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TACOMA PUBLIC LIBRARY

Administrative Policy #10.01
Acquisition Policy

Formally Adopted by Board of Trustees on September 18, 1979

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- A. General Policy Statement

The Tacoma Public Library, an agency of the City of Tacoma, operating according to the Public Library Laws of the State of Washington under the management and control of its Board of Trustees, affirms the following objectives for the selection of materials.

To select, assemble, and make available to the public informational, educational and recreational materials; to preserve materials which possess historic interest or worth; to assist in the development of an enlightened citizenry; to encourage self-education; and to promote and provide materials necessary for an enriched personal life. Tacoma Public Library makes its materials available for the purposes named above to all persons regardless of their age, sex, religion, race, origin, political views, social or economic status.

B. Intellectual Freedom

The Library subscribes fully to the American Library Association's Freedom to Read Statement (Appendix 1) and the Library Bill of Rights (Appendix 2).

C. Responsibility for Selection

Ultimate responsibility for selection of materials rests with the Library Director, operating within policies determined by the Library's Board of Trustees. The Director delegates the responsibility for selection of library materials to members of the staff.

D. Policy by Clientele

1. Adult

Adults who use the collection of materials at Tacoma Public Library are defined in age as being over 14 years old. They are men and women of all races and beliefs with widely differing tastes and needs. Materials selected for this diverse group of people include those of a recreational nature and cover the widest possible range of interests and reading levels.

2. Young Adults

Young adults (generally aged 12 through 18) will have materials specially selected to meet the particular recreational, emotional and informational concerns of this age group and will also be served from the general collection. Those materials which will help young adults understand themselves and others, broaden their viewpoints and knowledge of the world, stimulate their curiosity, expend their reading ability and enjoyment, and guide them in the transition from children's materials to adult materials are preferred.

3. Children

Children (generally preschool through age 12) are recognized as creative, inquiring individuals with unique capacities for intellectual and emotional growth. Materials are chosen to meet their diverse interests and needs but the resources of the entire Library are accessible to them. Materials for children are selected with the realization that they are an integral part of the total Library collection and are judged by the same criteria which apply to adult materials.

4. Disabled

The individuals in this group are not able to utilize materials published in the usual format. This inability is coupled with an interest in becoming an aware and informed person and in finding sources of educational and recreational materials. The library will meet the information needs of the group to the fullest extent possible, within budgetary constraints, and will refer individuals to other agencies equipped to meet a specialized need.

E. Policy by Collection Type

1. General Collection

a. Fiction

Novels will be purchased for the following purposes:

To satisfy the need for recreational reading materials for persons of differing tastes, interests, purposes and reading skills.

To serve as educational tools and to enrich human understanding by dealing informatively with social, personal, racial, ethnic, or religious situations.

Since it is not possible to set up a standard of literary quality which will apply to all novels, the Library uses the following considerations as a guide when selecting fiction:

Is the novel competently written?

Does the novel have constructive and plausible characterizations?

Does the novel give an honest portrayal of the human experiences with which it deals?

Does the book contribute to the collection balance in regard to (a) types and styles of literature, (b) subjects treated, and (c) patron appeal?

Other selection considerations are:

A collection of standard and classic novels will be maintained as determined by long standing community needs and/or listing in an authoritative bibliography.

A collection of mysteries, science fiction, westerns and light romances will be maintained.

Experimental novels, while often controversial, will be considered for purchase as they reflect new trends, and styles of expression.

Books written about the Pacific Northwest or with the Pacific Northwest as a setting will be especially considered for purchase.

Books written obviously and exclusively for sensational or pornographic purposes will not be chosen, but the Library will not exclude a title because of objectionable language or vivid description of sex or violence if the author is dealing honestly and realistically with his/her

theme. The Library recognizes that any given title may offend some persons; however, selections will not be made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval; but solely on the merits of the work in relation to the collection, the Library's objectives, and the interests of the readers.

b. Non-Fiction

The selection of circulating adult non-fiction materials will reflect the current needs, interests, and activities of the adult borrower. In addition to the materials selected which have been demonstrated to be of practical value to many adults, the Library will also select materials of a more specialized technical nature which experience has shown are required to meet the informational needs of some adult borrowers. Materials of a lighter vein are provided for entertainment purposes. This collection will contain materials of a wide variety of topics, levels of sophistication and treatment reflecting the needs and interests of the adult who uses the Tacoma Public Library.

Although the branch libraries are expected to maintain sufficient circulating materials of interest and use to their patrons, the Main Library will endeavor to act as a backup source for the entire system. To fulfill this function, the Main Library will select materials of sufficient quantity, variety and of a more specialized nature to supplement the branch collections.

Other criteria for the selection of non-fiction may include the following:

- 1) Purpose of item
- 2) Audience for whom intended
- 3) Reputation of the author
- 4) Quality of writing and visual art presented
- 5) Indexed in Library-owned materials
- 6) Insufficient material in subject area
- 7) Popular demand
- 8) Reputation of the publisher
- 9) Format of the material, its durability and quality of production
- 10) Accuracy of information presented
- 11) Special features in the book: Plates, Indexes, Tables, etc.
- 12) Not available elsewhere in the community
- 13) Price
- 14) Reviews in selection aids
- 15) Timeliness

2. Foreign Language Collection

The aim of the Foreign Language Collection is to provide recreational and informational reading for the foreign-speaking population of the city and to make available materials to those learning a foreign language. Books selected for the Foreign Language Collection may include:

- a. Classics in the original language
- b. Works of significant authors, past and present
- c. American classics and translations of books about American culture, literature and history
- d. Materials on the history, culture and literature of the countries in which the language is spoken.

3. Children's Collection

a. Primary emphasis is placed on the selection of diverse materials for all children of the community (generally preschool through age 12) which will:

- 1) Make them aware of the pleasures and knowledge to be derived from the use of Library materials.
- 2) Provide knowledge of mankind's history and culture.
- 3) Provide materials which will assist in the development of reading skills.

b. The criteria stated in the adult selection policy apply to the selection of children's materials. These additional policies apply:

- 1) Subject, vocabulary, and format must be understandable to the children for whom the material is intended.
- 2) Materials which do not meet literary or production standards may be chosen to fulfill emotional needs, serve as an incentive to read or serve some other special purpose.
- 3) Books in series are evaluated on the individual merits of each title.

c. Duplication of titles is provided to meet demand. Adult and young adult materials may be duplicated.

d. Librarians may offer assistance, but parents or legal guardians are responsible for guiding their children in the selection of library materials.

4. Reference Collection

a. A collection of reference materials is maintained for patron and library staff use within the library. The Reference Collections will contain (but are not limited to) the following types of materials:

Encyclopedias, both general and specialized.

Handbooks and dictionaries in all the major fields of knowledge

Directories of people, institutions, firms and/or official bodies in all fields

Atlases and gazetteers

Statistical compendia

Indexes and abstracts covering both material already owned or being acquired and material not owned but available elsewhere

Bibliographies: National, book trade and subject

Biographical dictionaries of general, national or regional, professional or occupational types, with both retrospective and current coverage

Articles clipped from newspapers and periodicals

b. Reference materials are selected according to the same general criteria as non-fiction materials.

5. Non-Print Collection

The Library buys non-print materials in many different formats. These materials must meet the same general selection criteria as print materials with special consideration given to technical quality. In addition, each class of materials must demonstrate an appropriate use of its format. For example, slides should present information that is inherently visual in nature without needing motion to convey its message. Films should use the qualities of visual image, motion

and sound in creative and informative or entertaining manner. The Library only buys non-print materials designed for school curriculum use when such materials are of interest to the general public.

Because of the special nature of non-print materials, the Library makes every effort to make appropriate equipment for their use available to the public. In cases where equipment cannot be made available for home use, it will be made available for in-Library use. Selection of equipment is based on durability, ease of operation, quality of performance, portability, ease of maintenance and repair, reputation of manufacturer, and cost.

6. Periodicals

a. Tacoma Public Library selects for purchase, or accepts as gifts, periodicals which support the recreational, informational, educational, professional and research needs of the total community. It strives to acquire those titles which will:

- Reflect current thinking
- Supplement the book collection
- Supply recreational reading
- Serve the staff as selection aids and as professional reading materials.
- Add to current historical or regional information

b. Individual titles may be chosen for the following reasons:

- Accuracy and objectivity
- Accessibility of content through indexes
- Demand
- Need in reference work
- Representation of a point of view needed in the collection
- Local interest in subject matter
- Price
- Favorable reviews

7. Federal, State and Local Documents Collection

Tacoma Public Library is a selective depository for the United States Government materials and a full depository for Washington State documents. The Library is subject to federal and state regulations which apply to depository libraries.

Selection of items to be received from the Federal Government follows the same general principles as those for all other materials except that when possible, highly technical publications and agency publications intended for the originating agency's in-house use are not selected.

Tacoma and Pierce County documents are of particular significance and are solicited. Documents from other governmental agencies may be collected.

Duplicates of items of particular significance are solicited and provided to branches and, when appropriate, are distributed free of charge to the public.

8. Pamphlet Collection

Pamphlets are solicited or purchased because they provide useful, current information at a low cost. Tacoma Public Library maintains a Pamphlet Collection to supplement the general collection.

9. Special Collections

Materials of special interest may be purchased or solicited. Special collections of the Library include:

a. Tacoma City Archives

By resolution of the Tacoma City Council, the Tacoma Public Library has been designated as the archives for "historic city documents." This status has also been recognized by the Washington State Archives in that items judged by the State Archivist as being "archival" or "potentially archival" are transferred to the jurisdiction of the Tacoma Public Library by units of the government of the City of Tacoma.

b. Lincoln Collection

The Lincoln Collection of the Tacoma Public Library is based on the Library of Marion L. Saunders, which was purchased in 1948. To this collection has been added a number of federal documents and other items about the life and times of the sixteenth president.

c. Kaiser Collection

A collection of books, maps, posters, and pamphlets on World War I is named in honor of John B. Kaiser, director of the Library from 1914 to 1924.

d. Genealogy Collection

This collection contains items of genealogical interest and local history. The collection also includes depository items from the Tacoma Genealogical Society.

e. Northwest Collection

The Northwest Collection includes books, maps, manuscript materials, photographs and other items about the history, growth, and development of that portion of North America west of the Rocky Mountains and north of California, including Alaska.

10. Branch Collections

Branch Collections contain primarily circulating materials which are supplemented by more specialized materials available from the Main Library. Branch Collections contain limited reference materials, adequate to answer most questions.

F. Policy by Format

The Library will purchase materials in any appropriate print or non-print format which may include:

Hardback
Paperback
Softcover
Large print
Microform
Videoform

G. Maintenance of Collection

1. Weeding and Discarding

In order to maintain a collection of value and use to the community, the following materials will be discarded: Library materials which have become worn out through use; materials that are no longer timely or accurate; materials that are of little use or questionable value; and excess copies of titles no longer in demand. All discarded materials are sold through a bid process.

2. Binding and Mending

Library materials needing repair will be mended if it is not possible to replace them or if the replacement cost is prohibitive. Library materials needing repair which are available for purchase will be evaluated according to the Library's need. They will either be discarded, used as they are, or replaced. Unless irreplaceable and distinctively worthwhile, paperbacks will not be mended except for the repair of separated covers.

3. Replacement and Duplication

Materials withdrawn will not automatically be replaced. The Library will purchase multiple copies of titles when a high rate of use is anticipated. Purchase in one collection type or format does not preclude its purchase in another type or format.

H. Gifts

The Library accepts gifts with the understanding that the material will be judged by the same standards of selection as those applied to the purchase of new materials. Those items which are useful to the Library will be retained. Unaccepted materials will be discarded.

The Library reserves the right to interfile gifts with other materials on the subject for the best public service.

The appraisal of a gift to the Library for tax purposes is left to the donor. The Library may provide a receipt indicating the number and type of items donated.

Funds for the purchase of a gift or memorial materials are encouraged. The responsibility for selection rests with the Library staff, although the donor's suggestions will be considered. Bookplates will be placed in each item if requested by the donor.