

Library Collection

Development Policy

(Rev. 4/2023)

Philosophy

The Board of Trustees recognize that individuals within the community have diverse interests, backgrounds, cultural heritages, social values and needs. The Board further recognizes that the Library serves all of the people within the community regardless of age, race, national origin, or political or social views.

It is the Library's goal to offer the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which may be unorthodox or unpopular with the majority or controversial in nature. The Library's decision to acquire or remove materials from its collections will not be determined by partisan or doctrinal points of view. Furthermore, the selection of materials by the Library does not constitute endorsement of the material's content.

The Claverack Free Library supports NYLS's Library *Bill of Rights*, the *Freedom to View* and the *Freedom to Read* statements, included as a part of this policy statement.

Responsibility for Materials Selection

Selection of library materials is and shall be vested to the Director of the Claverack Free Library and such members of the staff who are qualified by reason of education, training and experience.

Selection Guidelines

Materials for the library collection are chosen for a wide variety of reasons such as information, self-education, and the recreational pursuits of library users. The decision to add an item to the collection by purchase is usually the result of selection based on demand or need.

In selection based on demand, patrons are invited to request the purchase of specific items by the Library. The final decision rests with the Director, who must consider the special needs of one individual or group against the needs of the whole community.

Selection based on need occurs when Library materials are added to the collection for the purpose of updating and further developing certain subject areas. Materials are selected from reviews, availability lists, vendor catalogs, bibliographies and local experts.

The decision to include or exclude a particular item in the library's collection is based on a number of considerations, although they may not all be applicable to each item:

- Timeliness
- Effective expression and artistic excellence
- Evaluations in professionally recognized critical guides
- Significance of subject
- Educational and informational value
- Representation of various points of view
- Availability of material elsewhere
- Funds and space
- Interests and needs of individuals in the community
- Permanent value as source material
- Vitality and originality of thought
- Entertaining presentation
- Relation to other materials and existing areas of coverage in order to maintain a well-balanced collection
- Author's reputation or significance
- Accuracy and authoritativeness

In purchasing new materials, the Library makes a distinction between those which depict prejudice as an aspect of real life and those which offer derogatory stereotypes as valid representations. The latter are not added to the collection. However, materials which authentically portray a period or way of life are accepted even if stereotyping is included. Materials which portray the prejudices of real or fictional characters are also considered acceptable. Materials recognized as classics are acceptable even though they may contain passages widely viewed as objectionable by current standards.

The library does not purchase out-of-print materials for the collection.

Professional and special materials, such as legal, medical and religious works, are purchased only if they are of general interest.

The library does not support educational curriculums through the purchase of textbooks. Textbooks may be added to the collection if they provide the best or only source of information on a subject, or to complement an existing area with another perspective.

No attempt is made to purchase all the works by a certain author.

Periodicals are added to the collection on the basis of need.

Audiovisual material is added to the library's collection with consideration to patron demand and budget constraints. The library acquires this material primarily in the most popular format.

Local history materials are confined to the printed word. The library does not attempt to include artifacts as part of the collection. Books by local authors and books on local matters may be purchased even though they may not meet the standards set forth for the general collection.

The library accepts gifts of library materials, but reserves the right to evaluate and to dispose of such gifts in accordance with the criteria applied to purchased materials.

Children's materials are purchased by the same general principles that govern selection of adult materials. Responsibility for the choice of reading material for minors rests with their parents or guardians. Selection of materials for the library collection is not restricted by the possibility that minors may obtain materials their parents consider inappropriate, nor are children limited to the children's collection.

Access

The Board of Trustees recognizes that full, confidential, and unrestricted access to information is essential for patrons to exercise their rights as citizens. The Board believes that reading, listening, and viewing are individual, private matters. While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves or their own minor children, the freedom of others to read or inquire cannot be restricted. The library does not stand in loco parentis. Parents and guardians, not the library, have responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening, and viewing choices of their own minor children. Selection of adult collection materials should not be inhibited by the possibility that the items may be utilized by minors.

Claverack Free Library does not select, retain, or remove materials on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval or any group of patrons, but solely on the basis of standards stated in this policy.

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents. All patrons will have free access to all materials, and no materials will be sequestered (except items that need protection because of rarity, cost, potential for loss, fragility, or unsuitability of format for heavy use).

Reconsideration of Library Materials

Whenever any patron objects to the presence or absence of any library material, the complainant will be given a fair hearing. All complaints that cannot be readily resolved by staff members will be referred immediately to the Director, who will discuss the matter with the complainant.

If the patron wishes, they may submit the form **Request for Withdrawal of Material** or **Request for the Addition of Material**. If it is a request for the withdrawal, the Director will examine the item, check reviews of the item, determine if it conforms to the standards of the materials selection policy, and determine if there are any budget restraints. The Director will decide whether to add, withdraw, or restrict the material in question and will write to the complainant, giving the reasons for the decision. The Board of Trustees will also be notified of the complaint and of the Director's decision.

Materials subject to complaint shall not be removed from use pending final action. If the complainant wishes to contest the decision, they may present the complaint to the Board of Trustees. This may be done by letter or by attending a Board meeting. The Board will consider the complaint and the Director's recommendation. The written decision of the Board shall be final and shall be reported to the complainant.

Weeding policy

The library continually withdraws items from the collection, basing its policy on the elimination of outdated materials, materials no longer of interest or in demand, unneeded duplicates, and worn or mutilated material. Frequency of circulation, community interest, and availability of newer or more valid materials are prime considerations. Items dealing with local history are an exception as are certain classics and award-winning children's books. Fiction that was once popular but no longer in demand, and non-fiction books that are no longer useful, are withdrawn from the collection.

The professional staff of the library, under the general direction and supervision of the Library Director, will be solely responsible for the weeding of the collection. Items removed from the collection may be sold, given away, recycled, discarded or otherwise disposed of at the discretion of the Claverack Free Library. The proceeds from the sale of disposed library materials will be classified as book sale revenue and designated as operating revenue.