

RUSSELL LIBRARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

PURPOSE

The Russell Library upholds the principles of intellectual freedom by supporting the "[Library Bill of Rights](#)," the "[Freedom to Read](#)," and the "[Freedom to View](#)" statements adopted by the American Library Association. The Collection Development and Maintenance Policy is an extension of Russell Library's mission, vision, and strategic goals. We empower people to grow, connect, strive and thrive. Everyone feels welcomed and included. We strengthen community, create a safe and welcoming destination, foster a thriving economic ecosystem, and promote a lifelong love of learning.

Library resources are defined in this policy as the materials and media that comprise the informational, educational, and recreational collection of Russell Library and that are made available to the public either for loan or reference. Library resources include electronic databases and other content provided in digital and/or downloadable formats, as well as print matter such as books, magazines, and publications or documents preserved in microform.

Russell Library recognizes the importance of the public library as a place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, and promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by Middletown residents. Library materials are provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all Middletown residents. Librarians are professionally trained to curate and develop collections that provide access to the widest array of library and educational materials. Russell Library's collections represent an expansive range of varied and diverging viewpoints in the collection as a whole. All library materials are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in [Section 46a-64 of the Connecticut General Statutes](#).

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RESPONSIBILITY

Library resources selection is the responsibility of the Library Director and, under their direction, members of the Library staff in accordance with selection policies as adopted by the Board of Trustees. The Library Director and the Library's collection development team will review this policy periodically. Recommendations for revision will be sent to the Library Board for its approval. The Library Board or the Library staff may request that any section of this Collection Development Policy be reviewed at any time for clarification or reconsideration.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Suggestions for purchase from the public are welcome and will be given consideration within the limits of these policies.

Resources will be selected to cover a variety of tastes, interests, purposes, backgrounds, and reading levels to fill the informational, recreational, and educational needs of all residents of Middletown. Specialization or duplication will be considered as local interest or need dictates.

The Library will not attempt to furnish resources required for classroom or academic use. Resources for self-study or to supplement classroom study will be selected according to their appropriateness to the collection. Textbooks will be purchased only when they provide the best coverage of a subject and are useful to the general public. The Library will cooperate with local educational institutions to share resources, to encourage independent study and continuing education, and to supplement curricula with non-curriculum resources.

The staff will select physical resources according to the following criteria:

- favorable reviews from reliable sources
- inclusion in credible bibliographies or indexes
- accuracy, quality, and appropriateness of the resource
- reputation and authority of author or publication
- relevance to the current and anticipated needs and interests of the community
- significance, timeliness, or permanence of the subject matter
- literary merit, artistic quality, originality, and creativity
- representation of diverse points of view or lived experiences
- ability to enrich or add to the collection as a whole
- popular demand
- budgetary and space considerations
- alignment with the library's strategic goals

Periodicals are added to the collection on the basis of relevance and community interest. The periodical collection is evaluated annually. Budget considerations, usage and retention are reconsidered at that time.

Audiovisual resources are added to the Library's collection with consideration to patron demand and budget constraints. The Library acquires this resource primarily in the most popular formats.

All works by an individual author will not necessarily be considered for purchase.

Books written about Connecticut, with Connecticut as a setting, or by a Connecticut author will be given special consideration for purchase.

Additional copies of current popular books or older resources are purchased to meet demand.

All independently published resources are subject to the Library's Resources Selection Policy. An item is more likely to be added if it features regional connections or has wide audience appeal, has received a favorable review in one or more library review journals or one of the local papers and is available for purchase through an established distributor.

DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

The staff will select electronic resources according to the following criteria in addition to the above physical resources criteria:

- ease-of-use of the product
- availability to multiple users
- equipment, technology, and training requirements
- enhancement of the print equivalents in terms of speed, flexibility, combinations of search terms, full text, and added content
- access to retrospective information
- reduction of space requirements over print products
- budgetary considerations

REFERENCE RESOURCES SELECTION POLICY

Reference resources in a variety of formats are selected to satisfy the research and reference needs of library users of all ages with a variety of occupations and interests. All resources must be accurate, authoritative, factual and informative.

Reference resources are evaluated according to the following criteria:

- purpose
- authority (author's qualifications and publisher's reputation)
- scope
- timeliness
- format (arrangement, indexing, organization and consistency)
- suitability for use

There is a need for ongoing evaluation of print versus electronic resources, with attention to patron preference and format availability.

LOCAL HISTORY RESOURCES SELECTION POLICY

The Library maintains a collection of works about Middletown and significant works about Connecticut and New England.

Attempts will not necessarily be made to collect all resources by local authors. Such resources will be added based on selection criteria and/or public demand.

Local history resources will be retained in the collection in the Middletown Room, but even this collection may undergo periodic evaluation and reassessment.

CHILDREN'S RESOURCES SELECTION POLICY

The Children's collection strives to meet the needs of patrons under the age of 14 and the needs of parents, educators, and others concerned with children. Resources for children are selected by staff who are knowledgeable about children's literature and children.

Children's resources are selected according to the guidelines for general selection but should also include the following:

- encourage children's enjoyment in reading and in being read to;
- promote self-discovery and intellectual development;
- accommodate the special needs of children for play and recreation and for verbal, motor, and sensory development;
- contain content, vocabulary, and style of presentation suitable to the age level;
- support child development and parenting of children;
- comprise children's literature, children's authors and illustrators of high quality;
- promote better appreciation for and pride in cultural, racial and ethnic heritage;
- stimulate curiosity and critical thinking skills.

The Library may select resources which do not meet literary standards in order to fulfill emotional needs, serve as stepping stones to better reading, or fulfill some other special purpose.

The Children's collection is not designed to be either comprehensive or historical in nature. Major and secondary authors and illustrators are represented. Each work by an author or illustrator is evaluated on an individual basis. Children's books that were once important but which have appeal only for historical purposes will not necessarily be included in the collection.

The Children's department selects resources of interest to parents and other adults who work with children. Resources may duplicate those purchased in the adult or young adult collections. The collection also includes resources written for children but best used with the guidance of an adult.

YOUNG ADULT RESOURCES SELECTION POLICY

The Young Adult Collection includes resources of special interest to teenagers aged 13-17. The Young Adult Collection consists of resources selected to meet the informational, recreational, and emotional concerns of this age group.

Young Adult resources are selected according to the guidelines for general selection but the collection should also be fluid, flexible, current, and contain resources that:

- are in demand and of high interest;
- are of a special quality which will help young adults understand themselves and others;
- broaden viewpoints and knowledge of the world;
- stimulate curiosity;
- expand their reading ability, reading enjoyment, and critical thinking skills.

Emphasis of the Young Adult Collection is on popular browsing resources, on fiction written specifically for adolescents or with adolescent characters, and on non-fiction uniquely of interest to teenagers. Teens are encouraged to augment their research by utilizing the adult or children's nonfiction collection when needed.

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

In order to provide the best service to our community, the collection is regularly evaluated in accordance with state and national best practices as outlined by the CT State Library's Division of Library Development including but not limited to the [CREW Weeding Manual](#). Criteria used for withdrawal from the collection may include:

- Items are worn, stained or damaged beyond repair
- Items are out of date, contain inaccurate data, or are not historically significant
- New, more current, or more comprehensive resources are available
- A more desirable format of the content is available
- Duplication
- Usage statistics

Currently-useful items withdrawn by reason of condition, loss or damage will be considered for replacement.

Items removed from the collection are either given to the Friends of the Library to be sold with proceeds benefiting the Library or donated, recycled or disposed of properly.

DONATIONS

The Library may accept donations without commitment as to final disposition. It assumes unconditional ownership of all items donated and retains the right to use or dispose of them as it sees fit.

Monetary donations are always welcome. Recommendations from the donor are honored within the framework of the selection process.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN

Interlibrary Loan (ILL) is not a substitute for collection development but is meant to expand the range of resources available to Library users without needlessly duplicating the resources of other libraries. Titles that have been requested by patrons which do not fit the scope of the collection are checked for availability within the library consortium and various other sources.

CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALS

Even though parts of resources may be found by some to be objectionable because of language, stereotypes, or beliefs, an item may be acceptable if on the whole the work meets selection criteria. Resources found to contain plagiarism, misstatements, factual inaccuracies, or scant documentation will be reviewed carefully before purchase and may be reevaluated after acquisition.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AND CENSORSHIP

As stated at the beginning of this policy, the Russell Library supports the "[Library Bill of Rights](#)," the "[Freedom to Read](#)," and the "[Freedom to View](#)" statements adopted by the American Library Association. In the event that a Middletown resident cardholder desires to request reconsideration of a library resource, Russell Library has a procedure in place for reviewing materials using professionally accepted standards, including but not limited to:

- material relevance;
- physical condition;
- availability of duplicates;
- availability of age appropriate or grade-level material; and/or
- continued demand of material.

Russell Library's Review and Reconsideration Policy details the procedure for submission of requests for review of library materials. Russell Library limits consideration of requests to individual residents of Middletown.

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