

Berkeley Public Library

Collection Development Policy

Mission Statement

The mission of the Berkeley Public Library is to provide materials and services to help community residents obtain information to meet their personal, educational, and cultural needs and serves as a learning and educational center for its residents.

Vision Statement

The Berkeley Public Library will foster the spirit of exploration, lifelong learning, the joy of reading and the pursuit of information and knowledge for all ages and cultures.

Purpose of Collection Development Policy

The collection development policy is intended to provide guidance, within budgetary and space limitations, for the selection and evaluation of materials which anticipate and meet the needs of the Berkeley community. It directly relates the collection to the library's mission statement, and defines the scope and standards of the various collections.

As the community changes, the library will need to reassess and adapt its collections to reflect new and differing areas of interest and concern. The collection development policy will be periodically evaluated and revised (at least every 3 years) as necessary to provide guidance for implementing changes in the collection.

The Community

The Berkeley community reflects varying economic, racial, ethnic, and educational backgrounds. An increasing number of immigrant citizens and young families have settled in the village in recent years. A strong knowledge and understanding of the community is key in terms of selecting materials and providing services to a changing population. Our collections and services will continue to evolve and grow as the needs of the Berkeley community change.

Philosophy of Selection

In support of its mission, the Berkeley Public Library fully endorses the principles documented in the *Library Bill of Rights* and the *Freedom to Read Statement* of the American Library Association. The library upholds the right of the individual to secure information, though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others. Materials available in the library present a diversity of viewpoints, enabling citizens to make the informed choices necessary in a democracy.

Responsibility for Selection

The authority and responsibility for the selection of library materials rests ultimately with the Library Director. Under his/her direction, selection is delegated to appropriate library staff. All staff members and the general public are encouraged to recommend materials for consideration.

Selection Criteria

All materials, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the criteria listed below. An item need not meet all of these standards in order to be added to the collection.

- Popular interest
- Contemporary significance or permanent value
- Currency of information
- Accuracy
- Local emphasis
- Readability or ability to sustain interest
- Treatment of subject to age of intended audience
- Reputation of author, publisher, producer or illustrator
- Creative, literary or technical quality
- Critical assessments in a variety of journals
- Format and ease of use
- Circulation as monitored through the automated system
- Cost and availability
- Relationship to existing materials in collection
- Relationship to materials in other area libraries

Suggestions for Purchase

The library strongly encourages input from the Berkeley community concerning the collection. A suggestion for purchase procedure enables Berkeley citizens to request that a particular item be purchased by the library. All suggestions for purchase are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials and are not automatically added to the collection. It is the library's intent that suggestions for purchase be used to help the library in developing collections which serve the interests and needs of the community.

Request for Reconsideration

Persons from the Berkeley community wishing to recommend the removal of a particular item in the library collection may submit a *Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials* form, which will be reviewed by the Library Director and the staff in relation to the library's mission statement and the selection criteria of this collection development policy. After reading the material in question, evaluating journal reviews, and reviewing other materials submitted by the patron and the staff, a response will be made by the Library Director within 30 days of receiving the formal challenge.

Gifts

The Berkeley Public Library accepts gifts for the library's collection that fall within needed subject categories, as determined by the Library Director and the staff. Gift additions must meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials and are subject to the following limitations.

- The library retains unconditional ownership of the gift.
- The library makes the final decision on the use or other disposition of the gift.

- The library reserves the right to decide the conditions of display, housing and access to the materials.

Detailed information can be found in the library's *Donation Policy*.

Monetary gifts to the collection are welcome and may be designated as memorials.

- Donations of money designated for the periodicals and newspapers collection are accepted in lieu of actual subscriptions. These contributions offset the high cost of periodical subscriptions and maintain the continuity of subscriptions from year to year.
- Donors of the funds may suggest subjects or titles to be acquired with their donation, but the library reserves the right of final decision.

THE COLLECTION

Adult Collection

Fiction - The library's collection includes a wide variety of contemporary works of fiction representing all genres, international works of fiction, classics and important novels of the past. The library makes every effort to acquire fiction which is representative of the cultural and ethnic community that it serves and to satisfy the diversity of interests and recreational needs of its users.

Non-Fiction - The library aims at acquiring materials which provide a core of basic knowledge. In addition, the library selects, makes accessible, and promotes the use of materials which:

- address contemporary issues
- provide self-help information
- facilitate continuing education
- enhance job-related knowledge and skills
- increase knowledge of affairs of the community, the country, and the world
- support business, cultural, recreational and civic interests in the community
- present different viewpoints on issues
- nourish intellectual, aesthetic, creative and spiritual growth

Children's Collection - To encourage life-long reading habits, the children's collection provides materials in a variety of formats to satisfy and stimulate the informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs of the children of Berkeley from infancy through grade eight. Materials are selected with regard to the stages of emotional and intellectual maturity of children. The collection also provides adults with materials that relate to the well-being of children, enrich preschool/school curriculums, and aid in the study of children's literature.

Electronic Databases - Research databases extend the collection by providing timely and versatile access to information in electronic format. Databases are used by the library staff to enhance and supplement reference service and are available for patron use both in the library and remotely. Many of the databases contain specialized information beyond the scope of the library's print collections; others have information that does not exist in print format. Some

databases duplicate print sources which are carefully evaluated for retention with consideration to cost, frequency of use, and ease of access to library users.

Foreign Language Materials - The library maintains a collection of foreign language materials aimed at meeting the recreational and many of the informational needs of the Berkeley community. Resources include books, magazines, and audio-visual materials in the languages used by individuals in the community. The library's collection also includes materials which aid in learning a second language. Such resources include books, including grammars and dictionaries, audio CDs, and videos for learning the languages most frequently studied in the community. These items are primarily circulating materials.

Public Internet Access - In conjunction with its mission statement, the Berkeley Public Library provides access to a vast array of information available through electronic media. Online information, services, and networks provided directly or indirectly by the library will be readily, equally, and equitably accessible to all library users with a valid BPL library card. The Berkeley Public Library does not monitor and assumes no control over the information accessed and cannot be held responsible for the content, accuracy or quality of the information retrieved. Providing access to electronic information, services, and networks differs from selecting and purchasing material for the library's collection, offering unprecedented opportunities to expand the scope of information available to all users.

Large Print - The large type book collection meets the needs of an increasing number of visually challenged or impaired patrons. The major thrust of the collection is popular fiction, including mysteries and romance, along with high interest non-fiction such as biographies and health-related materials.

E-Media - The library must continually assess new electronic media and evaluate the capabilities and enhancements that they offer over existing formats. When deciding whether to replace or augment existing formats with new media, the following factors are considered:

- anticipated improvements in information storage and retrieval
- user demand
- quality of the product
- ease of use
- equipment requirements
- cost
- staff requirements for processing, maintenance, and training

It is essential for staff to monitor technological developments so that wise and cost-effective collection decisions are made for the Berkeley community.

Periodical Collection - The library's newspaper, magazine, and journal collection, both print and electronic, provides current information aimed at meeting the research and recreational reading needs of the community. The collection also contains periodicals that serve the professional reading and material review needs of the library staff. Periodicals supplement the book collection by providing up-to-date information, covering current topics not yet available in

books, and presenting a less in-depth treatment of a subject than is usually found in books. Back issues of current magazines circulate.

Reference Collection - The library maintains a reference collection which is used to answer questions and to serve the informational needs of library users. Reference sources are characterized by their ability to provide information and to summarize, condense, or give a comprehensive overview of a topic. They remain in the library to be readily available to all citizens. Selection criteria of particular importance for reference sources are: accuracy, currency, arrangement, uniqueness of information, authority, and indexing.

Reference sources are consulted for specific items of information rather than to be read consecutively and include: bibliographies, indexes, directories, dictionaries, catalogs, yearbooks and annuals, statistical compendia, atlases and gazetteers, biographical dictionaries, and almanacs. Reference sources which describe, condense, and summarize information include encyclopedias, histories, handbooks, abstracts, and special reports with difficult-to-find information.

Audio Recordings - Music and spoken word recordings are available in compact disc (CD) formats because of their availability and popularity. The music collection consists of works by major contemporary and classical artists as well as popular music with emphasis on acquiring recordings in a variety of genres including rock, R&B, folk, jazz, and classical music. Fiction books are also available in audio format and include a variety of genres.

Textbooks - Recognizing the responsibility of schools to provide access to required textbooks for their students, the Berkeley Public Library does not acquire textbooks required for school curricula. It does acquire some local school textbooks when needed to provide broad or introductory coverage in various subject areas. The Library Director confers with the District 87 School Librarian to review and upgrade the required titles as needed.

Videos - The library collects DVDs to meet the recreational and educational needs of adults, young adults, and children. Videos of feature films include highly rated current films as well as film classics, which are of broad family appeal or potential cultural, historical, or aesthetic significance. Whenever possible, the library purchases videos with public performance rights.

Young Adult Collection - A young adult collection has been established to satisfy the library needs of patrons from the approximate age of 13 to 18 years. It is a transitional collection for the reader moving from the children's collection to the adult collection. The type of materials selected differs significantly from the junior high level because of the social, emotional, and intellectual maturity required to read them. As this is primarily a browsing collection, fiction and graphic novels are emphasized.

Collection Maintenance

Maintenance of the library's collection through constant re-evaluation by the library staff ensures its usefulness and relevancy to the community. This evaluation depends heavily on the staff's professional education and expertise in assessing the needs of the community and the content of

the collection. Those materials determined to no longer be of value are withdrawn from the collection.

Weeding Library Materials

Library materials are discarded for one or more of the following reasons:

- Obsolescence: subject matter is no longer timely, accurate, or relevant
- Damage or poor condition
- Space limitations
- Insufficient use

Review and weeding of the library's collections is performed annually using *The CREW Method: Guidelines for Weeding*. This method of evaluation includes 6 general criteria for considering weeding an item from the library's collection, which has been summed up with the acronym MUSTIE:

- M= Misleading--factually inaccurate
- U= Ugly--worn beyond mending or rebinding
- S= Superseded by a new edition of by a much better book on the subject
- T= Trivial--of no discernible literary or scientific merit
- I= Irrelevant to the needs and interests of the library's community
- E= Elsewhere--the material is easily obtainable from another library

Binding

The decision to bind materials is made with consideration to the same factors involved in replacement. In addition, the following should influence the decision to bind:

- Adverse impact on circulation because of appearance
- Feasibility of binding
- Cost of binding vs. cost of replacement