



## THE INSTITUTE LIBRARY

*Founded 1826*

### Institute Library Collection Policy Statement

#### Collection Goals

The goal of the Institute Library is to build an excellent circulating library of: fiction, focusing on literary, mystery and suspense fiction; non-fiction, focusing on subjects of interest to the membership and non-fiction which contributes to knowledge of fiction writing and/or the creative narrative experience; and reference materials, focusing on librarianship, New Haven and Connecticut. Extremely specialized scholarly and critical works not written for the general reader are not collected.

#### Collection Strategies

##### Adult Fiction

- Literary fiction, including novels and short stories, written in, or translated into, English
- Stories from oral traditions of other cultures that have been transcribed into English
- Genre fiction
  - Aims for a broad and deep Mystery and suspense collection
  - Does not collect Romance, Fantasy, or Science Fiction unless deemed to be of outstanding literary value

##### Adult Non-Fiction

- Biographies, autobiographies and memoirs
- Literary essays
- Non-fiction works by writers primarily identified as writers of fiction
- Historical works, especially related to New Haven and Connecticut

##### Children's Books

- The Library does not collect children's literature unless such work contributes to the history of fiction in a significant way and is read by adult readers, e.g., *Alice in Wonderland*, etc.



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### Reference Materials

- The Library maintains a small reference collection. Generally, materials relate to New Haven, or Connecticut, or librarianship.

### Periodicals

- The Library presently subscribes to the New Haven Register
- The Library presently maintains, for a short time, donated periodicals on various subjects.

### Large Print

- At the request of members and in compliance with overall collection goals

### Foreign Language Collection

- The Library does not collect foreign language materials

### Paperbacks

- The Library collects paperbacks only in the following cases:
  - When the identified work is not available in hardback

### Selection Responsibility

Ultimate responsibility for the collection resides with the Director, although the input of members is strongly considered.

### Reserves

Books requested and reserved by members will be purchased when possible. Generally, they should confirm to the Collection Policy guidelines described herein.

### Principles of Selection

1. The Institute Library obtains, organizes and makes available print materials in the genres of fiction and non-fiction.



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2. The Library make choices based upon the mission of the Library, adhering to principle rather than personal opinion, reason rather than prejudice, and judgment rather than censorship.
3. To build collections of merit and significance, materials must be measured by a number of criteria. The basic test for selection of any item is whether it is relevant to the mission of the organization. It must also be of proven or potential interest to the membership. Other considerations include the quality of the material, the attention of critics, reviewers and the public, the amount of similar materials already in the collection. In addition, the cost and physical makeup of the material are considered. These decisions are all professional in nature.
4. The Library does not serve as censor of the reading of any member of the community. It should be clearly understood and emphasized that the Library does not endorse all opinions expressed in the materials which are stocked. It should also be recognized that some materials chosen may be offensive, shocking or insignificant to some readers but may be meaningful and significant to others. Works being considered should be viewed as a whole, not in isolated parts.
5. Responsibility for the reading of minors rests with their parents or local guardians. Selection of adult material will not be restricted by the possibility that these materials may come into the possession of minors. The Library should not be expected to act *in loco parentis*.

### Criteria for Selection

Materials are selected in accordance with one or more of the following guidelines:

- Artistic or literary merit
- Availability of shelf space
- Price, in relation to total budget
- Authority and competence of author
- Availability of material
- Awareness of significant new trends in literature, technology, and formats
- Clarity and accuracy of information and/or presentation
- Community requests and/or anticipated popular demand
- Favorable reviews
- Format and durability
- Practical usefulness
- Relationship to existing materials in collection
- Relative importance in comparison with other materials available on the subject



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### Selection Aids

The following sources are representative of the many aids used for selection of materials:

#### Professional Journals:

Booklist, Kirkus Review, Library Journal, New York Times Review of Books, Publishers Weekly, New York Review of Books, and Bookforum

#### In addition, the following works may be consulted:

Books in Print, Public Library Catalog, Fiction Catalog, General Periodicals, Trade Journals and Other Authoritative Subject bibliographies

### Responsibility for Selection

1. The initial responsibility for materials selection lies with an acquisitions committee, which is comprised of staff and volunteers. All staff members and the general public may recommend material for consideration.
2. The ultimate responsibility for selection rests with the Director.

### Gifts of Materials

Gifts of books and other materials are accepted consistent with and subject to the Institute Library Gift Policy.

### Disposal of Materials

Materials will be disposed of consistent with the Institute Library Weeding Policy.

### Reconsideration of Library Materials

As a not-for-profit institution under Connecticut State law, the Institute Library's collection includes opposing viewpoints, rather than supporting any one view of a particular topic or issue. Some of the materials may be offensive to individuals or groups because of individual perceptions of profanity, social, economic, and political ideas, religious viewpoints, the background of the author, or the kind of information provided. The Library does not approve nor endorse any particular viewpoint or belief represented in its collection. It is the responsibility of individuals to interface with books and materials in a manner that is congruent with their individual tastes. While a person may reject materials for him/herself and his/her children, he/she may not restrict access to the materials by others.



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### **Policy Review and Revision**

This Collection Policy will be reviewed annually by the Director and the Library Board.