

Carthage Public Library

POLICIES OF BOOK SELECTION

This Board believes that censorship is a purely individual matter and declares that while anyone is free to reject for himself books which he does not approve of, he cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others.

As a responsibility of library service, books and other materials are chosen to cover a wide variety of subjects for the information, education, and enjoyment of the people of the community. No materials are to be excluded because of the race or nationality, gender, sexual orientation, political or social views of the writer.

An attempt is made to provide materials presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times. No reading matter is proscribed or removed from the library shelves because of doctrinal or social content.

SELECTION OF BOOKS AND OTHER MATERIALS

AUTHORITY: The final authority for the determination of policy to guide the selection and acquisition of library materials is vested in the Carthage Public Library Board of Trustees. This board defends the principles of the freedom to read.

SELECTION AS MEANS OF CARRYING OUT LIBRARY OBJECTIVES

Selection policies necessarily begin with the study of community needs and existing collections of the library and of the services which the library performs. Materials selection is intended to implement the general objectives of the Carthage Public Library. The purpose of the selection process is to obtain books and other materials to further the library program of giving information, reference guidance, and help to those engaged in educational pursuits as well as to provide recreational reading. Resource sharing, electronic resources and other methods of access are valid and necessary ways of meeting patron's needs.

CRITERIA FOR BOOK SELECTION

- 1) The author's significance as a writer and/or his professional reputation.
- 2) Importance of the subject matter to the collection.
- 3) Scarcity of the material on the subject.
- 4) Timeliness or permanence of the work.
- 5) Inclusion of the title in special bibliographies or indexes.
- 6) Reputation and standing of the publisher. The works issued by smaller and more obscure publishers will not be ignored, since many significant titles originate from these sources.
- 7) Diversity of viewpoint
- 8) Patron demand.

9) Community relevance

BOOK SELECTION AIDS

The staff makes skilled use of selection aids, publisher's lists, special bibliographies for reference books and particular subject materials, and book reviewing journals. Reviews and personal examination are major sources of information about new materials. No one publication is relied upon exclusively. The critical opinions of reviewers are checked against each other and evaluated.

WEEDING

Material which no longer meets the stated objectives of the library will be discarded according to accepted professional practices. Disposition of library materials so weeded will be at the discretion of the Director.

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

Items in the library's collection are shelved in recommended age-appropriate sections. The "Primary" collection is intended for patrons ages birth – 2nd grade, "Juvenile" sections are intended for 3rd to 8th grade and YA or "Young Adult" sections are intended for patrons ages 8th-12th grade. The "Adult" collection is intended for adults 18 + and up. "All Ages" is self-explanatory. There may be some variations in the age appropriateness in each collection. In general, decisions to place a particular item in the collections are done by the standard of the average person, applying contemporary standards nationwide or the publishers' suggested age range if available. This statement is required by 15CSR 30-200.015 Library Certification Requirement for the Protection of Minors., subsection (a).

Patrons are not limited by these recommended age-appropriate sections. All patrons are welcome to checkout any materials in our collections. However the responsibility for materials used by minor children rests solely with their parents or guardians. The Library does not stand in the place of the parents or guardians when it comes to access to library collections. It is not the responsibility of the Library, Library Board of Trustees or staff to determine which collection minor children should use or what items in the approved collections is suitable for an individual. The Library staff is willing to work with parents to determine what items are best suited for a minor child's reading interests and needs, within the framework of the Library policy/disclaimer concerning "Library Certification Requirements for the Protection of Minors."

Purchase suggestions are accepted from any and all patrons. Each suggestion will be weighed against the selection criteria set forth in this policy.

CENSORSHIP

The Library and its Board of Trustees consider reading, listening, and viewing to be individual, private matters. Full, confidential, and unrestricted access to information is essential for patrons to exercise their constitutional rights. Libraries have a public and professional obligation to provide equal access to all library resources for all library patrons.

The Library recognizes the pluralistic nature of the community and the varied backgrounds and needs of all citizens, regardless of race, gender, nationality, sexual orientation, creed, religion, or political persuasion. A public library does not promote particular beliefs or views. It provides a resource where the individual can examine issues freely and make his or her own decisions.

The Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some library patrons. Selection will not be made on the basis of any anticipated approval or

controversial subjects, including unpopular or unorthodox positions. The choice of Library materials for personal use is an individual matter; while anyone is free to reject materials of which he or she does not approve, no one has the right to exercise censorship to restrict the freedom of use and/or access by others.

The Library does not stand in place of the parents/guardians when it comes to access to library materials. The responsibility for monitoring a child's reading, listening and viewing rests solely with the parent or legal guardian. Selection of materials for the Library is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain materials that their parents or guardians consider inappropriate. See the "Circulation" policy for the disclaimer as printed below that in order for a minor to have a library card, their parent or guardian must sign the application.

"As the parent/legal guardian of my child, I grant access to the full collections of the Carthage Public Library, the Missouri Evergreen Consortium, and any electronic books and resources that may be accessed using the patron's Carthage Public Library card. Library staff do not supervise minors. Library staff do not know what you consider appropriate for your child and cannot be responsible for their selections. If you do not agree to full access to the collections, your child will not be issued a card. Parents/guardians may then check out items for children on their own cards. This statement is required by 15 CSR 30-200.015 Missouri State Regulations."

Each item considered for selection will be evaluated on its own merits. Works that depict an aspect of life honestly will not be excluded because of frankness of expression; vivid descriptions of sex or violence; the philosophy, politics, or religion of the author; or any other factor which might be objectionable to some Library patrons.

The Library collection is organized and maintained to help people find the materials they are looking for. Any labelling, seclusion, or alteration of materials because of controversy surrounding the creator or subject matter will not be sanctioned, in standing with the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights.

PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING “PATRON’S STATEMENT OF CONCERN ABOUT LIBRARY RESOURCES”

RESPONSIBILITY: Staff is to refer complaints concerning library materials to the Director if a patron desires. Patron making complaint must be a Carthage Public Library card holder.

The Carthage Public Library welcomes comments from library cardholders and suggestions regarding the continued appropriateness of materials in the collection, especially with regard to outdated materials. Suggestions and recommendations will be considered and utilized by the library in the ongoing process of collection development. Additionally, CPL cardholders are free to express opinions or concerns about library programs, events, or displays.

Individuals may take issue with library materials, programs, events, or displays that do not support their own views or values on a subject or that is not compatible with their beliefs. Staff is available to discuss concerns and to identify alternate materials, programs, events, or displays that may be available. If a patron’s concern is not satisfied through discussion with staff, a formal, written request: “Patron’s Statement of Concern Regarding Materials, Programs, Events, or Displays” may be submitted to the Library Director.

The Carthage Public Library is not a judicial body. Laws governing obscenity, subversive materials, and other questionable matters are subject to interpretation by the courts. Therefore, no challenged material will be removed solely based on a complaint of obscenity or any other category covered by law until a local court of competent jurisdiction has ruled against the material. No material will be knowingly added to the library collection that has been previously determined to be in noncompliance with local and federal laws.

The item under consideration will remain in the collection throughout the process to support the freedom of other patrons to read, view, or listen.

An item, program, event or display will be evaluated for reconsideration only once in a 12-month period.

The Library Staff and Library Director will consider each request in terms of the criteria outlined in the library’s materials selection policy, program policy, and the principles of the ALA Library Bill of Rights and related statements, printed **reviews**, and other appropriate sources.

If a patron wishes to pursue a “Statement of Concern” of any material, program, display or event, the following procedures will take place:

- 1) Assure the concerned patron that the material in question will be re-evaluated with regard to the written materials selection policy.
- 2) Send the material in question to the Director who is responsible for the category along with concern or comments of patron.
- 3) The final decision rests with the Director who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board. Patron will be notified by mail the Director’s decision.
- 4) If not satisfied with the outcome given them by the Director, they may wish to have a hearing with the Book Committee of the Board. This will be done through the Director who will contact the committee members and set up a meeting for the hearing. The Book Committee consists of two board members to be appointed by the President, and the Director, who heads the committee.

- 5) The results of any concern shall be disclosed to the public and published on the library's website.

Because it is desirable to have maximum participation of the library staff in the selection of library materials, the Director may delegate responsibility for selection to other staff members. Such delegation does not relieve the Director of responsibility, but rather places the initial selection as close as possible to the point of contact with the public.

Staff members, board members, and the general public may recommend materials to be considered for purchase. Recommendations are given to the Director for consideration in the light of selection policies, study the community needs, and financial ability to purchase these materials.