

Weeding for the Utterly Fearless



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North Country Library System

Before we begin...

1. You can't keep everything forever. (There's not enough shelving in the world.)
2. We will be primarily talking about fiction and nonfiction print books used for leisure reading.

What is weeding?

Weeding (otherwise known as deselection) is the part of the collection development cycle where items are removed for the benefit of the overall collection, keeping it relevant, accurate, and appealing.

Weeding allows library staff to remove items that are damaged, worn, outdated, or no longer relevant and makes room for new materials - essential in a small library with limited shelf space.

Weeding:

- Is a vital part of the continuous evaluation of the collection
- Helps keep collections relevant and appealing
- Makes room for new materials
- Makes finding the good stuff easier
- Will boost your circulation



Where to start?



Collection Development Policy - Selection

Some criteria for selection:

- Relevance to the needs or interests of the community
- Current or anticipated popular demand
- Reputation and/or authority of author/publisher
- Literary or artistic quality
- Date of publication
- Cost and availability
- Suitability of format for library use
- Relevance to the existing collection

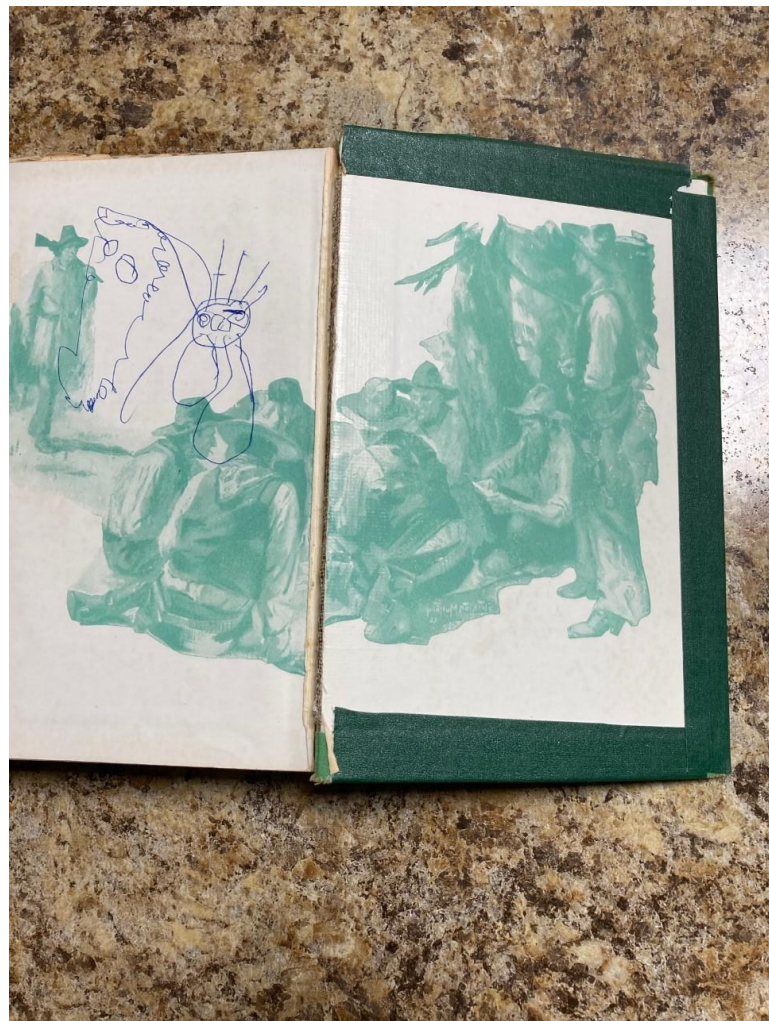
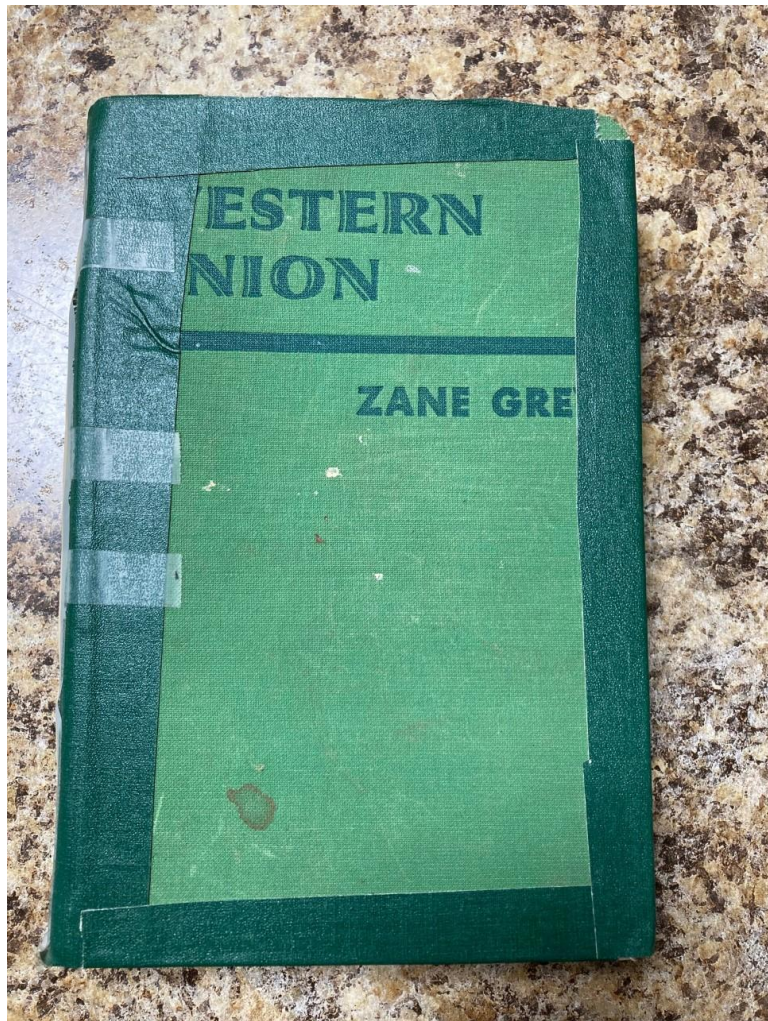
Collection Development Policy - Deselection

Some criteria for deselection:

- Damage or poor condition
- No longer relevant to the needs and interest of the community
- Infrequent use and lack of demand
- No longer accurate or superseded by more current information
- Availability elsewhere including other libraries and online

Hands on!

Let's take a look at some real life examples.



Brodsky and this fellow Goodman. You can imagine how I felt, seeing Brodsky after all these years."

"You mean they just walked into your garage by accident?"

"No, no. Good heavens, no. Brodsky tracked me down."

"What do you mean, he tracked you down?"

"It's not so complicated. The Lincoln vets have an office in New York, and they keep track of us. I subscribe to their newsletter, you know, and I sent them some money. He got my address from them — I gave them the garage address — and he and Herb Goodman came out here to see me."

"Just to see you," Barbara said after a long moment. "They came all this distance just to see you again. I got the impression that you never met this Herb Goodman before."

"That's right. And I get the impression that you're angry. Good God, for once I don't feel like a hole in the ground and you're angry."

"I'm not angry." And to herself she added, "Only afraid. I'm so afraid."

"I run a garage," he exclaimed. "Do you ever reflect on that fact? That's what I do. I'm a damn grease monkey, whether you want to accept it or not. I work twelve, fourteen, sixteen hours a day trying to meet my payroll and make the mortgage payments. I don't even support my wife and kid. You do."

"That's not true."

"I come home at night and I'm too damn tired to put my arms around you and say I love you. I'm too tired for sex. Or maybe I've come to hate myself so much that sex doesn't work."

"Do you want dessert?" Barbara asked quietly. "We have ice cream."

He leaned back, and a slow grin spread over his face. "You know, I love you, Bobby. I get these crazy fits, but I love you so damn much. It's just that loving you and running a garage don't make it for me. I don't know why. I eat myself up. This morning I was sure I was developing an ulcer. I'm only forty-two years old. That's not old. But I live with the feeling that everything's behind me and nothing's ahead of me."

"Until today?" Barbara asked.

"Yes."

"Do you want ice cream?"

"Sure."

GILBERT MARTIN AND WIFE: 1776 15

smiled and said, "You've brought along quite a piece of news of your own, though."

They were half an hour traversing Schuyler. Then once more the woods closed in on the road and river, great elms, and willows and hemlock along the brooks. Now and then, through swampy pieces the cart lurched and tottered over corduroy, and the mare had to set her feet carefully.

When they reached Cosby's Manor, it seemed to Lana a queer lost place. There was a fine house by the river, and a store built of logs, and a tenant's house. But all had a forgotten aspect. A woman came to the door of the store, shading her eyes with her hand. She did not seem like a live and healthy person. She seemed like someone in a trance. And she did not call to them, but met Lana's shy nod with a dull stare.

Gil came hurrying up beside the cart. "Never mind her, Lana. She's queer. They're Johnson people here, and they have n't got friends."

"Who is she?"

"It's Wolff's wife. I get along with Wolff all right, but people here don't speak to them much. I guess she gets lonely." He lifted his voice to call good-day to her.

"Hello," she said, flatly, and turned as if to reënter the store.

"You all alone, Mrs. Wolff?" Gil asked.

"John's round somewhere," she replied over her shoulder. "You want him?"

"No. I only thought the place looked lonely."

"Thompsons left last Thursday," she said.

"Left?"

"Yeah. They went for Oswego. They say the Congress is going to fix the fort at Stanwix, and that means trouble. I wanted John to go, but he said he could n't afford to. You can't leave if you ain't got cash money to live on up there, he says." She tilted her head to the northwest, stared at them, and then went into the store.

Gil and Lana looked after her. Then he turned to the house.

GILBERT M

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er the woods. Lana
was only a few miles
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na. They asked for
worth telling, they

AMERICAN
WINGS

MODERN AVIATION FOR EVERYONE

By

CAPTAIN BURR LEYSON

WITH A FOREWORD BY

Captain Eddie Rickenbacker

*

ILLUSTRATED WITH
OFFICIAL U.S. ARMY AND NAVY PHOTOGRAPHS

NEW YORK · E. P. DUTTON & CO., INC. · 1938




idable
Corps

"A brilliant debut."

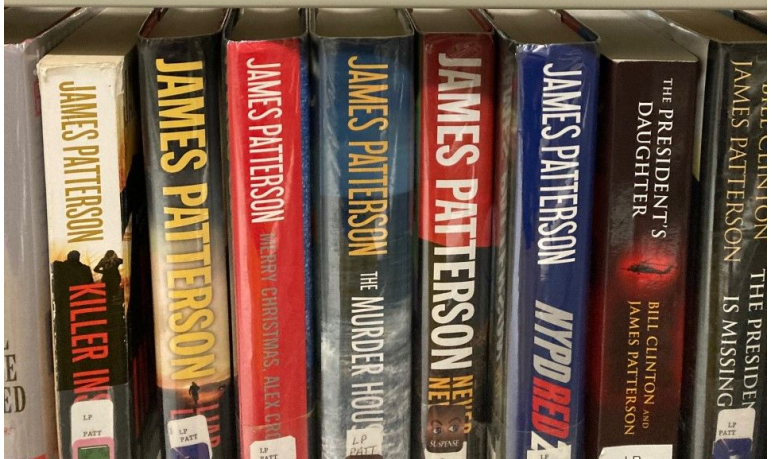
—GRAEME SIMSION,

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *THE ROSIE PROJECT*

GINNY MOON



a novel by
**BENJAMIN
LUDWIG**



What about...?



Series?

Do you need every volume in a series? Consider:

- Number of volumes
- Shelf space
- Popularity of author
- Popularity of genre
- Popularity/classic status of series
- Re-readability
- Target audience

Classics?

Classics are being continually evaluated, and deciding what constitutes ‘the classics’ could be a whole other class. But consider these factors:

- Do people still want to read it?
- Is it on a school reading list?
- Is it source material for other works?
- Is there a prettier copy?

Discs?

With so much audio and visual content streaming, is there a compelling reason to keep discs in your collection?

- Music CDs (or vinyl!)
- CD-Roms
- Books on CD
- Book and CD kits
- DVDs
- Video games

Special collections?

You may have state and/or local history materials, genealogy collections, reference materials, or a library of things. Consider:

- Why does your library have this collection? Does it align with your policies and/or mission?
- Does the information in this collection exist elsewhere? Does it exist in a more accessible format?
- If this collection circulates, is it in fact, circulating?
- If this collection does not circulate, do you have a way of otherwise tracking use?
- Does the library have the resources to maintain, preserve, and/or promote this collection?

Angela's Top Ten Tips



Tip #1

Everything in the library needs to earn its shelf space.



Tip #2

Library materials should be in good condition.



Tip #3

Library materials should be accurate.



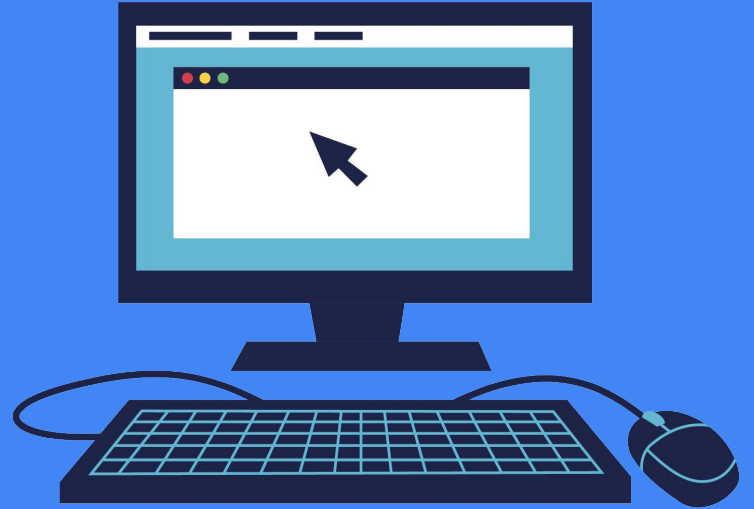
Tip #4

Items of enduring value should be retained, repaired, or replaced.



Tip #5

Use your ILS to run circulation reports (or ask your system!)



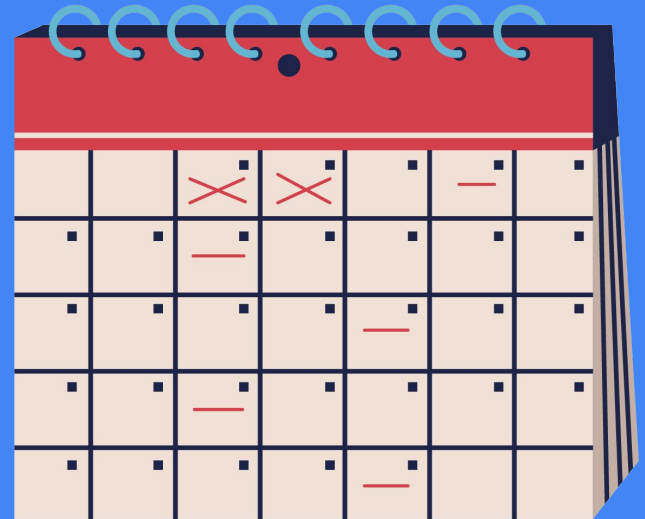
Tip #6

Be transparent with the public.



Tip #7

Weed early, weed often.



Tip #8

Know where to donate, sell,
or recycle your weeded
books.



Tip #9

When in doubt, wait until
next time.



Tip #10

Trust your gut. Nobody knows your collection better than you.



Final words of wisdom

"Remember – unless your library exists to archive and preserve materials for the ages, we are not in the business of collecting physical things. We collect information and provide access to information. We love books as much as anyone else, and sometimes hard decisions have to be made. How many times have you said, “But I just bought that!” and then realized it was ten years ago?"

Awful Library Books blog

<https://awfullibrarybooks.net/why-weed/>

Additional Resources

The Weeding Handbook: A Shelf-by-Shelf Guide, by Rebecca Vnuk ([second edition now available in the NCLS Professional collection!](#))

CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries, Texas State Library & Archives
Commission

<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/ld/pubs/crew/index.html>

Questions?

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