

In keeping with the Mission of the Monroe County Library System, the collection will be selected and maintained to provide materials "within the full scope of recorded human expression." The Library collection will provide its users a source of life-long learning and entertainment, a forum for the exploration of ideas, a repository for and a point of access to the dreams, aspirations, and visions of humanity. The collection will reflect the diversity of its users, the variety of their interests, and the heritage of their communities.

The Board of Trustees of the Monroe County Library System recognizes that the full range of human ideas must be accessible in a public library, and that this principle is embodied in the First Amendment of the Constitution, which protects the free expression of ideas. The Board believes that while anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves, they cannot restrict the freedom of others to read or inquire. Parents have the primary responsibility to guide and direct the reading of their own minor child. The Library cannot stand "in loco parentis."

The Library collection will be a broadly based and unbiased source of information. The collection will include as wide a selection as possible, and in as much depth as sufficient to meet anticipated and expressed needs. The Library selects materials in accordance with the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read statements.

Selection Criteria

Criteria for adding materials to the collection will include:

- Support of collection development objectives
- Literary and social value, or importance as a document of the times
- Relevance to community needs and interests
- Potential and/or known demand for material (bestsellers)
- Suitability of subject, style and reading level for the intended audience
- Reputation and significance of the author, illustrator, publisher, producer, filmmaker, etc.
- Literary, artistic, or technical values
- Accuracy of content
- Positive reviews in one or more appropriate professional journals
- Within limits of budgets for materials
- Relationship to existing materials in the collection
- Diversity of viewpoint
- Local author
- Availability in area libraries

Materials Not Collected

Forms of expression that are unprotected by the First Amendment will not be included in the Library. Abridged talking books are not purchased, although they may be added to the collection if donated.

Gifts

Books, videos, and other materials may be donated to the Monroe County Library System, with the exception of textbooks, paperbacks without covers, damaged items, and magazines. No conditions may be placed on their use by the library system, although every effort is made to abide by the donor's wishes. Some items may be added to the collection, but others may be discarded, returned, sold in a book sale, or offered to educational or other non-profit institutions. Donors may request a receipt estimating the value of the donation.

Cash gifts or memorials are welcome. Letters of thanks are sent to both the donor and the honoree, including titles of the materials purchased with the donation. Bookplates with the donor and honoree's names are placed in the materials.

Collection Maintenance

Library staff continuously evaluate materials, replacing or repairing those which are worn or damaged, and withdrawing items no longer current or in demand. Replacement will depend on whether the item is still available and in print, another item might better serve the same purpose, there remains sufficient need to replace the item, newer or revised materials are a better replacement, or if the item has historical value.

Withdrawn materials may be discarded, sold in a book sale, or offered to educational or other non-profit institutions.

Materials added to the collection may be removed if the Director finds they do not meet the collection criteria. Materials that have been damaged or altered so they no longer meet the collection criteria may be removed by the Director.

Reconsideration of Library Materials

The Board of Trustees recognizes the right of individuals to question materials in the library collection. An individual questioning material in the Library may be referred to designated members of the staff to discuss the matter; unresolved concerns may then be put in writing, signed by the patron, and forwarded to the Director. The statement and the material in question will be reviewed by the Selection Review Committee convened by the Director for this purpose. The Review Committee will determine if the material under consideration meets the criteria of this policy and will make a recommendation to the Director who will prepare a written reply to the individual.

All materials selected under this policy are considered constitutionally protected until such time as they are determined unprotected by judicial action in courts of competent jurisdiction and after all appeals have been exhausted. In the event that an individual charges that a particular item is not protected under the First Amendment of the Constitution, the onus of proof rests with the individual. Material under question will remain in the active collection until such judicial determination is made.

If the Director or the Board of Trustees are concerned that an item is "harmful to minors" as defined in Michigan Act 33 of 1978, MCLA 722.673 et seq, an opinion may be sought from the General Counsel of the Monroe County Library System. If the General Counsel provides an opinion that the item is "harmful to minors" under that statute, the item shall be maintained so persons under eighteen years of age do not have access to it unless the Board of Trustees adopts a resolution rejecting the opinion of the General Counsel.

As applied under this policy and under Act 33 of 1978, MCLA 722.673 et seq, "harmful to minors" means sexually explicit material which meets all of the following criteria:

Considered as a whole, it appeals to the prurient interest of minors as determined by contemporary local community standards.

- It is patently offensive to contemporary local community standards of adults as to what is suitable for minors.
- Considered as a whole, it lacks serious literary, artistic, political, educational, and scientific value for minors.
- Interpretation of the above criteria shall be in accordance with the relevant state and federal court decisions.

If you have any questions about the Library's Collection Development Policy, or would like to see the entire policy (including material categories, special collections, periodicals, and media), please contact your branch librarian or the Head of Collection Services at the Monroe County Library System, 3700 South Custer Road, Monroe, MI 48161-9732, (734) 241-5277 or 1-800-462-2050.

Patron's Opinion of Library Materials

Name:

Address:

Title of item:

Author:

1. Have you read, viewed, or listened to the material in its entirety? If not, how much?
2. What do you object to in the material, and why?

3. All titles in the Monroe County Library System's collections have been selected according to the Library's Collection Development Policy. Do you believe that the material falls outside the policy? If so, please explain why.

4. What action do you wish the Library to take?

5. Are you usually able to find what you want in the Library? _____
If not, what material (s) would you like to be able to find in the Library collection?

12/2003