

ALA LES Collections Discussion Group

June 28, 2015

San Francisco Hilton, Union Square 17-18

1-2:00 PM

Attendees: 21

Discussion Focus:

Proposed (Draft) *Guidelines for Deselecting Literatures in English Collections in Academic Libraries* developed by the ACRL Literatures in English Section Task Force on Deselection Guidelines.

Introduction:

Robin Imhof, a member of the ad hoc committee that wrote the guidelines, provided the background behind the document. The guidelines are developed for situations when items must be removed, not simply stored.

She invited suggestions and other feedback from the Collections Discussion Group.

Discussion:

The group recognized that a first step would be to consult the individual local library's collection policy before beginning to use the guidelines.

Purposes of the document:

- As a teaching tool
- Professional guideline

Strengths of the document were discussed. These include:

- It can be used as justification when a group objects to the way that weeding is approached.
- It is vetted by peers.
- Using it can help to relieve the anxiety of decision making when undertaking deselection.

Suggested Considerations

- What to do with abridged editions (like Reader's Digest Condensed Books, which might be used for cultural studies)
- Anthologies like the Norton, to study changes in the canon (might be addressed under the Special Considerations section; "author reception" might be a better heading for this topic).
- There was discussion about what "stable electronic form" means and should it be described in the document (aggregator access, PDF? DDA book?) Consensus was that the specifics of "stable electronic form" should be left to the local library to define. Consortium supported items may not be considered stable for some. May also need to consider usability, as well as stability.

“ADA compliant” may need to be added as a condition.

What is missing?

- Some statement about a strictly quantitative approach to weeding (e.g., all items not circulating during last 5 years) not supporting the integrity of a literature collection.
- Add a differentiation (definition) of primary and secondary works in the bulleted point on p. 3.
- Add the wording (italic) "Since literature *and criticism* generally retains its scholarly value" to the document [page 3, under the “Currency” bulleted point].
- In "Special Considerations" section add a statement about "Pre 1923 books, in particular."
- The book as a physical object needs to be addressed. Special bindings, marginalia may need to be factored into the decision.

Other points:

The process for weeding would be for the institutions to decide locally.

An approach that solely relies on data from catalog records might not work since many catalog records are not good or fully descriptive enough to make the decision.

Should faculty review be added? This too may be a local library decision.

Next Steps:

Suggestions will be considered and incorporated if accepted.

There will be a revised draft posted to LES Executive listserv and the LES site.

Notes by J. Arnold, reviewed by H. McClure and R. Imhof