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Diverse literature can have a range of positive impacts for teen readers. As part of their mission, the Young Adult Library Service Association recommends libraries collect materials that represent a vast array of identities and lived experiences. This study examines how five rural public libraries in western North Carolina talk about collecting diverse materials for youth in their collection development policies using content analysis. The collecting habits of the libraries are also examined using a content analysis. The study found that while the selected libraries are collecting some diverse materials, collection development policies do not reflect a need for or promotion of diverse or #OwnVoices materials. Suggestions for creating more inclusive collection development policies that advocate for diverse collections are included.

Headings:

Library Collection Development Policy

Rural Libraries

Young Adult Literature Awards

Young Adult Services Librarians

COLLECTING BETTER: A CASE STUDY OF THE COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICIES
AND COLLECTING HABITS OF RURAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

by
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Introduction

The world of young adult literature is rapidly expanding, becoming pervasive in today's mainstream culture. You can find teen and adult readers interacting with young adult literature authors on social media platforms like Twitter or waiting in long lines at youth literature festivals for the chance to meet them. The increased popularity of young adult literature has also brought criticism to the children's and young adult publishing industry. Many readers, authors, and publishers are calling for diverse representation in the books being published for young adults. In young adult literature, which is written for and about youth ages twelve to eighteen, diversity and representation are presented through the inclusion of characters who hold minority identities in terms of race, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, socioeconomic class, and ability. The demand for diverse young adult literature has also been heard in the library sphere and librarians have been advocating for the use of diverse characters in literature for children and young adults for many years. Rudine Sims Bishop notes the importance of character representation to readers when she compares books to mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors (Bishop, 1990). The comparison emphasizes the reflection of self that youth belonging to minority groups are able to take from diverse representation in literature (literature as a mirror) (Bishop, 1990). Bishop also

points out that diverse literature can also serve as a window in the lives of people who are different from the reader and gives them the opportunity to step into communities they don't inhabit themselves (Bishop, 1990).

The Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), frequently acts as a leadership organization for youth-serving librarians. YALSA promotes the inclusion and celebration of marginalized voices through collections, policies, and programming. Their statement on equity, diversity, and inclusion states that teens, especially those from historically marginalized groups "need and deserve to see themselves reflected in the library staffing, policies, signage, web site content and much more" (Young Adult Library Service Association, 2016). To meet the needs of diverse youth and fulfill the ideals of the YALSA diversity statement, librarians in youth-service roles in public and school libraries are collecting materials that represent the vast array of lived experience in their community.

A fair amount of research has been conducted on the representation and importance of diverse identities in children's and youth collection in the United States. Most of this research is focused on urban areas where minority youth live in higher numbers. Rural areas, which are typically defined as areas located outside cities and with low population density, are frequently overlooked in LIS research, especially in areas related to youth services and collecting materials for youth. While there may be fewer youth of racial and religious minorities in rural communities, there are youth who embody other minority identities including gender, sexual orientation, class, and ability. Homogenous racial and religious groups in rural areas can greatly benefit from diverse

literature as a window into other cultures. Rural communities can also benefit from diverse literature as a mirror for other minority identities. To meet the needs of the community, youth-serving librarians in rural communities need to collect materials representing diverse people and their lives and cultures.

Collection development policies and other formal and informal guidelines are used by librarians to collect materials for their library and justify purchases to stakeholders. In rural libraries, the collection development policy can remain out of date due to a lack of time to update them, since many rural libraries are staffed by only one or two full-time librarians. Collection development policies are sometimes approved by local government officials, which adds to the amount of time needed to update them. These documents act as purchasing guidelines for new materials and justification for materials that could be seen as controversial, especially in conservative communities. Therefore libraries need to ensure their collection development policies are up to date and include guidelines for selecting diverse materials that meet the needs of their community as both reflections of the people who live there and the broader communities of the country and world.

Research Questions

This study focuses on the following research questions:

- What guidelines are youth-serving librarians in rural libraries in western North Carolina using to collect diverse materials for their libraries?

- Are these librarians ensuring the representation presented in the materials is accurate? If so, how are they doing this?
- How do the collecting habits of rural libraries compare to their collection development policies, specifically when collecting diverse materials?

Literature Review

Importance of Diverse literature to young adult readers

Reading is an important way in which adolescents develop aspects of their identity. The Search Institute created a framework that outlines 40 Developmental Assets that adolescents need in order to grow up healthy, caring, and responsible (“The Developmental Assets Framework,” 1997). Reading for pleasure is listed as an internal asset that falls into the category of commitment to learning (“The Developmental Assets Framework,” 1997). A library’s collection can also empower teens to feel safe and valuable in their community, which is another critical asset outlined by the Search Institute (“The Developmental Assets Framework,” 1997). Acknowledgement of their identity on the shelves means that they are recognized by authors, publishers, and the library and its staff, which can lead to a sense of purpose, personal power, self-esteem, all aspects of the positive identity asset (“The Developmental Assets Framework,” 1997).

Books are one way that teens can see themselves represented by society and have their struggles acknowledged as valid. Rudine Sims Bishop wisely described books as the following:

“Books are sometimes windows, offering views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange. These windows are also sliding

glass doors, and readers only have to walk through in imagination to become part of whatever world has been created and recreated by the author. When lighting conditions are just right, however, a window can also be a mirror. Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection we can see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience. Reading, then, becomes a means of self-affirmation, and readers often seek their mirrors in books (Bishop, 1990, p.ix).

This description of literature emphasizes the ways in which a reader can interact with a book. However, if the characters in young adult literature are predominantly white, male, middle-class, heterosexual, cisgender, and non-disabled, readers outside those experiences will have a harder time relating to the characters. There is no mirror for youth of color, queer youth, disabled youth, or poor youth in the narrative norm described above. Reading outside the norm is also beneficial for members of the majority, since it provides readers the opportunity to develop empathy and understanding for people who have a different lived experience from their own.

A recent School Library Journal article surveyed librarians about the importance of diversity in their libraries. One librarian responded that diversity is one of the most important issues in the field of youth literature (Ishizuka, 2018, p. 28). The same survey revealed that 84% of librarians consider diverse book collections very important for youth (Ishizuka, 2018, p.28). Librarians also consider it important for readers to have stories written by people who are members of diverse communities, which are called #OwnVoices stories.

#OwnVoices

When writing from the perspective of or about a minority character, many authors carefully research the community their character comes from in order to portray an accurate experience. However, many argue that a better approach is for authors from minority communities to be promoted as sources of authentic stories from their community. Bishop acknowledges that some culturally authentic books can be written by people outside of the described culture or community, but notes that this is an exception rather than the rule (Bishop, 1990). More often, authors perpetuate stereotypes or factual inaccuracies when writing about a community outside their own. In their book, *Understanding Diversity Through Novels and Picture Books*, Liz Knowles and Martha Smith state that it is important for themes, characters, and settings in fictional works to be accurate and support culture, beliefs, and values (Knowles & Smith, 2007, 8-9). This mirrors the need for accuracy in nonfiction materials. Materials written by members of the community they depict are typically referred to as “#OwnVoices” and are gaining steam in the young adult literature world. Popular titles that are considered #OwnVoices include *If I Was Your Girl* by Meredith Russo (representation of trans identity), *Turtles All the Way Down* by John Green (representation of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and anxiety), *Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds (representation of Black youth), and *#NotYourPrincess: Voices of Native American Women*, edited by Lisa Charleyboy and Mary Beth Leatherdale (representation of Native American women).

Despite the need and desire for #OwnVoices books, publishing is falling behind. Publishing studies have shown the racial disparity among the people who write books

for children, as well as in the larger publishing community. In 2017, the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison compiled data about the racial identities of children's book authors in the United States. Only 9.2% of the books the CCBC reviewed had significant African or African American content (29.4% #OwnVoices), 1.9% had significant Native American or First Nations content (52.8% #OwnVoices), 8.4% had significant Asian Pacific's or Asian Pacific Americans content (39.4% #OwnVoices), and 5.8% had significant Latinx content (33.8% #OwnVoices) (Tyner, 2018). The remaining 3,302 books (89%) had no significant representation of African/African American, Native American/First Nations, Asian Pacific/Asian Pacific American, or Latinx content. This could mean the books featured white characters, characters with no specific race or ethnicity ("unspecified brown-skinned characters"), or non-human characters (Tyner, 2018). A total of 550 books (14.9%) submitted to CCBC were written or illustrated by people of color (Tyner, 2018). The majority of books are written by white authors and they are frequently writing books about characters of other races (Tyner, 2018). While this can be done well with intensive research and sensitivity readers, there are many cultural nuances that a person writing outside the community will not understand. Librarians can encourage the publishing of #OwnVoices texts by purchasing available materials and promoting them within their collections.

Creating Diverse Collections

When choosing resources for youth, librarians must be aware of cultural implications that come with depictions of characters, communities, or experiences. The

Council on Interracial Books for Children created a quick guide for selecting materials for children while also being aware of cultural depictions that could be modified for use with young adult literature and graphic novels for young adults. The list, *Ten Quick Ways to Analyze Children's Books for Sexism and Racism*, include the following ways and examples which have been modified for young adult literature ([Racism and Sexism Resource Center for Educators, 1974](#)):

- *Check the illustrations/images*: While not appropriate for most young adult literature, graphic novels for young adults should be examined for stereotypes or tokenism relating to cultural groups. Cover art could also be examined for hurtful images.
- *Check the storyline or narrative material*: Characters and their actions should be examined for stereotypes or hurtful tropes. For example, are white characters “saving” characters of color throughout the story? Are female characters portrayed as strong or weak and how are gender stereotypes addressed in the narrative?
- *Look at character lifestyle*: Analyze the character lifestyle, especially for characters that fall outside of the white, male, middle-class, cisgender, heterosexual, non-disabled lens (the “norm”). What cultural assumptions are portrayed by characters that fall outside of the “norm”?
- *Weigh the relationships between people*: Are relationships between people of different genders, sexual identities, ability, or race evenly balanced or is one group consistently seen as the dominant party in the relationship?

- *Note the heroes:* Does the protagonist of the story a person who falls outside the “norm”? Is a person outside the white, male, middle-class, heterosexual, cisgender, non-disabled lens a hero because they “did good for a minority person”?
- *Consider the effect on a child’s self-image:* While some teens may have aspects of their identity settled when they reach teenage years, content they consume can still impact their self-image. What messages are being portrayed about minority groups in the text? How would a person from a minority group feel after reading the book or engaging with the images in the graphic novel?
- *Consider the creator’s background:* Is the author qualified to create material representing the characters included in the story? Is the author a member of minority communities represented in the text or illustrations? If not, did the author do research about the community or have the material checked by a member of the community?
- *Determine the creator’s perspective:* What lens is the creator applying to the material?
- *Watch for loaded words:* Some words, like slurs, are easily identified as words that have a negative impact on a minority community member and perpetuate hate. Other words, like lazy, savage, or crazy, are more normalized in everyday conversation but carry negative connotations, especially when paired with minority groups. Materials should be examined

for slurs and other loaded words that perpetuate stereotypes. If slurs or loaded words are used, it is important to examine the context. Is it a person from a marginalized group reclaiming the word or is it a person from a majority group using it as a weapon? Is the word's negative use addressed?

- *Look at the copyright date:* Older materials are more likely to convey stereotypes than newer books. New books should also be inspected carefully as well, since prejudice and bias are still prevalent today.

Nancy J. Johnson, Melanie D. Koss, and Miriam Martinez (2018) build on both Bishop's (1990) metaphor and the idea of creating selection guidelines for diverse books. They recommend purchasing books with the potential to become sliding glass doors for readers with identities different from the characters portrayed. Some of their purchasing criteria include "characters who make the world a better place, experience injustice, stand up or speak out, serve as role models, take risks, wrestle with right and wrong," and "raise questions about their world" (Johnson, Koss, & Martinez, 2018, p.573). Books as sliding glass doors are particularly important in rural communities, like western North Carolina, which tend to be homogenous in terms of race and religious beliefs.

Rural Public Libraries

Public libraries in rural communities are often an integral part of the community. The public library provides materials, programs, and other information services to meet a wide range of the community's needs. Rural librarians act as everything from a

personal book recommender to technology specialist. Alemanne, Mandel, and McClure (2018) describe the public library as a highly trusted institution in rural communities, with libraries gaining credibility and visibility by offering information services and support.

In library science research, rural public libraries are relatively understudied. According to Real, Bertot, and Jaeger(2014), many library professional organizations consider public libraries to be small or rural if its service area contains fewer than 25,000 people. This aligns with the United States Census Bureau which defines rural areas as communities with less than 2,500 people (US Census Bureau, 2018) Rural libraries are also more likely to have fewer staff members, shorter hours, and a smaller budget (Flatley & Wyman, 2009, p. 30, 33-38).

Collection Development

In the earliest history of public libraries, materials were collected by trustees or committees appointed by library trustees (P. Johnson, 2009, p.7). However, the end of the 1800s brought a change to library collecting practice. Many people in the field advocated for book selecting responsibilities to be handed over to librarians, who were receiving increasingly advanced education (Johnson, 2009, p.7) With collecting responsibilities now in the hands of librarians, texts were published to aid librarians in their selection process. While many of these texts are outdated and have no real relevance to modern collecting, some of the selection goals written by Francis K. W. Drury are still used by librarians today. These goals include:

- Analyzing the nature of a community
- Recognizing the various needs materials be meeting
- Becoming familiar with sources of information
- Selecting materials based on the value they will provide to the community

(Drury, 1930, p. xii-xiii)

Modern libraries use a mixture of collection development guidelines and librarian expertise to select materials for the library. The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutes (IFLA) state that a library's primary task is to select, maintain, and provide access to information resources (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions Section on Acquisitions and Development, 2001). A collection development policy helps libraries achieve this task by providing guidance to librarians and other staff when selecting or removing resources for a collection. In *Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management*, collection development policies are described as documents that outline the present collection and the future of the collection (P. Johnson, 2009, p. 73).

IFLA also notes the importance of a collection development policy in its ability to reduce personal bias. It does this by positioning individual selection decisions within the context of the collection and the goals for the collection (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions Section on Acquisitions and Development, 2001). Collection Development Policies can also ensure that all members of a community are represented in the materials in the collection ("Montana State Library-Collection Development Policy Guidelines for School Media Programs," n.d.). This mirrors the

values of several sections of the American Library Association, which hold diversity-based collecting as a goal and believe that policies should reflect this goal. In rural communities, it is easy for librarians to collect materials that match their community's racial and religious image, since many rural communities are white and Christian. However, librarians also need to be mindful of the other diverse identities members of their community may hold, including diverse socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability. These identities should also be represented on library shelves. Including a commitment to diversity is essential in these community for youth to understand the lived experiences of others who are different from them through literature.

Putting Everything Together

Little research has been done on diversity in rural libraries, despite a large body of work relating to diversity in children's literature and its importance in youth development. This study fills the gap in diverse literature research by combining collection development policies, rural libraries, and diverse literature. By examining collection development policies for statements on diverse literature, the study will be able to highlight areas where policy is weak or non-inclusive. The study will also examine how libraries are enacting their policies by collecting diverse materials or not purchasing them for the library's collection. This can act as a gateway for other research done surrounding diversity in programming, services, and collections in rural libraries in other areas of the United States.

Methods

This study seeks to understand how librarians are talking about collecting diverse materials for youth in collection development policies. The study will also investigate how librarians are ensuring that the representation depicted in their library's materials is both accurate and adequate. Special attention will be given to materials that come from "own voice" authors, which, as discussed in the literature review section, are authors and other creators who write or otherwise tell stories and share information about communities they are involved in.

Documents and Artifacts as Data

This study will be examining collection development policies, which are written for librarian use and, in most cases, public examination. Since this study will be examining what some may view as a sensitive topic, using documents as a data source is an ideal method of data collection. Wildemuth (2009) describes documents as a more accurate representation of phenomenon than other methods, like self-reporting (p. 165). The use of documents as a data source is also attractive to researchers since, in many cases, the documents are readily available for use and stored systematically (Wildemuth, 2009, p. 166-167). This is likely to be true for

this study, since many libraries provide their collection development policy on their website.

This study will be using a second data collection method, artifacts as data. The libraries selected will have portions of their collection for children and youth analyzed for particular titles that represent a well-rounded youth collection with representation in different areas of diversity. The inclusion of these books in the collection will be examined, including books purchased in non-print formats, like e-books, audiobooks on disc, and e-audiobooks.

In high quality research studies, data is best analyzed when multiple data sources are integrated before conclusions are drawn. For this study, collecting data both from collection development policies and the collection itself will add nuance and help eliminate some concerns about the validity of the conclusions drawn by the researcher.

Content Analysis

This study will use content analysis to investigate how librarians in rural libraries incorporate diverse materials into their youth collection through the library's collection development policy. The analysis of collection development policies will also search for criteria that librarians use to gauge the accuracy of the representation in their materials, which is critical when the majority of the library staff and users are people who do not have first-hand experience with the representation being presented.

The study will also include content analysis of the library collections. While investigating the conversation surrounding diverse materials for youth in rural libraries

is the primary focus for this study, it is also important to see if libraries are following through on their commitment to collecting diverse materials, if it is included in the collection development policy. If diverse collecting habits are not a part of the policy explicitly, examining the collection can unearth diverse collecting habits or lack thereof.

Content analysis has become a backbone of data analysis in the Library and Information Science fields. Neuendorf (2002) defines qualitative content analysis as the “systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics” where the term message can be interpreted as any information captured. In this study, the “message” will be collection development policies. Quantitative content analysis focuses primarily on counting words and extracting objective content while qualitative content analysis goes beyond to interpret meanings, themes, and patterns that appear in the document (Wildemuth, 2009). Beyond this basic difference, Wildemuth (2009) describes four primary differences in quantitative and qualitative content analysis. First, quantitative content analysis is primarily used in mass communication as a method to count elements while qualitative analysis stemmed from social sciences, primarily anthropology, qualitative sociology, and psychology, to explore underlying meaning in text. Next, quantitative analysis is deductive (testing hypotheses and addressing questions) while qualitative analysis takes an inductive approach, grounding topics and themes in the data. Third, quantitative and qualitative content analysis vary in data sampling techniques. Quantitative analysis requires random sampling while qualitative analysis uses non-random sampling including purposive sampling, where artifacts are chosen specifically for the study. Finally, the two methods produce different products.

Quantitative analysis produces numerical data that can be manipulated and represented with statistics. Qualitative analysis typically produces descriptions or typologies that address unique themes and illustrate a range of meanings. In order to make the most out of the data analysis, this study will use a combination of quantitative and qualitative content analysis.

Content analysis has previously been used to investigate collection development and other library policies (Kelly, 2015; Robinson, 1994). This study would build on previous work investigating library policy through content analysis by exploring rural public libraries, youth collections, and diverse representation in an area that has been largely dominated by research focused on academic library policies.

Methodology

The study examines the collection development policies of five rural public libraries in western North Carolina. The United States Census Bureau describes two types of areas in terms of population density and development: Urban Areas, made up of urbanized areas and urban clusters, and Rural Areas. Rural areas encompass all population, housing, and territory not included in Urban Areas, which have at least 2,500 people (US Census Bureau, 2018). A list of counties categorized into urban, mostly rural, or rural created by the US Census Bureau was used to select the counties from which the libraries were selected. In order to provide an adequate number of libraries to select from, counties categorized as mostly rural or rural were included. The US Census Bureau defines mostly rural as counties with 50% - 99.9% of the population living in

rural areas, which were previously defined as all areas with less than 2,500 people (The United States Census Bureau, 2010). This will provide a wider range of counties that will better represent the libraries in western North Carolina.

Once a list of all the library systems in rural and mostly rural counties in western North Carolina was generated, each system was assigned a number. Five numbers were then be randomly selected using a random number generator. This mitigated some sampling issues, including possible over-representation of library systems that span multiple counties and under-representation of counties with multiple library systems.

Once the libraries were identified, the collection development policies were gathered from the library website or by contacting a librarian at the library. The policies were then coded, starting with a single document acting as a pilot study. The longest collection development policy was used for the pilot study in order to create a robust coding system to use on the remain documents. Particular attention was paid to uses of the following words or phrases:

- Accurate (as it relates to library materials)—factually correct while also acknowledging differences in lived experiences and, ideally, told from a voice within the community being represented
- Diverse or Diversity—Content reflective of a wide range of lived experiences, especially those outside the traditional white, middle class, male, heterosexual, cisgender, and non-disabled lens. Diversity can be made up of both internal and external characteristics.

- Marginalized—people, communities, or experiences that are systematically overlooked; typically those outside the traditional white, middle class, male, heterosexual, cisgender, and non-disabled lens
- #OwnVoices—content creators who create from their own unique perspective and lived experiences
- Privileged—people, communities, or experiences that are given opportunities systematically over another group
- Representation—portrayal of diverse or marginalized people, communities or experiences
- Youth, Young Adult, or Teen—Adolescents between the ages of 12 and 18

Once the pilot document was coded in a first round, the process was repeated with the researcher coding the document searching for broader categories and themes within the document. In order to increase the validity of the coding schema, another graduate student coded the pilot document and, once the schema was verified, another collection development policy from another library selected for the study. This helped eliminate issues with the coding scheme.

An examination of the selected library systems' collections also took place in this study. In order to evaluate the collecting habits of the libraries, each of the collections was searched for twenty book titles that have been awarded book awards for their diverse representation in areas including race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. The list of books included winners from the following awards in the last five years (2014-2018):

- *American Indian Youth Literature Award*: An award given to the best writing and illustrations by and about American Indians that show American Indians accurately in both present and historical contexts (“American Indian Youth Literature Award,” n.d.).
- *Americas Award*: An award given to books that authentically and engagingly portray Latin America, the Caribbean, or Latinx people in the United States (Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs, n.d.).
- *Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature*: An award that honors works about Asian/Pacific American experiences or cultures, written or illustrated by an Asian/Pacific American author or illustrator (Asian Pacific American Librarians Association, 2016).
- *Coretta Scott King Book Award*: An award given to outstanding African American authors and illustrators that demonstrate and appreciation of African American culture and universal human values (“The Coretta Scott King Book Awards,” 2009).
- *Lambda Literary Award for LGBTQ Children’s/Young Adult Literature*: An award for children’s and young adult literature based on merit and relevance to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer lives (Lambda Literary, 2018).
- *Pura Belpré Award*: An award presented to a Latinx author and illustrator whose works are written for children or youth and portray, affirm, and celebrate the Latinx cultural experience (“Pura Belpré Award,” 1999).

- *Rainbow Book List*: An award given to children and youth materials with significant and authentic GLBTQ content (GLBT Round Table of the American Library Association, 2009).
- *Schneider Family Book Award*: An award that honors an author or illustrator of a book for children or youth that embodies an expression of the disability experience (“Schneider Family Book Award Manual,” 2014)
- *South Asia Book Award*: An award given to young adult or children’s books that portray South Asia or South Asians (South Asia National Outreach Consortium, 2018).
- *Stonewall book Award-Mike Morgan & Larry Romans Children’s & Young Adult Literature Award*: An award given to books written for children and young adults portraying the gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender experience (“Stonewall Book Awards List,” 2009).
- *Sydney Taylor Book Award*: An award given for children and youth materials that authentically portray the Jewish Experience (“Association of Jewish Libraries - Sydney Taylor Book Award,” n.d.).
- *Tomas Rivera Book Award*: An award that honors authors and illustrators who create children’s and youth materials that depict the Mexican American experience (“Tomás Rivera Book Award,” 2018)

Some of these book awards are specifically for Young Adult Literature while others also give the same award to books written for younger audiences. After the winners from the last five years were selected from these awards, any books that were written

for younger audiences were removed from the list. NoveList, a reader's advisory database with information on published books, was used to determine the intended audience for the books using their Min/Max Grade Level category and recommended ages category. As defined earlier in this paper, young adults are people who fall into the range of 12 to 18 years of age, or 6th through 12th grades in the United States. Books that had recommended age levels or grade outside these recommended ranges were removed from the book list to ensure only texts intended for young adults were included. These books were chosen based on their inclusion of marginalized voices and overall popularity and accessibility. Since they have all been given awards by large organizations, it is more likely that small, rural library systems will have heard of the titles and will have purchased them, based on their award-winning status.

After the final list was determined, each of the library catalogs was searched for the titles. The number of copies of each title was recorded, including multiple formats of the text, like e-books and audiobooks available digitally and on disc. Every effort was made to locate the titles in the library catalog by using title, keyword, and author searches.

Analysis

The analysis for this study is broken into two parts. The first is analysis of the collection development policies from the five selected libraries. All counties in western North Carolina that are categorized as rural or mostly rural and were eligible for the study are located in Appendix A. The policies selected for the study are located in Appendix B with identifying information removed. The second section is analysis of the libraries' holdings of the titles select for this study. The titles included in this study are listed in Appendix C and the holding data for each library's collection is located in appendix D.

Collection Development Policy Analysis

Library A

Library A had the longest policy at nine pages. The document includes policies on materials selection, book withdrawal, selection of materials in languages other than English, requests for reconsideration of materials, and collection of North Carolina and local authors. Throughout these sections, an emphasis was placed on collecting based on the needs of the community. Phrases like "to meet the needs to the community" and "appeals to the interests and needs of individuals in the community" are used eight times in the materials selection section of the policy.

This library also included statements on diversity: (“The library attempts to maintain a well-balanced collection representing all the major religions and their sacred scriptures. Authoritative materials which introduce and explain the basic concepts and practices of the various religions and beliefs are also included.”), accuracy (“Authoritative, scientific and popular materials about sex are provided for the general reader at various age and reading levels” and “eliminate books containing obsolete information”), and censorship (“Individual or group prejudice about a particular item or type of material in the collection may not preclude its use by others.” and “no book should be eliminated because of coarse language, or violence, or frank discussion of sexual episodes”). Censorship was not originally a theme coded for in the policies, but its prevalence and relation to diversity in young adult materials warranted its inclusion in further rounds of analysis.

Within this policy, there was only one mention of young adult materials, which only stated that these materials would be shelved in the same area as children’s materials and that review sources are consulted prior to purchasing. There were a few other statements within the policy that stood out during the initial coding. The first discusses collecting adult materials and states that books which are “obviously pornographic” will not be collected. While this seems fairly straightforward, this statement could have a more nefarious meaning. Who gets to determine what materials are pornographic? How would materials feature romance between people who are not straight, white, cisgender, and non-disabled be categorized? People of color and LGBTQ people have been historically oversexualized in media and it isn’t unreasonable to think that young

adult literature featuring romance between LGBTQ people and people of color could be deemed pornographic, even if it contained the same level of detail as material featuring a straight, white, cisgender romance (Fletcher, 2016; “How the Hyper-Sexualization of Queer Women is Unhealthy for Teens,” 2017; Samuels & Miller-Young, 2007).

The policy also includes a statement that the library will collect materials that reflect the diversity of the community. While this is a positive statement, libraries should also make an effort to collect materials that reflect the diversity of the humanity as a whole. There may not be people living in this library’s community that represent a specific marginalized group but, as Rudine Sims Bishops has previously assert, youth can and should learn about people with different identities and lived experiences through literature.

Library B

The second library had an eight-page collection development policy. However, five of the eight pages were materials taken straight from the American Library Association (Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, Freedom to View Statement). While these materials are important for library patrons to be aware of, since they provide explanations for patrons rights within the library, these sections of the document were not included in the content analysis. Analyzing ALA’s use of language to promote collection of diverse literature for youth is outside the scope of this study.

Again, the main theme in this policy is community need shaping the collection, like in the policy from Library A. This policy talks about community needs using phrases like

"reflective of community demand" and "collect, curate, and make accessible library materials in a wide variety of formats that respond to community interests and demographics." This library also includes phrases about collecting diverse materials and preventing censorship. Interestingly, the policy also includes the need to collect materials that are underrepresented or a unique perspective of an issue. This could be viewed as both collecting diverse materials and materials from historically marginalized communities. The statement could have been made stronger by explicitly naming materials created by and about marginalized groups as an area to collect in.

Finally, this library notes that they collect materials even if the content is controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others. This stands out as both a statement against censorship and a statement supporting collections that contain a wide array of representation. However, the use of the words controversial, unorthodox, and unacceptable should be interrogated. What group is deciding what content is controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable? How frequently are the lived experiences of marginalized people placed into these categories?

Library C

The third library policy had fewer themes coded than the previous policies. Like the first two libraries, Library C had a primary focus on community-based collecting. They also include phrases that support themes of diversity and representation, like "represent all sides of controversial issues" and "Materials useful to some may be objectionable to others." This library included statements on accuracy in their section

on collection maintenances, stating that materials that are no longer relevant and lack use.

The policy this library adopted also takes a strong stance against censorship. The ALA Library Bill of Rights and Right to Read statements are both referenced in the document. The library also makes a point of explaining that materials will be assessed as a whole, not based on isolated passages. Library C did not make any strong statements about diversity or inclusion of marginalized voices in their collecting habits.

Library D

Library D has the shortest policy of all the libraries in this study. The policy is, however, full of statements supporting the coding areas. The first and most prominent is community needs, like the other documents examined. Supporting statements included collecting based on recommendations from community members and collection of materials that are in high demand within the community. This library also included statements against censorship within the community.

One of the most interesting statements in this policy supports both the collection of diverse materials and materials created by members of marginalized groups. The policy states that “In no case should library materials be excluded because of the race or nationality or social, political, or religious views of the author.” While this statement affirms the collection of #OwnVoices materials, it also places materials with hateful rhetoric in the same category. This policy could have done more to distinguish what types of representation they are collecting and why being a member of a

marginalized community gives authors a unique understanding and authority to write materials about the community.

Another interesting item in this statement was their commitment to removing materials from the library. The policy states that materials will be removed once there are obsolete or no longer useful to the community, they will be removed from the collection. This is fairly standard across the policies but should be interrogated more to determine if materials that use harmful language and stereotypes that were once deemed “appropriate.” Materials that use harmful stereotypes could be considered obsolete due to their outdated language and using this policy, could be removed from the library collection.

Library E

The last library collection development policy, like those previous analyzed, has a strong emphasis on community. This policy also has a heavy focus on accuracy of materials. It references both the need for authentic representations of human experiences and materials that have accurate, timely, and useful information. The comment on authentic representations is also interesting, since it evokes themes of diverse representation and #OwnVoices literature. The statement could be made stronger by including language explicitly outlining what diverse representation and #OwnVoices literature looks like and why it is important for this community.

Another interesting theme in this policy is the desire to keep propaganda materials out of the collection. The policy states that materials that purposely distort

facts, are biased in presentation, or contain misleading information should not be purchased for the library. While this statement is positive in nature, it is important to consider who is deciding what materials are propaganda and how strictly the policy is enforced. The policy also states that the library makes an effort to purchase children's materials that have won literacy awards like the Caldecott and Newbery medals. These medals are given for children's materials that have an excellent plot or illustrations but are not known for being given to materials that have particularly diverse representations of race, gender expression, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, or ability. It would be interesting to see the policy include more diverse awards like the Coretta Scott King award or Stonewall award.

Collection Analysis

A total of twenty books were selected for the study and each library was searched for the titles as physical or digital books or audiobooks. None of the libraries had all of the titles in their collection. Library A had 8 out of 20 (40%), library B had 14 out of 20 (70%), library C had 12 out of 20 (60%), library D had 11 out of 20 (55%), and library E had 4 out of 20 (20%). Many of the libraries had multiple copies of titles available in different formats, which can improve accessibility.

There were a few titles held by all the libraries in this study. Each library had copies of *Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson, *Gabi: A Girl in Pieces* by Isabel Quintero, *The Hired Girl* by Laura Amy Schlitz, and *The Inquisitors Tale: Or The Three Holy Children and Their Magical Dog* by Adam Gidwitz. *Brown Girl Dreaming* won the

Coretta Scott King book award, a major award given out annually by the Ethnic & Multicultural Information Exchange Round Table of ALA. It is one of the more well-known book awards for children's literature, which could explain its inclusion in all the collections.

On the other end of the collecting scale, there were also a few titles not held by any of the libraries. None of the libraries owned copies of *Bombay Blues* by Tanuja Desai Hidier, *Killer of Enemies* by Joseph Bruchac, or *Tales of the Mighty Code Talker* by Arigon Starr. This is extremely disappointing since western North Carolina has a large population of Native Americans and two of the titles not collected by any library are written by and about Native Americans. A recent School Library Journal survey of youth serving librarians stated that books with disabled, Native, and English language learner characters were the most difficult to find, which matched with collecting habits of the libraries in this study (Ishizuka, 2018, p. 29).

Discussion

Accuracy and Representation

Many of the policies analyzed in this study used the word accurate or some other phrase to convey accuracy of materials. Many noted this as an important selection criterion. However, the policies were using accuracy in reference to factual material. The study was looking for factually correct materials, but the focus was on materials that represented the lived experiences of individuals. This type of accuracy comes from #OwnVoices materials where authors are writing from an insider perspective about race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or socio-economic status. Accuracy can also be achieved through careful research and sensitivity readers, but with the underwhelming number of marginalized authors, libraries should focus on collecting accurate #OwnVoices materials over accurate. Tameka Fryer Brown, a children's book author, stated that it isn't just about seeing brown and black faces on book covers, it is equally if not more important to hear authentic stories from brown and black folks (Brown, Lyons, & James, 2018). Author Gordon James also emphasized the need for people writing outside their experience to do thorough research (Brown et al., 2018).

The policies also frequently used “representation” in their policies as an important selection criterion. Again, this word was used differently than the study was looking for (portrayal of diverse or marginalized people, communities or experiences). Frequently this word was used to refer to representation of political ideas (liberal, conservative, and moderate) or different religious beliefs. While these are also important to include in a collection,

more specific language should be used around representation to connect it to the lived experiences of historically marginalized groups and #OwnVoices stories.

Context

A few of the selected collection development policies state that phrases and scenes taken out of context are not reason for materials to be removed from materials. An example of this type of removal is the frequent banning of John Green’s young adult book, *Looking for Alaska*. The book is frequently banned for a sexual scene taken out of context of the larger plot, which is of growing up and dealing with death (Ellie Diaz, 2017).

Banning or removing books from libraries based on a phrase taken out of context is generally censorship, but the idea should be reconsidered when the phrases or scenes are based on harmful language, slurs, or problematic stereotypes. Providing accurate, positive representations of marginalized groups is important for youth development. Libraries should consider removing materials that use harmful language, slurs, or problematic stereotypes since they can do serious harm to readers, both those who

belong to the group being stereotyped and readers understanding these stereotypes or language as acceptable and accurate.

Making a Better Collection Development Policy

The collection development policies created by these libraries have a lot of strengths. All of them state that collecting based on their communities needs is important and many of them express the importance of preventing censorship in the library. However, there is more these policies could be doing to explain the importance of diverse literature for youth and to protect diverse literature within the collection. Melissa Orth, who was survey for a recent School Library Journal Article stated that “As a teen librarian in the whitest state in the union, I feel that it is my duty to not have the collection reflect my community, but rather the wider world” ([Ishizuka, 2018, p.29](#)). This sentiment should be applied to rural communities that have homogenous representation of an identity (race, religion, sexual orientation, etc.), ensuring that teens can build understanding and empathy of people who do not have the same identities as them but are equally valuable members of society.

One way libraries could enhance their collection development policies would be to include clear language surrounding the collecting of diverse materials, especially those that are #OwnVoices. One example of this comes from an elementary school library's Collection Development Policy. The policy states that the library will "provide a variety of appropriate materials that represent diverse opinions and viewpoints. We will ensure that our students 'see themselves' in the collection by offering multi-cultural

literature and non-fiction in a wide range of reading levels" (Cole, 2013, p. 1). The policy also states that the library will be mindful of specific diverse populations (African American, Latinx, Karen, Burmese, Indian, and multiple Asian cultures) and look for materials that support and represent those students as well as materials that support district-wide initiatives (Cole, 2013, p. 3). Another library's collection management policy suggests that the librarian consider student interest, developmental needs, and diversity of the student population (Yates & Dry, 2017, p. 2).

Another way libraries can improve accuracy of diverse representation is by collecting mindfully and using resources curated by #OwnVoices experts. Cole recommends using We Need Diverse Books when selecting titles with accurate representation (Cole, 2013, p. 4). Yates and Dry also emphasize the need for #OwnVoices in their library's collection management policy, stating that "Special attention is given to diverse titles that reflect our school population or offer students new perspectives and promote inclusivity, especially books in which the author is a member of the group depicted in the book" (Yates & Dry, 2017, p. 2). By incorporating statements like these into collection development policies, libraries can affirm the importance of diverse materials and protect them from unfounded attempts of removal.

Further Research

There are several areas related to this study that could be explored for further research. First, conducting a study interviewing librarians in rural areas could help researchers understand why collecting decisions about diverse materials are made. It

could also provide insight into the unique considerations youth-serving librarians make while purchasing materials on a limited budget for a typically white, Christian community. Similar studies could also be done in rural areas in different parts of the country that have different racial, socio-economic, and religious makeups. Collecting habits in these areas could vary from the collecting habits in rural western North Carolina since a different population is being served.

Finally, studies could be conducted comparing rural and urban library collection development policies within the same geographic area. For example, libraries in rural western North Carolina could be compared to Asheville, a large urban area in western North Carolina. This research could give insight into the different ways urban and rural librarians collect materials based on community makeup.

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Appendix A: Counties Eligible for Study Data

County Name	Total Population	Population Status
Alexander	37,198	Mostly Rural
Alleghany	11,155	Rural
Ashe	27,281	Mostly Rural
Avery	17,797	Mostly Rural
Cherokee	27,444	Rural
Clay	10,587	Rural
Graham	8,861	Rural
Haywood	59,036	Mostly Rural
Jackson	40,271	Mostly Rural
Macon	33,922	Mostly Rural
Madison	20,764	Mostly Rural
McDowell	44,996	Mostly Rural
Mitchell	15,579	Mostly Rural
Polk	20,510	Mostly Rural
Rutherford	67,810	Mostly Rural
Stokes	47,401	Mostly Rural
Swain	13,981	Rural
Transylvania	33,090	Mostly Rural
Watauga	51,079	Mostly Rural

Wilkes	69,340	Mostly Rural
Yancey	17,878	Rural

Appendix B: Library Collection Development Policies

Note: Identifying information about the libraries including but not limited to county names, library system names, and branch names have been removed from the policy to ensure privacy. Replaced text will be bracketed ([county name] or [library name]).

Formatting has also been modified to match the structure of this document. Due to this change in formatting, total page counts for each policy have increased and do not match the page numbers listed in the analysis section above.

Library A

Materials Selection Policy

Purpose of a Selection Policy

- A written materials selection policy aids library staff in selecting and acquiring a useful, well-rounded collection of books and other materials to meet the needs of the community.
- A policy statement helps the library board determine whether the staff is doing an acceptable job of building a collection of materials that is relevant to community needs and that meets accepted standards of quality, and it is useful in instructing new board members in existing board policy.
- A policy statement helps answer questions by the public regarding the presence or absence of certain materials and helps explain the basis on which materials have been selected.

National Statements Concerning Intellectual Freedom

- The Library Board and librarians believe that the right to read is an important part of the intellectual freedom that is basic to democracy, and hereby adopts these two basic documents as official library policy: The Library Bill of Rights; The Freedom to Read Statement.

Objectives in Materials Selection

- The purpose of the [County Name] Public Library is to obtain, organize and make conveniently available to all the people of the community recreational, educational and informational materials in a convenient form, including books, periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, micro-forms, recordings and other print and non-print materials. It is the policy of the library to maintain an up-to-date collection of standard works in all fields of knowledge, that are of permanent value, plus timely materials on current issues and items in current demand.
- In addition to the requirements of the general public served, materials will be selected to meet the needs of business, the professions, government, and community organizations. Materials selection will also include consideration of the needs of the homebound, the visually, physically and mentally disabled and those individuals with learning disabilities. The needs of adult beginning readers and of people for whom English is not the principal language will also be considered. Both the adult and young people's collections will serve as supplementary sources for student use, but materials selected for students

must also be useful to the general reader. Textbooks will not ordinarily be purchased.

Responsibility for Selection

- The selection of materials is the responsibility of the librarian. All librarians should be involved in the selection process.

Method of Materials Selection

Any materials selection policy must be fairly general, and librarians must always exercise their knowledge and experience of all library materials and of the community served. Certain methods and principles should be followed as closely as possible.

- *Criteria:* Each type of material must be considered in terms of its own merit and intended audience. All selections, both purchases and gifts, must meet some of the following criteria:
 - Appeals to the interests and needs of individuals in the community.
 - Permanent value as source material or interpretation.
 - Vitality and originality of thought.
 - Contemporary significance.
 - Artistic excellence.
 - Entertaining presentation.
 - Accuracy and objectivity.
 - Suitability of physical form to library use.
 - Skill, competence and purpose of the author.
 - Relations to other materials and existing areas of coverage in order to maintain a well-balanced collection.
 - Technical quality in selection of non-book material.
- *Reviews:* Reviews in professionally recognized periodicals are a primary source for materials selection. Standard bibliographies, booklists by recognized authorities and the advice of competent people in specific subject areas will be used.
- *Requests:* All requests from patrons for specific titles or subject requests will be considered. Whenever there is enough demand or interest in a title or subject, an item with unfavorable reviews may be purchased unless it is completely without literary or social value, or the subject in question is already adequately covered by better materials.
- *Specialized Materials:* Specialized materials of limited community interest will not ordinarily be purchased. Referral to other library collections and interlibrary loan

will be used to supply patrons with these materials. Supplementary materials for students and information for specialists are provided in a limited number of fields, the library taking cognizance of and avoiding unnecessary duplication in subject areas which are the special prerogative of other community resources.

Replacement and Maintenance

The library keeps its collection vital and useful by retaining or replacing essential material, and removing on a systematic and continuous basis materials which are worn, outdated, of little historical significance or no longer in demand.

Access

- Processing and shelving of materials shall in no way reflect a value judgment of the materials. There will be no labeling of any item or of its catalog cards to indicate its point of view or bias. All materials will be shelved in their proper order on open shelves, freely and easily accessible to the public, except for documents.
- The library assures free access to its holding for all patrons who are free to select or reject for themselves any item in the collection. Individual or group prejudice about a particular item or type of material in the collection may not preclude its use by others.
- Children are not limited to the juvenile collection, although juvenile collections are kept together to facilitate use. Responsibility for a child's reading must rest with the parent or guardian, not with the library.

Statement of Specific Policies in Selected Areas:

- Adult Materials
 - *Fiction*: The fiction collection provides books in the English language for the wide range of interests of the general reading public, including classics in the field, titles representing periods of writing and those meeting the popular demand for light reading. Books which are obviously pornographic, should be excluded, but no book should be eliminated because of coarse language, or violence, or frank discussion of sexual episodes, and one of which may be objectionable to some people, if the author is justified in what he portrays, or when such episodes are pertinent to the plot or character delineation in a book. It is the library's responsibility to protect the rights of mature readers.

- *Religion*: The library attempts to maintain a well-balanced collection representing all the major religions and their sacred scriptures. Authoritative materials which introduce and explain the basic concepts and practices of the various religions and beliefs are also included. The library does not add materials of a strictly proselytizing nature. The collection encompasses popular studies on new ideas and movements which are taking place in religion today. Books on astrology, witchcraft and other occult sciences should be limited to the best, most reasonably presented.
- *Science and Medicine*: The library generally purchases standard and popular materials in health, nutrition, hygiene, diseases and medicine that are primarily of interest to persons outside the medical profession. Authoritative, scientific and popular materials about sex are provided for the general reader at various age and reading levels. Books catering to morbid, esoteric or sensational interests do not come within the scope of the collection.
- *Law*: The library purchases standard and popular materials which deal with the philosophy of law and particular types of law such as real estate, taxation, marriage and divorce for the lay reader.
- *Politics*: In addition to a balanced collection on modern American and international politics and government, the basic doctrines of all political systems that have influenced, and do influence people, should be available to the public. Outright propaganda should be avoided except for a few representative items.
- *Genealogy*: Except for a few elementary texts on genealogical searches, the library buys only materials which have general reference value, or which are of value to general readers and contains information of local and or regional interest. Individual family histories are rarely purchased unless they are of outstanding national or local importance. The library will attempt to secure genealogical materials through Inter-library loan whenever possible.
- Juvenile Materials
 - The Children's Department selects materials on subjects of interest to and within the comprehension of children from pre-school through the eighth grade.
 - A few adult books of interest to students of children's literature, parents, and people working with children are also purchased. These include historical perspectives and evaluations of children's literature, information

- on children's authors and illustrators, and bibliographies of materials for children.
- Graded readers are bought sparingly for the primary grades. Abridged editions of the classics are purchased only when they retain the quality or flavor of the original. Paperback books usually duplicate copies of hardbound titles already in the collection. In addition, a few easy reading ephemeral books are purchased.
 - Young Adult Materials
 - Titles of interest to persons of junior high school age are purchased by and shelved in the children's area. Specialized review sources are consulted as well as the standard journals.
 - Extension Materials
 - The entire library collection with the exception of Reference and genealogy materials are available for use at nursing homes, for homebound service and through intra-library loan. Standard circulation policies and overdue policies apply.
 - Non-Book Materials
 - The library staff considers that non-book materials represent an alternative format and may be selected when the non-book form best meets the needs of the community. In general, the same selection policies will apply.
 - *Periodicals and Newspapers*: The library endeavors to provide the most representative periodicals in wide of subjects of reference value and recreational interest. Particular interest is given to titles included in periodical indexes. Specialized titles are considered in relation to subject needs and their unavailability in area and regional libraries. The library maintains on microfilm a collection of local newspapers.
 - *Maps/Atlases*: A small circulating collection is maintained. World, national, state and local atlases are also maintained in a specified area.
 - *Microforms*: The local newspaper is maintained on microfilm as well as other data of local interest, i.e. cemetery records, birth, death and marriage records and U.S. Census data when available.
 - *Books on tape/Books on CD*: Books-on-tape/CD are purchased with the intent of providing the public with audio recordings of some of the most popular current titles. Preference is given to unabridged titles.
 - *Music recordings*: The library maintains a limited selection of musical CDs featuring classical, folk/county/rock and seasonal music. The library has

neither the space nor budget to attempt to stay abreast on current popular music/artists.

- *Videocassettes and DVDs*: Videocassettes are chosen to include informational and instructional materials, current community events, and artistic or entertaining performances. Special emphasis is given to current popular movies when able to purchase at reasonable prices.
- *Gifts* - See "Gifts and Donation Policy".

Book Withdrawal Policy

Book withdrawal is an important aspect of collection development. When library books lose the value for which they were originally selected, they should be withdrawn so that the collection remains vital and useful. The withdrawal of books is based on the following guidelines:

- To remove physically worn out or damaged volumes from the library.
- To eliminate books containing obsolete information.
- To remove duplicate copies of titles that have waned in popularity, eliminating those most physically damaged or worn.
- To consider for withdrawal, books which have not been checked out for several years. The library's rule of thumb on most materials is that if it has not been checked out in five years it may be discarded. Points to consider include the current popularity of the author and the historical and literary significance of the material in question.
- In part, decisions will be made based on acceptable professional practices, such as those described in the CREW method and the professional judgment of the Library Director or designated staff. When necessary, local specialists may be consulted to determine the continued relevance and reliability of materials.

Disposition of Withdrawn Materials:

All materials withdrawn from the collection should be stamped as "discarded" or "withdrawn."

Items withdrawn from the collection will be disposed of either by transfer to the Friends of the [County Name] library organization for sale, by recycling, or by discarding as trash. In some instances, withdrawn materials may be given to other libraries or agencies at the discretion of the Library Director if there is a need.

Materials in Languages Other Than English

The [County Name] Library endeavors to provide a collection that reflects the diversity of the community. Although the library relies on interlibrary loans for most requests for non-English materials, the library may, as funds and space permits purchase bilingual juvenile/easy materials that would be of use to both English speaking children who are learning another language as well as those children for whom English is a second language. Such materials will be evaluated for selection using the same guidelines and policies used for materials in English.

The library does not have the expertise to catalog foreign language materials. Donations of materials, in languages other than English, will be disposed of per the "Gifts and Donations Policy".

Request for Reconsideration of Materials

The [County Name] Library welcomes comments and suggestions regarding the continued appropriateness of materials in the collection, especially concerning outdated materials. Suggestions will be considered and utilized by the library in the ongoing process of collection development.

Individuals may take issues with materials that do not support their tastes and views. Staff is available to discuss concerns and identify alternate materials that may be available. If a patron's concern is not satisfied through discussion with staff, a formal, written request for reconsideration of materials may be submitted to the library director. Copies of this form may be obtained at the circulation desk.

The [County Name] 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 for the complaint of obscenity or any other category covered by law until a local court of competent jurisdiction has ruled against the material. No materials will be knowingly added to the library collection that have been previously determined to be in non-compliance with local laws.

For a request for reconsideration to be considered, the form must be completed in full. The patron submitting the request must be a resident of [County Name] and hold a valid borrower's card. The request will be evaluated by the director, and, if warranted, the Library Board of Trustees or a committee thereof. The director will respond in writing, within thirty days of receipt, to the patron's request for reconsideration. The response will indicate the action to be taken and reasons for or against the request. An item will be evaluated for reconsideration only once in a twelve month period.

North Carolina and Local Authors

The [County Name] Library cannot serve as a repository institution for collecting materials published by native North Carolinians nor those persons who have chosen to make North Carolina their home.

We will try to purchase materials published by North Carolinians based on relevancy of the materials if non-fiction and the popularity of materials if fiction. Availability of funds would also be a consideration.

The library could conceivably become overwhelmed by the number of persons who feel the local library should purchase their materials. The library is under no obligation to purchase materials solely on the basis of "being local".

Local residents of [County Name] and possibly surrounding counties could donate a copy of their published materials to their local library. Even so, donated materials would only be accepted if they meet the criteria set forth in the "Selection Development Policy". All donated materials are subject to the same policies as other materials when it comes to de-selection or withdrawal of items that no longer circulate or become damaged or lose their relevancy.

Library B

[County Name] Public Libraries Collection Development Policy

The [County Name] Public Libraries collect, curate, and make accessible library materials in a wide variety of formats that respond to community interests and demographics. The libraries' goal is to maintain popular, up-to-date collections attuned to the diverse needs of [County Name] residents. Collection formats, subject matter, and target audiences will be reflective of community demand.

The purpose of this Collection Development Policy is to guide staff in the selection, retention, and withdrawal of library materials; to inform the public of the philosophy of collection development; and to establish a framework for continuous evaluation and improvement.

Collection Philosophy

A democracy relies on an informed citizenry, and the public library has an integral role in achieving that goal. [County Name] Public Libraries provide an impartial environment in which individuals and their interests are brought together with ideas and information spanning the spectrum of knowledge and opinions. [Library System Name] uphold the right of the individual to secure information, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others. Materials available present a diversity of viewpoints, enabling citizens to make informed choices.

[County Name] Public Libraries endorse the following American Library Association statements:

- Library Bill of Rights (see Appendix A)
- Freedom to Read (see Appendix B)
- Freedom to View (see Appendix C)

The library collections are comprised primarily of popular materials directed toward the general public; an effort is made to have the most current information available. The collection contains information on a variety of subjects and views, and is organized to provide unrestricted and easy access within the limitations of space and budget. All [Library System Name] materials are intended for public use and, with the exception of selected special or reference collections, all materials are available for check-out.

Collection Responsibility

The Library Director has ultimate authority for the collections. The director shares this responsibility with staff who are qualified by reason of education and/or experience.

Selection Criteria

[County Name] Public Libraries' collections provide a wide range of literary, cultural, educational, informational and recreational materials for people of all ages. Collections include popular and in-demand materials in a variety of print, audiovisual and electronic formats.

The same evaluation criteria will be used to add and remove all materials from the collections. An item need not meet all criteria in order to be acceptable.

- Public demand, interest or need
- Current or long-term significance
- Evaluation of critics and reviewers
- Established authority of author, creator or publisher
- Accuracy and timeliness
- Underrepresented or unique perspective of an issue
- Relationship to existing collections
- Price, format, condition and ease of use

In most cases, the library will not purchase or accept as gifts self-published materials that are not reviewed in established review journals.

Withdrawal of Materials

Staff shall review items in the collection on an ongoing basis to ensure that they continue to meet customers' needs. Worn, damaged, and outdated materials shall be removed from the collection on a regular basis. Materials may also be withdrawn if they are unused or are superseded by a new edition or a more authoritative work on the same subject. Other criteria that may be applied include space, collection balance, the changing demands of users, or the replacement of materials with other formats.

Withdrawn materials will be disposed of in the manner deemed most appropriate for that item, including sale by the Friends of the Library, distribution to other libraries or community service organizations, or recycling.

Gifts and Donations

When the libraries receive a monetary donation for the purchase of materials, selection is made in accordance with this Collection Development Policy.

[County Name] Public Libraries accept donations of materials including works by local authors, for consideration as additions to its collections. Materials donated must be in a format collected by [Library System Name]. Upon receipt, all donations become property of the libraries, and may be used or disposed of as needed. Donated materials are subject to the same selection criteria as all other library materials. [Library System Name] do not return donated materials, or track their status. [Library System Name] shall not accept materials with special conditions or restrictions imposed by the donor.

Materials not added to the collections are generally given to the Friends of the Library for sale at fundraisers to support the library. Upon request, [Library System Name] will provide the donor a receipt, but will not appraise the value of donated materials. While all donations are appreciated, some might not be appropriate for [Library System Name] and may be referred to a more appropriate recipient.

Complaints and Censorship

Collection development decisions are based on the merit of the work as it relates to the Libraries' mission and ability to meet the needs and interests of the community; decisions are not made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval of the material. The inclusion of an item in the collections in no way represents an endorsement of its contents.

The Libraries recognize that many materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend some. Only individuals can determine what is most appropriate for their needs and can define what material or information is consistent with their personal or family values. Individuals can apply those values to the use of library materials for themselves. While anyone is free to personally reject materials of which he or she does not approve, he or she may not exercise censorship to restrict the freedom of others.

Responsibility for materials selected, read or viewed by children and adolescents rests with their parents or legal guardians, not with library staff. Selection decisions are not influenced by the possibility that materials may be accessible to minors. Materials are

not labeled to show approval or disapproval or to indicate certain philosophies. No items are sequestered except to protect from damage or theft.

Comments from members of the public about the collection or individual resources frequently provide the [Library System Name] with useful information about interests or needs that may not be adequately met by existing resources. Should a member of the community question the place of an item in the collections, the Library Director or staff may meet with the individual to discuss the concern. If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, the individual will be asked to fill out and return a written and signed Request for Reconsideration Form. Objections to particular language or point of view cannot be used as justification for the exclusion of materials.

In the absence of a fully completed form there is no formal complaint and no further action shall be taken. Upon receiving a fully completed Request for Reconsideration Form, the Library Director shall establish a staff review committee to investigate the complaint. The questioned material will be reviewed, and assessed as a complete work, and the customer will receive a written response to their concern. If the person is dissatisfied with the resolution, he/she may appeal to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will reconsider the decision based on whether or not the particular title conforms to the Collection Development Policy and offer a final decision.

Appendix A
Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. 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.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Appendix B

The Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the

natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state

these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers. Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

Appendix C

Freedom to View Statement

The FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Library C

[County Name] LIBRARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Mission Statement: *The [County Name] Library is committed to offering our community the opportunity to thrive by providing high quality programming, resources and customer service.*

Purpose

The [County Name] Library strives, within budgetary limitations, to purchase and make available the best materials in a variety of formats that are of permanent and current interest on a wide range of subjects based on the needs and requests of the community we serve. The Library seeks to meet the educational, informational, cultural and recreational needs of our patrons through the acquisition of a balanced collection of material and formats. Final responsibility for selection of all library materials rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies approved by the Board of Trustees of the [County Name] Library.

Material Selection

Selection of materials is based on the professional knowledge and judgment of the Library staff, whose expertise includes familiarity with all types of materials, familiarity with the strengths and weaknesses of the existing collections, and awareness of the needs of the community. Each title is judged individually according to its intrinsic merit, the subject treated, the reader interest, and need for the book in an organized collection. Each title is judged as a whole and isolated passages in themselves are not used as criteria. The selectors also consider professional review, authority and demand. Staff members consult standard bibliographic works and published reviews in professional and general periodicals and online resources for evaluations of available materials. Some works may be purchased based on the strength of an author's or performer's previous popularity before a published review is available. The Library participates in a number of electronic resource sharing consortia such as NCLIVE and the North Carolina Digital Library. Responsibility for digital content selection in these consortia is shared among a variety of libraries and organizations. The [County Name] Library does not have complete control of content or inclusion of resources within these consortia.

Gifts

The Library accepts gifts of books and other materials with the understanding that they become the property of the Library and are evaluated in the same manner as purchased materials. Acceptance by the Library of any gift does not mean that the item will be incorporated into the collection. The Library reserves the right to refuse any donation deemed unsuitable based on the aforementioned explanation. Gifts that are not added to the collection may be donated to the Friends of the [County Name] Library.

Collection Maintenance

The Library has an obligation to maintain an up-to-date collection that reflects the reading and research interests of the community. To accomplish this, items must periodically be designated for discard. Retention and withdrawal decisions are based upon an item's historical standing and importance, its replacement possibilities, age, physical condition, relevancy, lack of use, and whether there are multiple copies of the item. Items that are designated for discard will be reviewed carefully by Library staff before they are removed from the collection. Items in acceptable condition may at times be made available to the Friends of the Library for sale or discard. Occasionally, items of a classic nature, or of local importance that are not available for replacement and are in poor physical condition will be designated for rebinding, as funds allow.

Intellectual Freedom Statement

The Library has a responsibility to serve all segments of the [County Name] community. Materials useful to some may be objectionable to others. Selections are based solely on the merits of the work in relation to building the Library's collections and to serving the interests of readers. The Library attempts to represent all sides of controversial issues. The Library's function is to provide information, not to advocate specific points of view. Responsibility for what children read rests with the children's parents and/or legal guardians. Therefore, parents should be aware that controversial material may come into a child's possession even though items are catalogued and shelved appropriately according to content. In its selection of materials, the Library subscribes to the American Library Association's Freedom to Read Statement and to the Library Bill of Rights. (Attachments to this policy.)

Reconsideration of Materials

No challenged materials which have been duly selected shall be removed from the [County Name] Library's collection except upon the recommendation of the Library Director or upon formal action of the [County Name] Library Board of Trustees when a recommendation of the Library Director is appealed.

Procedure

1. A patron challenging any part of the collection should first be offered a copy of the Collection Development Policy to read.
2. If material is still questioned, a copy of the form "Statement of Concern about Library Resources" (form appended) should be filled out completely by the patron.
3. The Library Director will review the form and make a reply to the patron.
4. If the patron is not satisfied with the reply, he/she should bring the matter to the attention of the [County Name] Library Board of Trustees, not less than one week prior to a regularly scheduled meeting.

5. The Board of Trustees will review the communication, the decision and the issues raised and will respond to the patron when the review process is complete.
6. Decisions by the Board of Trustees are final.

Library D**[County Name] Public Library
Materials Selection Policy**

- A. Within its budgetary means, [County Name] Public Library will attempt to provide any materials that help to meet its objectives. These will include print, audiovisual, electronic, digital and other formats.
- B. Materials considered for addition to the collection will be judged on the following points.
 - a. Appearance of the title in important bibliographies or recognized reviewing media
 - b. Significance or usefulness to the collection
 - c. Price
 - d. Geographical area represented by the author or contents of item
 - e. Popular demand and/or timeliness
 - f. Quality of content, expression or format
 - g. Authority and reputation of author
- C. Materials will be considered as whole works and may not be excluded on the basis of individual passages taken out of context.
- D. In duplicating titles, the library attempts to weigh the specific demands in relation to the total library program and policies. Materials that are in great demand and selected titles on current issues may be duplicated.
- E. Separate collections of materials are provided for children. Limitation of access to library materials is considered a parental responsibility and not a function of the library or library staff.
- F. The library subscribes to the Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association, which affirms its belief in the following basic principles:
 - a. As a responsibility of library service, books and other materials selected should be chosen for values of interest, information and enlightenment of all people of the community. In no case should library materials be excluded because of the race or nationality or the social, political or religious views of the author.
 - b. Libraries should provide books and other materials presenting all points of view concerning problems and issues of our times; no library materials should be proscribed or removed from libraries because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
 - c. Censorship should be challenged by libraries in the maintenance of their responsibility to provide public information and enlightenment.
 - d. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
 - e. The rights of an individual to the use of a library should not be denied or abridged because of his or her age, race, religion, national origins, or social or political views.

- f. As an institution of education for democratic living, the library should welcome the use of its meeting rooms for socially useful and cultural activities and discussion of current public questions. Such meeting places should be available on equal terms to all groups in the community, regardless of beliefs and affiliations of their members, provided that the meetings are open to the public.
- G. The library also subscribes to the Freedom to Read statement of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council and to the Statement on Labeling as adopted by the American Library Association.
- H. Books and other materials that are obsolete, soiled, damaged or no longer useful to the objectives of the library shall be systematically weeded from the collection by designated library staff.
- I. Branch collections will, in general, concentrate on popular current materials and will rely on the main collection to provide in-depth information and retrospective materials. Since these units serve people with a wide range of interests, each unit will select materials with its individual clientele in mind. In making these selections, they will not be limited to those materials in the main library.
- J. All materials except those that are in special demand and cannot be duplicated, such as bound periodicals, reference and North Carolina Room materials will be lent for home use under library regulations and procedures.
- K. Responsibility for the selection of library materials is shared by designated librarians, with suggestions from all staff members and library users being welcome. Ultimate responsibility for selection rests with the Library Director, operating within the framework of policies determined by the Board of Trustees.
- L. Borrowers wishing to complain about the inclusion of any particular title in the collection should complete a Request for Review of Library Materials form, available at any lending desk. Complaints will be considered by the Library Director in consultation with appropriate staff members. A decision concerning the item will be communicated by letter to the complainant. Should the complainant wish to appeal the decision, he or she may request a hearing with the Library Board of Trustees.

Library E

Book Selection Policies

Introduction

Library patrons using the public library facilities in [County Name] deserve the highest quality of library services available within the constraints imposed by financial limitations. The [County Name] Library system will select and preserve a comprehensive collection of print & non-print materials, and will make available Internet accessible resources to meet the informational, educational, recreational, and cultural needs of all citizens of [County Name].

As a public forum, the public library system will provide collections, Internet access to resources, and the availability of Inter-Library Loan service (ILL) through which an individual may explore all points of view and issues of interest. The public library system will be responsive to public demand for materials of contemporary significance and interest, while balancing this with the need to collect and preserve materials of permanent value.

Responsibility & Selection of Materials

The ultimate responsibility for selecting materials for the public library system rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees. The Library Director may delegate portions of this responsibility to appropriate members of the regional and local library staffs.

The public library system recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some library users. 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 collection building and to serving the interests of residents in the [County Name] area.

Responsibility for the reading, listening, and viewing of library materials, and accessing Internet resources by children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection will not be inhibited by the possibility that materials may inadvertently come into possession of children.

The [County Name] system acknowledges a particular interest in local and state history, therefore, it will take a broad view of works by and about North Carolina. However, the

library is not under any obligation to add to its collections everything about North Carolina or produced by authors, printers, or publishers with North Carolina connections.

Suggestions from the general public are encouraged and are evaluated by the library staff based on the regional library system's criteria for material selections.

Open Access To Ideas

Public libraries are recognized as legal public forums in the communities they serve. As part of a free society, the library system will provide access to information in all fields and from all points of view. The library system, the governing library board of trustees, and the library staffs will not, either directly or indirectly, ban or censor any materials. The presence of an item in the public library does not indicate any endorsement of its contents by [County Name] Library System.

The library system holds censorship to be a purely individual matter and declares that while anyone is free to reject for himself books and other materials of which he does not approve-he/she cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom of others.

The library system subscribes to and has adopted the American Library Association's Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement and the Freedom to View Statement. These items are included in this Policy.

Reconsideration of Materials

Should a member of the community question the place of a book or other material in the collection, this individual may submit a Request For Reconsideration of Library Materials form to the Library Director. This form is available in all public library locations. The Library Director will reevaluate the item to see if it meets the library system's stated evaluative criteria, and will review the selection decision to see if the item falls within the Books & Materials Selection Policy. If the patron request a written response, one will be provided by the Library Director within fifteen business days from the postmark date of the request/letter. If the patron is not satisfied with the response, he/she may appeal to the Library Board of Trustees.

The Library Board of Trustees, with the Library Director, is the final board of appeal in reference to public library materials, and must make a formal response to the complaint and/or hearing at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

Selection Criteria

There is no single standard that can be used to evaluate all the types of materials included in the public library collections. Each type of material will be evaluated in terms of its own qualities and merits for the collection.

However, there are some general criteria the public library uses to evaluate, regardless of the format. Every item must meet one or more of the following criteria as applicable for inclusion in the collection:

- Contemporary or permanent value
- Quality of writing, design, illustrations, or production
- Reputation of the publisher or producer, authority and significance of the author, composer, film maker, etc.
- Relevance to community needs Potential and or known demand for the material
- Cost (\$)
- Availability of materials elsewhere in the area
- Suitability of subject, style, and level for the intended audience
- Availability and suitability of format
- Evaluation of critics and reviewers (professional & general)
- Space limitations

Further criteria for the evaluation of works of imagination such as fiction, poetry and drama are:

- Representation of a significant trend, genre, or culture
- Vitality and originality
- Artistic merit and literary value
- Authentic reflection of the human experience
- Effective characterization
- Authenticity of historical or social setting

Gifts Policy

The library system accepts gifts of materials, but reserves the right to evaluate and dispose of them in accordance with the criteria applied to purchased materials. Gift materials which are not in accord with the library's objectives and policies will be sold and the monies used for the purchase of needed library materials and resources.

No gift materials are accepted with "strings attached". The library system cannot make a commitment to keep any collection or group of books on a special shelf apart from other books in the library, and reserves the right to inter-shelve gift materials with other materials on the same subject.

Cash donations for the purchase of materials in memory or in honor of a person are always welcomed.

The library system receives unsolicited materials which come free from organizations or individuals whose objectives are propaganda or advertising. Those which distort facts, are biased in subject presentation, or contain misleading statements are not added.

The public library does not appraise gifts or provide evaluations of gifts for tax deductions or other purposes, but will acknowledge receipt of gifts in writing if requested by the donor.

Books & Resource Materials

Fiction

Fiction collections are a major component of most library collections. Classic literature and popular best sellers make up the core of the fiction collection. Its purpose is to both entertain and enrich human understanding by presenting stories in an imaginative way rather than in a factual manner. The emphasis in the collection is on American and English authors.

Selections are based on one or more of the following criteria: quality (determined by reviews), potential use, and demand. Current best sellers are purchased through a book lease plan in order to provide multiple copies to meet patron demand.

Non-Fiction

The non-fiction collection emphasizes timely, accurate, and useful informational materials to support individual, business, government, and community interests. Materials are available for all ages and reading levels, and are selected to represent a continuum of opinions and viewpoints when available. As a new field emerges, the library attempts to respond with timely additions.

The library system does not purchase elementary, junior high, and senior high textbooks listed on the N.C. State adopted textbook list. These textbooks are provided without charge to each person enrolled in the public education program.

Juveniles

The public library targets preschoolers in the interest of encouraging an appreciation of the library's resources in the formative years. To assist in this goal, the library's purchase of Easy Books for this age child will be educational, recreational in intent, including picture books, concept books, and board books.

For school age children, the public library purchases materials for informational, recreational and cultural needs, highlighting classic literature, current young adult fiction, including the popular areas of mystery & suspense, sports, and science fiction. For both age groups, an effort is made to include all books that have won children's literary awards (Caldecott & Newbery Books, et.al.).

Large-Print Materials

Large-print materials are purchased to meet the special visual needs of the community. They are selected by the same standards of format and content that apply to other materials purchased by the library.

Videotapes & Audio Books

Videotapes are added to the collection following the same criteria as books. The video collection consists of a mix of feature films including current high interest and old classics, non-fiction films, and films for children. Films which are rated "X" and/or have an excessive glorification of violence will not be included in the library's film collection.

Recorded books (also known as books-on-tape) are purchased within the same guidelines as other books.

Slides, Films, Filmstrips, Record Albums, CDs

Due to limited financial resources, the regional library system makes no attempt to purchase any of these materials.

Microforms

The library purchases microforms when materials are too fragile or bulky to retain in the original form. Most notable in this area are the census records and newspapers on microfilm housed in all of the libraries.

Periodicals & Newspapers

Periodicals are selected to supplement the book collection and to provide materials on current issues for research and for general reading. The public library also selects newspapers of local, state, and national interest, depending on cost, the place of publication, the breadth of coverage, and the degree of fulfillment of reference or recreational interests.

Maintaining The Collections

The public library's collections should contain current materials that are in good condition and are in demand. Use is of paramount importance in deciding whether to retain a title. Space, the cost of replacement, and the appearance (appeal) of the collection are additional factors in making weeding decisions.

All collections need to be weeded on a continuing and scheduled basis. Regardless of use, materials should be removed if they:

- are damaged, worn, have pages missing, etc.;
- contain dated or obsolete information, even if some of the information is useful;
- are unused duplicates; or
- have been replaced by a newer edition.

Replacement/substitution of these materials reintroduces the selection process.

Appendix C: Books Used in Study

Title	Author	Award	Award Year
Beautiful Music for Ugly Children	Kristen Cronn-Mills	Stonewall Book Award	2014
Bombay Blues	Tanuja Desai Hidier	South Asia Book Award	2015
Brown Girl Dreaming	Jacqueline Woodson	Coretta Scott King Book Award	2015
Gabi: A Girl in Pieces	Isabel Quintero	Tomas Rivera Book Award	2015
Girl Mans Up	M. E. Girard	Lambda Literary Award for LGBTQ Children's/Young Adult Literature	2017
Girls Like Us	Gail Giles	Schneider Family Book Award	2015
House of Purple Cedar	Tim Tingle	American Indian Youth Literature Award	2016
I'll Give You the Sun	Jandy Nelson	Rainbow Book List	2015

It's Not Like It's a Secret	Misa Sugiura	Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature	2018
Killer of Enemies	Joseph Bruchac	American Indian Youth Literature Award	2014
Little & Lion	Brandy Colbert	Stonewall Book Award	2018
Out of Darkness	Ashley Hope Prez	Americas Award	2016
Outrun the Moon	Stacey Lee	Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature	2017
Rose Under Fire	Elizabeth Wein	Schneider Family Book Award	2014
Tales of the Mighty Code Talkers	Arigon Starr (Editor)	American Indian Youth Literature Award	2018
The Hired Girl	Laura Amy Schlitz	Sydney Taylor Book Award	2016
The Inquisitor's Tale: Or, The Three Holy Children and Their Magical Dog	Adam Gidwitz	Sydney Taylor Book Award	2017
The Memory of Light	Francisco X. Stork	Tomas Rivera Book Award	2017

When the Moon Was Ours	Anna-Marie McLemore	Rainbow Book List	2017
Yaqui Delgado Wants to Kick Your Ass	Meg Medina	Pura Belpre Award	2014

Appendix D: Book Availability in Selected Libraries

Title	Library A	Library B	Library C	Library D	Library E
Beautiful Music for Ugly Children	0	0	0	1	0
Bombay Blues	0	0	0	0	0
Brown Girl Dreaming	3	5	7	4	1
Gabi: A Girl in Pieces	1	1	3	2	3
Girl Mans Up	0	1	1	0	0
Girls Like Us	0	1	1	0	0
House of Purple Cedar	0	0	0	2	0
I'll Give You the Sun	1	2	5	2	0
It's Not Like It's a Secret	0	1	0	0	0
Killer of Enemies	0	0	0	0	0
Little & Lion	0	1	2	2	0
Out of Darkness	0	1	2	1	0
Outrun the Moon	0	1	1	0	0
Rose Under Fire	1	1	1	2	0
	0	0	0	0	0

Tales of the Mighty					
Code Talker					
The Hired Girl	2	3	6	3	1
The Inquisitor's Tale: Or, The Three Holy Children and Their Magical Dog					
The Memory of Light	1	1	1	2	0
When the Moon Was Ours	0	1	1	0	0
Yaqui Delgado Wants to Kick Your Ass	1	0	1	1	0