



SPARTANBURG COUNTY  
PUBLIC LIBRARIES

## **Spartanburg County Public Libraries Materials Selection Policy**

### **I. Objective of the Materials Selection Policy**

- The objective of the Materials Selection Policy is to guide Collection Development librarians in the selection of materials and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made.
- The Spartanburg County Public Libraries (SCPL) system strives to provide and maintain within its financial ability a general collection of materials in a wide variety of formats which will cover a broad range of knowledge and which will include both basic works of permanent value and timely materials on current issues for the informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs of the children, teens and adults of the community.
- Due to limitations of space and budget, the Library's collection will not satisfy all requests for materials. Specialized materials which are beyond the scope of the collection may be obtained through interlibrary loans.

### **II. Responsibility for Selection**

- The selection of library materials is the responsibility of Collection Development Librarians under the supervision of the Director of Collection Management. Selection is based primarily on reviews in reputable journals, as well as the professional judgment of the librarians.
- The ultimate responsibility for the selection of materials, however, rests with the County Librarian, who operates within the policies established by the Board of Trustees.

### **III. General Principles**

- The Board of Trustees of the Spartanburg County Public Libraries has endorsed the Library Bill of Rights (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>). In part, it states:
  - “Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.”

- “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.”
- “Libraries sometimes acquire resources that include ratings as part of their packaging. Librarians should not endorse the inclusion of such rating systems.” SCPL may not remove existing ratings systems such as the MPAA. SCPL will not create a rating system independent from existing rating systems.
- The Library Staff, the County Librarian, and the Board of Trustees do not necessarily endorse every idea, opinion, or presentation that is contained in the materials which are selected. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of contents. No item will be placed on closed shelves except for the purpose of protecting it from damage or theft.
- The responsibility for supervising a child's reading materials or other library material rests with his or her parents or legal guardians. Selection of materials for the adult, teen and children's collections is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain materials that their parents consider inappropriate.
- The Library will review the selection of a specific item upon request of a member of the community. Patrons may request "A Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials," a copy of which is available at all library locations or by email at [spttech@infodepot.org](mailto:spttech@infodepot.org). Patrons should complete this form and return it to the Library. It will be reviewed by the Director of Collection Management and submitted to the County Librarian with a recommendation for action. The SCPL Materials Selection Policy will be used as a basis for the review. The County Librarian will respond promptly to the person or organization requesting the review. If necessary, the request for reconsideration will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees.
- Educational institutions are expected to assume chief responsibility for needs of their students.

#### **IV. Selection Guides**

- The following sources are some of the professional selection guides used by the staff in selecting materials:
  - Library Journal
  - School Library Journal
  - New York Times Book Review
  - Horn Book
  - Booklist
  - Kirkus
  - Metacritic
  - Choice
  - Publisher's Weekly
  - Voya
  - Internet Movie Database
  - Rotten Tomatoes
  - Metacritic
  - Video Librarian

## **V. Selection Criteria**

The following general criteria apply to all Spartanburg County Library collections.

- High standards of quality in content, expression and physical attributes (creation, binding, printing, paper quality).
- At least one favorable review in a reputable selection guide is generally required before an item is purchased.
- Significant reputation of the author, editor, producer or illustrator.
- Established reputation of publisher in the industry.
- Content that is timely, popular, accurate, and representative of various viewpoints.
- Contemporary or historical significance, potential usefulness, appeal or cultural value of the title
- Reasonable cost with regard to budget restrictions.
- In most cases, the SCPL will not purchase self-published material unless it is reviewed in an established source. Exceptions may be made for material of local interest.
- Suggestions for purchase of particular items, as well as donations, by members of the community are welcome but are subject to the same selection criteria.
- Abridgements are purchased on a case-by-case basis.
- SCPL cannot maintain all digital formats or online offerings indefinitely. As formats and content delivery systems change, the library will evaluate digital offerings based on the popularity of format, cost of maintenance, fee structures, and availability.

## **VI. Donations of Materials**

The library accepts donations of books, unsolicited manuscripts and archival collections with the understanding that, upon receipt, they become the property of SCPL and will be evaluated against the same criteria as purchased materials. Materials will be distributed in whatever manner the library deems best—by adding them to the collection, selling them, or giving them to other libraries or institutions. Strictly sectarian propaganda and tracts of an obviously proselytizing nature will not be accepted. SCPL will not notify donors of the final disposition of donated materials.

Materials donated to the Library qualify as tax-deductible charitable donations, but IRS regulations prohibit the library, as an interested party, from assigning a dollar value to the donation. Please consult current IRS regulations for more information.

## **VII. Gifts and Memorials**

The Library gratefully accepts monetary gifts to purchase materials. Please see the Gift and Memorial Form that is appended for further information.

Donations of materials to serve as memorials must meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials.

## **VIII. Maintenance of the Collection**

Decisions must be made continuously on how to handle worn materials—whether to mend, bind, replace or discard them. Weeding, the permanent removal of materials from the library’s collection, is an integral part of collection development. In order to maintain a useful, accurate, and up-to-date collection, weeding should be conducted on a regular schedule. Selectors responsible for specific subject areas are also responsible for weeding those areas.

One or more of the following criteria should be considered in weeding the collection

- Circulation data
- Poor physical condition; not suitable for rebinding
- Duplicate copies of a title no longer in demand
- Obsolete content

While the same general criteria for weeding apply to both SCPL Headquarters and branch libraries, limited space at the branches may require more frequent and aggressive weeding in certain subject areas. Selectors and branch librarians should maintain good communication during the weeding process, with the selector considering the judgment and discretion of the branch librarian in determining priorities and final decisions.

### **Policy Revision**

This policy may be revised. Revision will ordinarily be done by the Collection Management Department and approved by the Board of Trustees.

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