

## **Hillsdale Community Library Book Selection Policy**

### **Objective of selection**

Within the limitations of space and budget, the library selects books which meet the educational, informational, and recreational needs of the citizens of the community. Selection is based more specifically on the particular needs and interests of the community. It is an objective of the library to provide a resource where the individual can examine many points of view and make his or her own decisions. Book selection attempts to provide materials which will facilitate informal self-education of all the people in the community.

### **Responsibility of selection**

The responsibility of selection lies with the staff and the library within their areas of responsibility. The ultimate responsibility for selection lies with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board.

### **General Criteria**

1. Relevance to community interest
2. Current significance
3. Attention of critic, reviews and public
4. Number and nature of requests from public
5. Common sense
6. Reputability of author and publisher
7. Suitability of format for library use

It is impossible with limited staff to review each book which the library selects for addition to the collection. Therefore, selection of materials is accomplished primarily through reviewing periodicals hands-on examination. Particular importance is given to reviews which are directed to the library market, such as *LIBRARY JOURNAL*, *PUBLISHERS WEEKLY*, *BOOKLIST*, *HORN BOOK*, *SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL*, and other reviewing media. A book will also be purchased if there is sufficient patron interest and request for a title.

Materials with an emphasis on sex, or containing profane language should not be automatically excluded if the book presents a true-life situation which deals with characters and situations realistically presented. This library has a comprehensive reading public which it has an obligation to serve, the same as any other patron. "Best Seller" lists are constantly being referred to by many of our patrons so the library should strive to maintain at least one copy of best sellers, even though sometimes these books do not meet the selection standards set forth in this policy. Responsibility of the reading habits of children rests with the parent or legal guardian; therefore, selection should not be

inhibited by children. The library will not knowingly purchase material which has been declared illegal by the Courts of the Michigan or Country.

With regard to books dealing with sex education, the library will purchase books written for the adult, young adult, and child. The materials selected for these groups should have a minimum of two reviews backing up the librarian's selection. Recognized book lists such as *BEST BOOKS FOR YOUNG ADULTS* and *NOTABLE CHILDRENS BOOKS* are also used for consideration. If possible, the librarian should personally review each title keeping in mind the needs of the community served. The letter designation (E, J or YA) on material does not limit its use. It is not intended to restrict readership to and age or interest group. Since the level of sophistication varies within each community, materials for the less mature and the poorer reader, as well as for the person already comfortable with adult materials, should be provided. We support the American Library Association's assertion that:

The librarian who would restrict the access of minors to materials and services because of actual or suspected parental objection should bear in mind that he is not in loco parentis in his or her position as a librarian

The American Library Association holds that it is the parent -- and only the parent -- who may restrict his children -- and only his children -- from access to library materials and services. The parent who would rather his child did not have access to certain materials should so advise the child.<sup>1</sup>

### **Auxiliary collections**

The paperback collection in the library is heavily used. Popular works are selected. The librarian must be familiar with the broad range of current adult, young adult, and juvenal titles.

Paperbacks are purchased most frequently through publisher's pre-selected lists. Most books are reprints of hardbound titles. However, a great many titles are paperback originals and not reviewed in almost all reviewing sources. Upon examination of the paperback titles, if a book is deemed unusable for the collection, it will be given to another library, sold in a book sale, or discarded.

The library has a responsibility to provide patrons with factual information about the religions of the world. Materials whose sole purpose is persuasive or solicitous for a religious group will not be selected. The library will attempt to have religious literature of an authentic historical and/or educational content. These books must meet the general criteria set fourth in this policy.

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<sup>1</sup> American Library Association. Office of Intellectual Freedom, Intellectual Freedom Manual (n.p.; American Library Association, 1974), pt. 1, pp. 14-15.

## **Summary**

The library's aim is to present the community with a well balanced collection that meets the educational, informational, and recreational needs of the citizens of the community. This is done with careful consideration keeping in mind the selection of high quality, informative, and readable materials within the library's budget, space, and criteria set fourth in this policy.

Adopted November 1982