing the collection the Library takes cognizance of the resources of other libraries in the Westchester Library System and will not needlessly duplicate materials. Materials, particularly those of a highly technical nature, may be borrowed from libraries outside the Westchester Library System by inter-library loan.
- H. Popular Demand: The Library will make available materials for enlightenment and recreation even if not enduring in value, interest or accuracy. A representative sampling of experimental or ephemeral material may be purchased, but will not attempt to be exhaustive.
- I. Legal, technical and medical works will be acquired only to the extent that they are useful to the layman.
- J. Textbooks will not be purchased by the Library except in subject areas where material in another form is not conveniently available.

IV. Material Selection for Children

The principles stated in the adult materials selection policy are applicable to the selection of materials for children. The Library cooperates with the local school libraries so that the services of the two agencies may complement each other. The major function of the school library is to furnish curriculum-related materials while the Library seeks to provide a more comprehensive collection.

The children's collection is carefully selected for children of all ages, with emphasis on books, periodicals, records, etc., which stimulate the imagination and provide sound information and understanding of the world they live in.

V. Use of the Library's Materials

Library materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no book or other item is sequestered, except for the purpose of protecting it from injury or theft.

Responsibility for the reading of children rests solely with their parents and/or legal guardians. Selection of materials for the adult collection is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain materials their parents and/or legal guardians consider inappropriate.

VI. Gifts

The Library will consider gifts of books and other materials with the understanding that it will evaluate them in accordance with the criteria applied to purchase materials delineated in Sections III and IV.

When the Library receives a cash gift for the purchase of memorial books or collections, the selection will be made by the Library in consultation with the donor. The name of the donor or person memorialized will be entered on the bookplate.

VII. Maintaining the Collection

The same objectives and criteria will be used in “weeding” materials from the collection as are used in their acquisition. In order to maintain the collection in its most attractive and useful condition, the Library Director, with the assistance of the Library's staff, will use his/her judgment in removing from the collection materials which are no longer useful, or rebinding books which are deteriorating whenever appropriate. Materials no longer useful to the Library may be given to other libraries or sold for the benefit of the Library.

Reviewed and approved by the Harrison Public Library Board of Trustees, 5/6/13.