

Policies

Collection Development Policy

Supersedes the Materials Selection Policy

Approved 6/21/2023; 9/18/2024. Review Date: 2029

OVERVIEW

Purpose

The Collection Development Policy documents the guiding principles by which T. B. Scott Free Library provides and cultivates a collection of quality intellectual resources. The Library Board reviews it every five years or as needed.

Library mission

Serving the Merrill area through traditional and innovative services, T.B. Scott Free Library connects people to their community and the world, promotes literacy and civic engagement, encourages, and supports life-long learning, ensures free and open access to ideas, and provides opportunities for recreation.

Intellectual freedom

Intellectual freedom is a core value of T. B. Scott Free Library. As such, this collection development policy is guided by the first four articles of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights:

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

T. B. Scott Free Library/Merrill, Wisconsin

Related Policies: Donations Policy, Memorial Books Policy

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COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

T. B. Scott Free Library maintains a collection of intellectual resources to serve the information, education, and leisure needs of the community. Serving all ages, the collection focuses on popular interests and includes digital resources, emerging formats, and non-traditional items in addition to the core collection of books.

Responsibility for collection selection and deselection ultimately lies with the library director, though the director may delegate collection development responsibilities to other library staff.

Selection criteria

Library staff select resources based on a variety of criteria, including but not limited to:

- Accuracy
- Enduring value
- Social significance
- Cost
- Format
- Suitability of physical form for library use
- Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
- Present and potential relevance to community needs
- Importance as a document of the times
- Popular demand, i.e., large print runs and media buzz
- Relation to existing collection and other materials on the subject, i.e., filling collection gaps
- Local interest, local history and genealogy
- Literary merit
- Reputation and/or significance of author
- Insight into human and social conditions
- Contribution to inclusivity and diversity
- Availability of the material from partner libraries in Wisconsin Valley Library Service (WVLS)
- One-time vs. sustained costs as with subscriptions

Resources are selected based on their value to the library and its users, regardless of the selectors' personal taste.

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Selection aids

When acquiring resources for the collection, library staff use a variety of resources including professional review journals and prepublication selection tools. The library also welcomes suggestions from patrons. Ultimately, this Collection Development Policy governs which resources are added to or withdrawn from the collection.

Formats

The library collects resources in a variety of formats to meet the changing needs of users as technology and publishing models evolve. Formats include:

- Books
- Large Print books
- e-books
- Audiobooks
- e-audiobooks
- DVDs
- CDs
- Electronic databases
- Newspapers and magazines
- Microfiche and microfilm
- Non-traditional physical items such as learning games, jigsaw puzzles, and wireless hotspots

In addition to the above formats, the library maintains the Library of Things, a collection of household items.

Areas outside scope of collection

The library typically does not collect the following:

- Classroom textbooks
- Scholarly resources
- Professional resources
- Esoteric resources
- Self-published books that have not been reviewed in professional outlets

This list is not exhaustive, and the library director may choose to make exceptions. If the resource is unavailable from T. B. Scott Free Library, staff will endeavor to borrow it from a different library at no cost to the patron.

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Inclusion

The library is committed to building a collection that has something for everyone. When acquiring resources, library staff select resources created by and about people from a variety of backgrounds, perspectives, and intellectual traditions. Staff take care to include perspectives that have historically been overlooked and may perform collection audits to assess the collection's inclusiveness.

Accessibility

The library collects resources that are accessible to as many people as possible. In practice, this often manifests as one book being acquired in multiple formats, such as Large Print and CD Audiobook as well as traditional print. Digital and electronic resources represent another dimension of accessibility, not only for patrons with disabilities but for patrons who use library resources remotely.

Multiple copies

Due to limited funds, the library acquires multiple copies selectively.

Languages and translations

The library gives preference to resources in English or to resources translated to English.

Gifts

The library welcomes material gifts to be considered for inclusion in the collection, subject to the criteria outlined in this Collection Development Policy. Gifts become the property of the library. Gifts that are not added to the collection may be sold, with proceeds going to the Friends of the Library.

Deselection

To maintain a healthy collection, library staff may remove resources, periodically and as needed. Criteria for deselection include but are not limited to:

- Condition of material
- Obsolescence of information
- Duplicate copies of materials no longer in high demand
- Low circulation or lack of recent circulation

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Related Policies: Donations Policy, Memorial Books Policy

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External resources

In addition to resources selected by in-house staff, the T. B. Scott Free Library collection includes resources selected through local and state consortia: notably, electronic databases, such as those available through BadgerLink, and digital media, e.g., e-books and e-audiobooks, such as those available through the Libby platform. While these resources are freely available for patron use, they are not governed by this Collection Development Policy.

When physical resources are not held by T. B. Scott Free Library, patrons may borrow them from other libraries in the Wisconsin Valley Library Service (WVLS). Materials not owned by WVLS Libraries may be requested through inter-library loan (ILL).

Diverse collection

The library must be free to include in its collection a range of positions on important, complex, or controversial issues, including unpopular or unorthodox positions. The public library does not promote particular points of view but does provide opportunities for individuals to examine issues freely and make their own decisions.

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/legal guardians 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 consider an individual's concern with any material in its collection upon written request of a Lincoln County community member and registered T.B. Scott Free Library card holder. Requests from groups or organizations will not be considered.

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This request must be submitted in writing, using the library's "Statement of Concern" form in accordance with the following rules and procedures:

- Completed Statement of Concern form, available at the Circulation desk. All questions on the form require responses. Incomplete requests may be denied if deficiencies are not corrected within 30 days after notification.
- Once returned, the Statement of Concern is forwarded to the Library Director
- A fee may be required to compensate for the time necessary to review the Statement of Concern
- The Library Director along with the Head of Adult Services and the Head of Youth Services will review the Statement of Concern in its entirety
- The community member will receive notification of the administration team's decision in writing within 90 days
- If the community member is dissatisfied with the written report, the community member may request review by the Library Board of Trustees.

The Library reserves the right not to review an item that has been reviewed through this procedure in the past three years.