

This email is intended to answer questions about weeding at the Berkeley Public Library. I will provide a full presentation similar to this at the September 9th BOLT Meeting. This process was originally queried in January 2015 by Berkeley City Council. At that meeting, I provided an Annual Report on the progress of Berkeley Public Library and answered questions about our weeding process. In particular, I pointed out a test case of the 500s, the section dealing with Earthquakes.

After a review by librarians it was determined 25% of the collection to be weeded was already missing (hence why it wasn't circulating). Of the remaining collection all but three books were questioned as a maybe to keep. Those that were pulled were decades old (some of the sampling included topics on earthquakes that go back to 1990 which seems is irresponsible to keep).

We saw this process repeatedly as we went forward with weeding the other ranges. Keep in mind, we review items that haven't circulated in three years, but that is only the first step. From there, we look at the content (is it relevant), publisher date (it is still current), condition of the book, and its relation to other books in the collection. If we cannot use the book, we typically offer it to the Friends of the Library for their booksale, then Better World Books, if neither can use it, then we send it to the recycler. So to recap:

1. 3 year no circulation
2. Review for content and condition
3. Replace, restore, or deaccession
4. Deaccessioned items sent to Friends, Better World Books, or DR3 (St. Vincent de Paul)

One wrinkle that came up in January and February was that the Friends could not use much of the items that were being weeded. The person who ran the bookstore said in a Friends meeting that she need to sell books too. She can't sell books that are old or out of date either. As a result of that conversation, we have been sending books to the DR3 that meet these criteria. This is a majority of the books that are being deaccessioned.

The Berkeley Public Library has put together a schedule for library weeding. So far, the library has reviewed and weeded the 500s (Natural Sciences), the 600s (Applied Sciences), the 300s (Social Sciences), and the 700s (Arts, music, and entertainment). The library plans to review the rest of the collection as the year goes on. This will be an annual event with each Dewey Decimal range having its own month to review. Librarians doing this review are trained specialists who research and remain current on all collection development topics. We are also replacing titles with newer versions.

Below is a brief outline of why we weed.

At the Berkeley Public Library, we have adopted the national standard of Collection Maintenance called Library CREW. Most of the information below was put together through their helpful website at the Texas State Library and Archives: <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/ld/pubs/crew/index.html>

CREW stands for:

Continuous

Review

Evaluation

Weeding

What is weeding?

The process of removing books and other materials that are:

In dilapidated physical condition

Contain outdated or inaccurate information

Do not fit into the scope of the library's collection

The updated Berkeley Public Library Collection Development policy addresses collection maintenance with similar themes:

Maintenance of the collection through scheduled evaluation by library staff is critical to ensuring its continued usefulness and relevancy.

Evaluation criteria include:

- Age of materials and currency of material
- Condition of item
- Circulation of the material

Damaged materials will be considered for replacement.

BOLT approved this new policy May 28th, 2015.

https://www.berkeleypubliclibrary.org/sites/default/files/files/inline/2015_05_28_bolt_collection_development_policy_approved_28may2015.pdf

Why do we weed?

To enhance the library's reputation for reliability and currency

To provide feedback to current selection teams on the collection's STRENGTHS and WEAKNESSES

To provide a continuous check on the NEED FOR REPAIRS/REPLACEMENTS

To make the collection MORE APPEALING

To save TIME

To save use SPACE efficiently

If anyone has any further questions on the topic, I would be happy to answer them.

Weeding is a recurring process most libraries undertake. I want to address any concerns.

Sincerely,