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Collection Development
Selection Process

After graduating the Master's program, I would like to be in a Public Library. Ideally, it would be somewhere in the North West of America (looking into locations in Oregon right now). The community, ideally, would be one that is interested in furthering life long learning, as well as believing that others should be entitled to that right. The library will also respect the individual's right to access materials for their personal entertainment (such as fiction books or movies). The community would embrace a wide range of ages, races and genders (ideally), but would also have to contribute to a variety of interests. Thus, the selection process would have to be thorough enough to ensure that the materials chosen would be beneficial to anyone who wishes to gain the knowledge on that subject.

This system will be based off of the current system in the library where I am currently working, with a few alterations to account for a potentially diverse and different service community. The library, with a large staff and a collective of volunteers, there is a large amount of people who can assist in the process.

I imagine breaking down the selection process into two 'teams'. I would have the head of the children's department making decisions on what should be considered for addition into the children's collection. The head of reference would be in charge of deciding what should be considered for the adult collection. From both of these department heads, I (as the Head of Technical Services) would have the final decision into what each department can add to their collection.

Obviously, the heads of the children's collection and reference will not have the time or resources to read/watch every item that is brought for consideration. That being said, the others within various departments will have to assist in deciding what should be considered for the heads of each department to consider. The children's department will need one person (if the number of staff allows) to find and review fiction in the categories of Picture Books, Beginner Chapter Books and 'Tween' Chapter Books (for children on the older end of the scale). The non-fiction will be sought out by the staff, based on what is requested by the patrons of the children's room. A suggestion box will be put in place to get suggestions of specific books or subjects that require more materials in the library. These suggestions will be brought to the head of technical services for review or search.

The reference staff will need to have multiple individuals to cover a variety of sections. The staff will be asked what subjects they enjoy reading and studying. From there, the staff will bring suggestions and recommendations that they have read or have heard about to the head of reference. The head of reference will then have to make decisions as to the required need or sense of local usage before bringing it to the head of technical services. The patrons may also make suggestions, but the suggestions brought to the head of technical services will be at the discretion of the head of reference.

Ideally, the head of technical services will be able to compile a list of diverse interests of all the staff and use that list as a resource to test the necessity of an item in question. The staff will not just consist of the professional librarians, but anyone who is on the library payroll (including paraprofessionals and other staff not directly associated with the library business). Volunteers will also be encouraged to provide suggestions and recommendations. In this way, the head of technical services will be able to ask the staff

what their opinions are of material in question. The high school pages will be able to provide insight as to what they believe will be useful to include in the Young Adult section (as well as help gauge what is appropriate for their age group). With the right group of staff, enough will have experience in a variety of areas to better provide insight into subjects that the head of reference would not know about.

Once the heads of each department have received the suggestions and recommendations from staff and patrons, the duty of the head of technical services will be to judge each piece of material for the following criteria:

- Relevance, accuracy and need
- Budget and space limitations
- Original or Alternative point of view
- Availability in other libraries
- Professionalism of the material
- Emphasis on local community and demographics.

After determining if the material in question fit the criteria, the head of technical Services will search for two positive, professional reviews and ensure that the material will be appropriate for the library and fit the library's desire to encourage lifelong learning.

To determine the criteria for a fictional book, the head of reference will also consult materials like Publishers Weekly in addition to the professional reviews. The fictional material will be judged on the interest in the author, subject material and the number of copies being purchased by nearby library. In this way, the head of technical services may more easily understand what trends are going to be something that people will want to borrow from the library. If multiple people suggest the purchase of the same

book, head of technical services would have a stronger indication of what materials the library patrons will be interested in reading.

The policy on donations and gifts will be handled primarily from the volunteers. The library volunteers will look through the materials that are donated/gifted to the library to determine what materials are in good condition and potentially useful to the library. The head of technical services will review these items, compare them to the catalog and follow the procedure for the other departments if they are not available in the catalog. What is not brought into the catalog will either need to be recycled or (if they're in good enough condition) be donated to a local charity (Goodwill, etc.). The gifts will need to be considered differently, since patrons might go looking for those materials on the shelves. The library's formal policy will be that it does not normally accept gifts of physical books and any gifts or donations that are not accepted into the library will be handled at the discretion of the library staff.