



Collection Evaluation

2005

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Introduction

The *Oak Park Public Library Strategic Plan* calls for the library collection to be assessed in 2005. Approaching this assessment through collection- and user-centered methods of evaluation, our goal is to determine strong and weak areas, as well as the physical condition and age of our materials. We seek to present a picture of the overall collection through an organized process of systematic description and analysis. And perhaps most importantly, we want the evaluation process to be ongoing.

The major part of this evaluation document consists of individual reports for 90 categories within our materials collection. The categories were chosen by departmental managers and selectors, and include various formats, user levels, and subjects. We provide a statistical overview for each category, which includes number of volumes in the category; annual circulation; average annual circulation per volume owned; average age of the volumes; and a rating for the category. This is combined with an impressionistic, subjective, narrative report by selectors and collection development staff. These reports address the collection scope and depth, significance, currency, physical condition, and how well it meets the needs of users.

Additional evaluation methods included in this document are the materials availability survey results (evaluating the degree to which library users were able to get the materials they wanted during their visits), and analysis of interlibrary loan transactions (looking at requests that our collection could not satisfy). We also compared the number of volumes held and the per capita expenditures between our library and 14 other Chicago-area public libraries.

Key to Tables

Items owned – Number of items held July, 2004.
Circulation – Number of items checked out during 2004.
Turnover Rate – Average circulation per item owned. Calculated by dividing the annual circulation number by the number of items owned.
Average Age -- Weighted average age of items in the category.
Rating – Determined by collection development selectors. Rating scale: Excellent On track Needs attention

MAIN LIBRARY

ADULT COLLECTION PRINT

1. Fiction

Items owned – 20,295
Circulation – 63,723
Turnover Rate – 3.14
Average Age – 8.3
Rating – On track

The fiction collection is large, well-used, and strong in newer titles. Space constraints in the old building required constant, rigorous weeding; therefore, older books tend to be limited to the best and most enduring titles. We are replacing them with new editions or fresh copies when possible. Currently, we buy just about all of the frontlist put out by mainstream American publishers. We support the bestseller list in a big way, buying large numbers of copies to meet immediate demand. The collection needs some attention in weeding these short-term, high-interest duplicate titles. At the same time, we try to keep 8-10 copies of selected literary fiction favored by area book discussion groups. Additionally, the collection is well represented by midlist titles, releases from smaller presses, foreign novels in translation, and short stories.

2. Mystery

Items owned – 6,263
Circulation – 26,781
Turnover Rate – 4.27
Average Age – 7.3
Rating – Excellent

We buy extensively in mysteries, including titles with very small print runs. The mystery book market is moving away from whodunits to the more commercially successful suspense thrillers, causing the definition of a mystery to be changing – an issue for us in terms of genre classification. The collection will need room for expansion because of its popularity and the fact that mystery readers go back to earlier titles when they discover a new writer.

3. Science Fiction

Items owned – 1,969
Circulation – 5,971
Turnover Rate – 3.03
Average Age – 8.4
Rating – On track

This collection looks well-used and yet still very attractive with colorful, engaging cover art. It is a strong collection, with authors covering a broad range of sub-genres, but circulation statistics suggest that we should focus on the more popular, well-reviewed authors. There are a good number of marginal titles with low use that should be weeded. Possibly the most important issue in this

collection is in maintaining series, which are usually more important and more popular than stand-alone titles. This collection needs to be looked at in conjunction with the science fiction paperback collection, as many series are split between the two collections.

4. Fiction Paperbacks

Items owned – 642
Circulation – 1,921
Turnover Rate – 2.99
Average Age -- 4.4
Rating – Needs attention

Limited shelf space requires that we weed this collection constantly. Space is simply inadequate to support a general paperback collection along with three breakout genres; therefore we need to reconsider the types of fiction maintained here.

5. Mystery Paperbacks

Items owned – 455
Circulation – 1,780
Turnover Rate – 3.91
Average Age -- 4.6
Rating – Needs attention

This is an uneven mix of reprints and paperback originals. Additionally, it holds fill-in volumes of series that are supported in hardcover. Mysteries are very popular and some attention to this collection should easily produce higher circulation.

6. Romance Paperbacks

Items owned – 886
Circulation – 3,850
Turnover Rate – 4.34
Average Age -- 3
Rating – Needs attention

We are neglecting the romance genre. Much of the romance market is published only in mass market paperbacks. If we want to serve romance fiction readers, we need to maintain the most popular paperback series, offering a broader range of historical and contemporary choices.

7. Science Fiction Paperbacks

Items owned – 376
Circulation – 693
Turnover Rate – 1.84
Average Age -- 5.2
Rating – Needs attention

This collection should be scaled back dramatically. Fill-ins for series we support would be better shelved with the hardcovers. Many of the paperback originals are neither popular nor well-reviewed.

8. Large Print

Items owned – 2,983
Circulation – 4,743
Turnover Rate – 1.59
Average Age -- 11.1
Rating – On track

This format has seen changes in its reading audience. As baby boomers age and start to choose large print books, we see more interest in mainstream fiction and bestsellers than in the previously popular gentle reads, inspirational writings, and westerns. While this is a good collection, it could use more mysteries and the crowded shelves need weeding.

9. Foreign Language

Items owned -- 249
Circulation -- 282
Turnover Rate – 1.13
Average Age -- 14.2
Rating – Needs attention

Consisting of a few shelves of battered, faded, paperbacks in a hodgepodge of European languages, this collection is very weak. It lacks direction and probably reflects the fact that Oak Park does not serve a specific foreign language population. The predominance of French is a holdover from cooperative agreements within SLS during the previous century. We may have to

move beyond our primary vendors to improve the books in languages other than Spanish.

10. Computer Books

Items owned – 1,543
Circulation – 7,744
Turnover Rate – 3.72
Average Age -- 6.1
Rating – Needs attention

This is a well-used collection and concentrates on current, practical manuals rather than on history and philosophy. It covers a wide array of applications and we are working to be current on topics such as digital audio, game design, open access, PDAs, blogging, and podcasting. Even so, much of this collection is dated. In addition, it's an uneasy mix of materials for casual users and IT

professionals. The collection needs weeding badly and reflects our uncertainty about user needs for older equipment and applications. We need a library-wide plan for developing the computer book collections.

11. Philosophy

Items owned – 1,494
Circulation – 2,138
Turnover Rate – 1.43
Average Age – 12.4
Rating – On track

Many of the classic titles covering the history and systems of philosophy are old and faded, with fairly low circulations. This part of the collection primarily serves students and runs from the ancients to deconstructionists. The ethics section is much more heavily used, serves a larger population, and includes newer topics such as animal rights and reproductive technologies.

12. Psychology and Self-help

Items owned – 2,223
Circulation – 5,499
Turnover Rate – 2.47
Average Age -- 10.2
Rating – On track

Focusing on the needs of the nonprofessional reader, this collection includes works of classic psychologists, secondary sources relating to them, and popular psychology. There is reasonable balance between cognitive perspectives and behavior issues. The self-help section is large, good, current, and quite popular. We have a strong collection in interpersonal relationships.

Trends include psychology and health, dreams, personality, and therapies. Materials on learning are dated and need some attention. Some weeding is necessary of older titles in general.

13. Childcare and Development; Education

Items owned – 4,016
Circulation – 7,356
Turnover Rate – 1.83
Average Age -- 9.6
Rating – On track

These collections are very popular and the subject is an important one in this community. The proximity of universities with strong programs in education allows us to focus on the practical needs of parents and families. Some weeding is necessary. Education titles cover schools of all types, including home schooling, but many are quite dated and need attention. Reading is

important and we need more titles on both whole language and phonics. We have a large collection of parenting books and they are up-to-date, attractive, and include materials relating to nontraditional families.

14. Religion

Items owned – 4,965
Circulation – 8,190
Turnover Rate – 1.65
Average Age -- 12.4
Rating – On track

This collection of materials is fairly extensive and offers a broad spectrum of information on the texts, doctrines, leaders, and history of the world's major religions. Showing diversity and balance, the titles range from basic spiritual precepts to detailed sections on Christianity, Judaism and Islam. The majority of the works are on Christianity, covering both Protestant and Catholic

viewpoints equally. The collection is showing more recent growth in Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and other religions. While this collection has a scholarly slant, it also includes popular writings offering spiritual guidance and comfort. The collection looks heavily used, is fairly worn, and needs to be weeded for currency and condition. While religion books tend to date slowly, they should still be evaluated for continued accessibility, appeal of language, and writing style. Classic titles need to be replaced, as many of them are falling apart. Some of the hot topics that we see represented in this area are spirituality, prayer, Christian living, devotionals, meditation, and biblical studies. We will continue to collect mythology of diverse cultures, with particular emphasis on Greek and Roman myths.

15. General Social Sciences

Items owned – 8,563
Circulation – 14,052
Turnover Rate – 1.64
Average Age -- 9.9
Rating – On track

This huge, sprawling collection covers an enormous variety of subjects and topics. It needs some weeding but much of the collection is recent and useful. We are quite strong in women's history and issues, relationships between different types of people, family concerns, and lifestyles. True crime is less popular than it used to be, but still circulates well, and our collection is good. The

small, shabby folklore collection does not go out much, but it contains some titles that people expect to find in libraries.

16. Political Science

Items owned – 1,718
Circulation – 2,448
Turnover Rate – 1.42
Average Age -- 10.3
Rating – Needs attention

This has been a fairly deep collection with very low circulation. It is now being vigorously weeded and will contain fewer old, specialized, and musty books. There is a core collection of titles about Chicago politics and many general titles of use to junior and high school students. Political balance is good in general.

17. Personal Finance

Items owned – 2,414
Circulation – 4,866
Turnover Rate – 2.02
Average Age -- 9.4
Rating – Needs attention

This small collection is out-of-date and looks worn, due to its heavy use. While the collection reflects current trends in the market, there are a fair number of titles that cover the market before 9/11/2001 and should be weeded. The collection is well-balanced. All popular investment vehicles are represented, especially the stock market, but titles also include bonds, derivatives, and mutual

funds. We need more current titles on credit and household budgets, and will need to purchase titles reflecting the bankruptcy law changes in October, 2005. We should expand on the very popular topics of mortgages, real estate licensing, and foreclosed property information.

18. Law

Items owned – 2,762
Circulation – 2,366
Turnover Rate – .86
Average Age -- 12.9
Rating – On track

Circulation of law books is quite low, which is a surprise. This section has been weeded heavily because the collection had previously been somewhat scholarly, heavily British, and in some cases, moldy. But even the new consumer manuals circulate less than expected, most likely due to the impact of the Internet. We are trying to buy more heavily in areas that patrons seem most

interested in: immigration, family law, business, bankruptcy, wills, and real estate. Hot topics in law include intellectual property and tort reform. We need a standardized retention plan for tax materials. This collection will not attempt to be a professional resource for attorneys or law school students, but will focus on the general public. Currency is crucial and outdated materials must be weeded ruthlessly.

19. Military

Items owned – 805
Circulation – 693
Turnover Rate – .86
Average Age – 15.1
Rating – Needs attention

This includes the history, philosophy, strategies, and methods of warfare. Needing a good deal of attention, a large number of outdated, worn, low circulating titles have been weeded in 2005. The low use may be due to some overlap of the subject in the history section. The most popular books are on uniforms and weapons.

20. Languages

Items owned – 1,521
Circulation – 2,654
Turnover Rate – 1.74
Average Age -- 15
Rating – Needs attention

This collection needs work. The study of language and linguistics includes classic titles by Pei, Hayakawa, and Chomsky but is quite dated. There are a number of older sign language titles and few newer titles. Signing does date, so this needs to be looked at carefully. There's a nice collection of word histories and trivia books for popular reading. The foreign language materials

need a great deal of attention. There are very few attractive books on the shelf for learning Spanish. Our coverage of other languages is quite broad, but not deep enough. Many of the language learning texts are very old and teaching methods have changed in this area.

21. Science and Math

Items owned – 5,156
Circulation – 5,152
Turnover Rate – .99
Average Age -- 12.4
Rating – On track

Trying to broaden the appeal and use of this collection, we have been buying heavily in series for casual readers with titles that include words like *demystified*, *made simple*, and *for dummies*. We also find that college-level introductory science textbooks are helpful. We try to satisfy the demand for popular science materials for students and aficionados, along with some basic materials for

professionals. We have a strong collection in the natural sciences – plants and animals. Regional materials circulate very well and we buy multiple copies. Currency and timeliness are important, and this section can use some weeding and updating.

22. Medical

Items owned – 4,875
Circulation – 10,688
Turnover Rate – 2.19
Average Age -- 7
Rating – On track

Attractive and well-used, this collection is currently undergoing substantial weeding and updating. The collection is popular, focusing on the high school and junior college level, with some college text books. More in-depth material is collected on diseases and disorders, but we do not collect at the professional level. Currency, accuracy, and readability are most important. We offer a

reasonable balance of alternative and traditional approaches. Some of the trends in medical books are ADHD, autism, complementary and alternative medicine, aging, allergies and asthma, cosmetic surgery, and medical marijuana. We should seek out dental and optical materials because they are rarely reviewed. This collection must be monitored and weeded constantly for currency and accuracy. Dated information can be dangerous.

23. Engineering

Items owned – 2,324
Circulation – 2,539
Turnover Rate – 1.09
Average Age -- 11.1
Rating – Needs attention

The engineering collection needs a lot of work and reflects the traditional public library weakness in this area. This is not a coherent collection – it feels quite scattershot. The extremely large collection of auto repair manuals needs to be looked at for usage. Bicycling is very popular in Oak Park, and NASCAR less so than in other regions of the country. Important areas that need to be improved

are communications technology, consumer audio and video, and applied physics. In space travel, we have older histories but also newer books – Mars exploration is up-to-date.

24. Gardening and Landscaping

Items owned – 1,461
Circulation – 3,530
Turnover Rate – 2.42
Average Age -- 9.2
Rating – Excellent

This is a very nice, extremely attractive collection. We buy generously and weed appropriately, maintaining a good representation of classic gardening texts, beautifully illustrated books, and good solid working manuals. Books focusing on the Midwest are particularly well represented, with multiple copies. This collection offers beginner's manuals as well as more in-depth reading, with many titles on individual plants. Current trends and topics include low maintenance/water conservation, native plants, containers, ornamental grasses, gardens rather than grass, foliage, wildlife, salvage decoration, and water features. Landscaping books include attractive coffee table books, in addition to historical materials on Jensen and Olmstead.

25. Pets

Items owned – 925
Circulation – 2,044
Turnover Rate – 2.2
Average Age -- 9.6
Rating – On track

The dog section looks good and attractive; it's a popular and well-used collection with broad coverage. Topics range from general dog ownership and training to books on many different breeds. While factual information on dogs and dog breeding has not changed, it's important to make sure that we have newer titles that include information on screening for genetic diseases.

There are more general cat ownership books and fewer books on specific breeds. The section on horses needs some weeding of older, less attractive books. There are token titles on pigs, chickens and cattle. The bird collection includes titles on specific types of birds, but not many general books. We need to check on all bird breeds to verify that our coverage is complete, and also to check currency on bird health and importation. There is general coverage of other pets such as hamsters, gerbils and turtles, but the books look somewhat dated and there is very little on rabbits, in particular house rabbits. The fish section looks old and should be checked for popularity of freshwater and saltwater types. There is a small treasure trove of new and attractive books on backyard wildlife.

26. Cooking and Sewing

Items owned – 2,904
Circulation – 8,757
Turnover Rate – 3.01
Average Age -- 7.3
Rating – Excellent

Our collection of cookbooks is extensive and by far one of the strongest and most popular in the adult nonfiction collection. We have a good overview of books that support school projects and reports: food culture, history, and science. There is good representation of essays, classic titles, general and specialized cookbooks, and books by popular chefs. The collection reflects the book

market's focus on the foodie/gourmet world, as opposed to home-style or convenience cooking, but we buy what we can find. We monitor and weed health related cookbooks for currency and accuracy, especially in areas such as heart smart diet, allergies, and diabetes. Additionally, we check all canning and preserving books carefully for up-to-date guidelines. Wine guides are a bit dated and tired and we need to make sure new titles focus on *terroir*.

While the cookbooks are outstanding, the tiny sewing book collection is definitely dated looking and is currently being weeding. Serging is well represented but we don't have much on clothing for men or for children. Few people have a lot of time to sew, and new books are focusing more on small, quick projects and accessories, rather than complex suit- or dress-making.

27. Management

Items owned – 2,495
Circulation – 5,180
Turnover Rate – 2.07
Average Age -- 8.5
Rating – Needs attention

This collection needs weeding, especially for out-of-fashion management models and past fads. This particular area does include more than just management—the subjects covered range from growing a business to more corporate human resources issues. It includes books on leadership, marketing strategy, and doing business in cyberspace. There are a lot of titles with trendy

keywords: *healing, transformational, branding, and global*. Home based businesses are important in Oak Park and we definitely need newer titles. The accounting books are quite old, e-commerce books should postdate the dotcom crash, and PR needs to be expanded.

28. Buildings

Items owned – 825
Circulation – 2,234
Turnover Rate – 2.71
Average Age -- 9.2
Rating – On track

This small but important collection offers general home repair and improvement, as well as more specialized titles. This is a very popular collection, with perennially favorite topics such as decks, kitchens, and bathrooms being well represented. Older titles are retained, as they reflect aging housing stock. We buy everything we see on rehabbing, but we need to seek out more - many

of these titles do not get reviewed in library review journals. Essays and memoirs on home building are popular. Energy issues will certainly become hot again. We still have many titles from the 1970s (ignored by most publishers during the 1980s and 1990s) on solar power, wood burning, and general energy conservation. Also popular are books on alternative lifestyle issues such as straw bale houses and living off the grid.

29. Art

Items owned – 3,987
Circulation – 6,018
Turnover Rate – 1.51
Average Age -- 14.3
Rating – On track

This is a broad, deep, and rich collection, reflecting the importance of the arts in Oak Park. It does, however, need weeding and updating. There are a number of musty books in poor physical condition. Books on new art forms and trends need to be sought out and purchased. Students of art, whether formally enrolled or self-taught, look to the past, and our historical texts are

excellent. Our collection tends to feature Western art, but does have global coverage. Not surprisingly, we are stronger in painting than in sculpture. Collections of photographs are good, but instructional books on photography need attention to reflect changes in technology.

30. Architecture

Items owned – 1,653
Circulation – 3,022
Turnover Rate – 1.83
Average Age -- 13.2
Rating – Excellent

This is an extensive collection for a public library, and has nice depth. While it includes a number of scholarly titles, especially on Midwestern and Prairie architecture, much of the collection is readable and practical. We are obviously strong on Frank Lloyd Wright and Chicago architects. History is well covered, international coverage is good, and domestic architecture is very strong.

31. Crafts and Collecting

Items owned – 3,211
Circulation – 7,150
Turnover Rate – 2.22
Average Age -- 10.3
Rating – On track

This is a very popular part of the collection. Shelves are getting tight and older hobby craft books need to be weeded to allow space for more current titles. Crafts range from pottery and metal work to paper crafts and needlework. Knitting has exploded in popularity and new titles seem to arrive daily. We have a good collection of doll books. Television and the Internet have strongly

increased demand for books on collecting both traditional antiques and retro collectibles. Comics and graphic novels are classified in this area and are very popular.

32. Decorating

Items owned – 756
Circulation – 3,265
Turnover Rate – 4.32
Average Age -- 7.5
Rating – Excellent

When will faux finishes fade? Our interior decorating collection is good-sized, attractive, and very popular. People like to look at (but not buy) decorating books and even the older titles circulate vigorously. This collection includes titles covering historic styles of design and showing interiors from around the world, but they don't circulate as well as more practical books.

Kitchens, kid's rooms, and bathrooms are perennially popular topics. Trends in this area include mid-century influenced decorating, budget décor, and television celebrity designers.

33. Music

Items owned – 2,793
Circulation – 3,402
Turnover Rate – 1.22
Average Age -- 12.4
Rating – Needs attention

This is an area that is in great need of weeding and updating. Much of it is very old (some stamped from 1937) and tattered and the shelves are crammed. The classical area seems to be in shambles with a number of extremely obscure titles that get no use. There are holes in the biographies for classical musicians. Spiral-bound song books are a troublesome format because

they are popular but don't hold up. We need more scores of musicals. Biographies of country singers are strong. Books on the popular instrument techniques circulate quite well, especially piano. Jazz books are newer and have been going out. The rock and roll section is quite good.

34. Film

Items owned – 1,513
Circulation – 2,146
Turnover Rate – 1.42
Average Age -- 12.6
Rating – On track

Primarily made up of film history and movie star biographies, this collection also covers film study and materials for viewer's advisory. We are seeking out titles to meet the growing demand for technical, career, and business information for budding filmmakers.

35. Sports

Items owned – 3,136
Circulation – 5,400
Turnover Rate – 1.72
Average Age -- 9.1
Rating – Needs attention

This is a large collection and circulates most strongly in a few key areas: running, walking, martial arts, Olympics, bicycling, and Chicago sports figures and teams. Otherwise, circulation is low, particularly considering the large size of the collection. Current sports biographies are popular but fade from view fast. This collection needs to be scaled back in areas that are not popular.

36. Literature and Rhetoric

Items owned – 10,240
Circulation – 10,431
Turnover Rate – 1.02
Average Age -- 13.7
Rating – Needs attention

We are struggling with a number of questions in this collection, mainly the traditional library questions of quality versus demand. How many unknown, unread poets should we keep? Do we keep a book just because it was written by a famous person? Do we keep a set of books that hardly circulate but seem like something an outstanding library should own? Do we weed classical and foreign authors if they don't go out? It's imperative that we both explore ways to promote treasures in the literature section and also look at use.

This is an extremely large and comprehensive area and use is quite uneven. Writing guides are very popular and need to be beefed up and updated. Literary criticism, especially for school papers, is extremely important, and some of the older books of criticism look worn and shabby but do not have newer editions. Since the study of English literature, especially in high schools, has changed, we need to look for newer titles reflecting this. *Cliffs Notes* have been moved out of the pamphlet file and onto the shelves. Contemporary poetry books are new and attractive, but they do not circulate well at all, and while our poetry collection

represents wide cultural diversity, our play collection does not. Theater is important in Oak Park and we need to look for more cultural diversity and more contemporary dramatists.

37. Geography and Travel

Items owned – 4,862
Circulation – 13,988
Turnover Rate – 2.88
Average Age -- 9.4
Rating – On track

Our patrons travel extensively and broadly, with a wide range of budgets, tastes, interests, expectations, and travel wishes. This collection is well used and our core strength lies in our wide array of titles. Our weakness is in keeping adequate supplies of current copies of guidebooks on the shelves. The standard big-name guidebooks are generally available in every section, reflecting popular travel needs, along with armchair travel and coffee table books, and including a smattering of more scholarly/intellectual coverage.

The British Isles is a well-stocked up-to-date section, and circulates widely. This is probably the strongest section in the travel collection. The western European collection is broad and deep. Southeast Asia is particularly strong and current. There is a great African armchair travel section, with current basic guidebook coverage, and varying regional strengths. Our collection of Canadian guidebooks and travel aids is surprisingly sparse. For Mexico and the Caribbean, we have an extensive collection of guidebooks covering destination cities and regions. The Midwest, especially the states contiguous to Illinois, are generally well-covered. The Chicago area collection looks good, current, deep, and broad. We will be watching South America carefully for travel trends. Hawaii is one of our more popular destinations, and we may have insufficient copies of current guidebooks for the winter demand; this will be watched.

38. World History

Items owned – 7,958
Circulation – 12,134
Turnover Rate – 1.52
Average Age -- 11.3
Rating – On track

In general, most of the books in this area are in good condition. World War II is the largest section of this collection and circulates well. Of various countries, the United Kingdom is by far the largest section, followed by France, Germany, and Russia. Asian country books are strongest for those nations with whom we trade heavily, and for recent hot spots. We have more books on Vietnam

than on all of Africa, and very few books on South America. These areas need strengthening.

39. U.S. History

Items owned – 3,241
Circulation – 7,364
Turnover Rate – 2.27
Average Age -- 11.3
Rating – On track

American history books are well used, older, and look worn, which is probably not a problem for students and researchers. Recreational history readers (who seem to be increasing based on the growing number of history titles showing up on the bestseller lists) will be better served by a newer, more popular, less musty collection. While we do get a number of students using the collection for

research, most patrons who are reading for leisure will not pick up a book that looks too scholarly. The highest circulation numbers in this area are for books dealing with current events, and we are strong in coverage of the Civil War and local/regional history materials. The revolutionary war and colonial period are not being used very much. Ranging from natural history of the continent to current American conflicts, this section is quite large and needs weeding to make room for newer titles.

40. Biography

Items owned – 3,728
Circulation – 5,539
Turnover Rate – 1.48
Average Age -- 14.5
Rating – Needs attention

This is not an attractive collection and its location in the new building is not ideal. This collection really needs weeding to allow room for newer titles on historical persons, with updated writing styles, research, and historical perspective. Because media stars and athletes are shelved in other areas, this collection looks quite political and historical.

41. Oversize Books

Items owned – 470
Circulation – 544
Turnover Rate – 1.16
Average Age -- 13
Rating – On track

This collection has a lot of overflow from the art collection, many out-of-date atlases, and numerous coffee table books that may be past their prime. The proximity of study tables makes browsing uncomfortable and, consequently, use is lower. (And we know of no better solution. Oversized books are always a problem.) This collection needs to be kept weeded to stay

contained within its current location. We do not want to expand this collection.

42. Test Preparation

Items owned – 364
Circulation – 1,175
Turnover Rate – 3.23
Average Age -- 6.6
Rating – Needs attention

This well-used collection serves those of all ages who need help in preparing to take an entrance or licensing test, or to qualify for a job. Usually two copies of a title are purchased, and this guideline needs to be re-examined. To meet demand more effectively, we need to move toward a plan of depth rather than breadth and will focus on buying multiples of the best titles.

43. Careers

Items owned – 711
Circulation – 2,459
Turnover Rate – 3.45
Average Age -- 6.2
Rating – Excellent

The careers collection has been heavily weeded and updated in the past couple of years. People looking for jobs, and students or jobseekers researching careers are the primary users. We have a good, solid collection of books on writing resumes and interviewing. Titles on what to do with your life have a lot of general appeal and circulate well. Individual career books are not as popular but they are helpful for students. Current trends include law enforcement, homeland security, and the military. The biggest problem for this collection is its location near the reference collection and non-circulating periodicals. It is not immediately apparent that this collection is a circulating one.

44. Adult Literacy

Items owned – 405
Circulation – 258
Turnover Rate – .64
Average Age -- 14.4
Rating – Needs attention

Stronger in the *Laubach* and *Challenger* titles used by Cook County Literacy Volunteers, this collection needs attention for other workbook series and basic readers. There is a fair amount of overlap with other collections such as languages and audiovisual, so a pathfinder to help users should be developed. Attention needs to be paid to finding additional publishers.

45. Reference

Items owned – 10,839
Circulation – NA
Turnover Rate – NA
Average Age -- 17.1
Rating – Needs attention

The reference collection continues to exhibit the philosophy of “just-in-case” versus the “just-in-time” philosophy of the electronic age. The fact that SLS Reference Service was twice housed in Oak Park is reflected in the esoteric and scholarly nature of some of the titles which would be more appropriate in a research library. The shelves are fairly crowded. Much of the collection is older and

unused. The lack of use in many areas underscores the need not just to replace older editions, but to decide if in fact the subject even needs to be represented in the collection at all. The collection needs to reflect more closely the Internet Age—attention needs to be paid to areas that are used, and materials that are no longer of interest or use need to be withdrawn. We need to analyze the types of materials that patrons are willing to use under the restriction of in-library use only. On the other hand, there are some very interesting titles in the reference collection that would probably be more used if patrons’ attention were drawn to them—a rotating reference display collection has been considered by the department.

ADULT NONPRINT

46. DVDs

Items owned – 2,127
Circulation – 38,522
Turnover Rate – 18.11
Average Age -- 3.6
Rating – On track

This extremely popular collection includes a broad range of fiction and nonfiction DVDs. We have a good mix of critically acclaimed, prize-winning videos and current titles with substantial demand. We have a strong newer collection of gay and lesbian films. Documentaries, foreign, and independent films are actively collected. Nonfiction is a growing collection which is comprised of titles

that are more educational and informational in nature. Work needs to be done to give the nonfiction portion of the collection some depth.

47. CDs

Items owned – 9,926
Circulation – 68,038
Turnover Rate – 6.85
Average Age -- 9.6
Rating – On track

The compact disc collection is a well-used collection that attempts to encompass a broad spectrum of music genres. The CD collection reflects its essentially popular nature by placing more emphasis on popular artists, yet it still manages to maintain a good balance of less popular materials as well. Areas with consistently lower circulation rates will see a reduction in the

number of titles purchased in the future. For the most part, the CD collection represents what people ask for; however, sometimes limited availability of titles and theft can lead to gaps in certain areas. It is necessary to purchase duplicate copies of the more popular titles in order to meet the anticipated number of holds and losses. Attention does need to be paid toward retrospectively filling in the classic titles and building more of a local artist representation. Periodic shifting of the collection is required in order to accommodate areas that are growing faster than others.

48. Books on Tape

Items owned – 3,535
Circulation – 20,609
Turnover Rate – 5.83
Average Age -- 8.7
Rating – Excellent

This collection is very deep, with a good balance of popular and interesting titles, along with some quirky treasures like poets reading their own works. Many homebound patrons “read” by listening to audio books, and the tastes of this population have influenced purchasing decisions for this collection. Series are difficult to maintain, and many series are not complete, especially if

there are more than 3-5 titles in the series. Unlike the print collection, audio books do not have genre stickers on the spine, which makes it difficult for patrons to browse the audio book collections. The packaging of the books on tape shows a lot of wear, as getting replacement parts keeps older cases on the shelf. Large items do not fit into the TechLogic slot and must be returned at the circulation desk to avoid damage. The nonfiction section is very well-used, especially self-help. The *Pimsleur* language materials continue to be very popular, especially those for Spanish. While giving way to audio books on CD, this collection is still viable.

49. Books on CD

Items owned – 821
Circulation – 8,883
Turnover Rate – 10.82
Average Age -- 3.9
Rating – On track

This is a much newer collection, having only been collected for the past few years. It is heavy on best sellers, probably due to the standing orders, but there are classic titles available as well. What's missing are midlist titles and authors. Again, series are difficult to maintain, although we've made an effort to complete some of the bestselling series, such as Janet Evanovich's series. The nonfiction

section has more offbeat and interesting materials, while also including bestselling nonfiction. Some items of note are the Bible and lectures on different topics by university professors. The nonfiction section has a good collection of poetry. Again, the most heavily used section of the nonfiction is the foreign language material, especially the *Pimsleur* products, with Spanish the most popular language. French and Italian are also in demand. The audio book collections have been greatly enhanced by the addition of downloadable audio books through our web site.

YOUNG ADULT COLLECTION

50. YA Fiction

Items owned – 4,695
Circulation – 12,325
Turnover Rate – 2.68
Average Age -- 7.4
Rating – On track

Young adult fiction is a well-used collection of popular and classic teen fiction titles. It includes as many paperback editions of titles as possible because paperback titles have been shown to circulate in significantly higher numbers than hardcover copies in teen collections. This collection includes a lot of display shelving as YA book covers are an important selling point to

teenagers. This is a comprehensive collection that represents both current trends and classic literature, thereby supporting both recreational reading and school assignments for teens. It contains one of the most popular and well-used collections in the library: the graphic novel collection. Shelved on face-out display shelving, this is an attractive and inviting collection which is constantly in need of filling and straightening. YA fiction also includes a very strong collection of gay and lesbian teen fiction titles. Currently, a small number of YA audio book titles are shelved within the YA fiction collection, but in the future these items will be moved to the regular audiovisual section.

51. YA Romance

Items owned – 157
Circulation – 180
Turnover Rate – 1.15
Average Age -- 7.3
Rating – Needs attention

This is an evolving, well-utilized segment of the collection. In an effort to update this collection, recent weeding has removed a large section of outdated romance series titles, and we are filling in with new chick lit titles. This collection is almost entirely paperback. It could use some updating of classic titles and a more defined focus on maintaining series paperbacks.

52. YA Science Fiction/Fantasy

Items owned – 1,059
Circulation – 1,982
Turnover Rate – 1.87
Average Age -- 6.8
Rating – Needs attention

teenagers, it is an important collection to keep current and appealing.

This collection is a very popular one which could use some updating and weeding. The collection appears crowded and slightly worn. It is intended primarily as a paperback collection with hardcover editions when necessary. This genre is a victim of the constant problem of keeping series titles current, as individual titles can go in and out of print rapidly. As this is an ever-popular genre with

53. YA Nonfiction

Items owned – 1,674
Circulation – 1,564
Turnover Rate – .93
Average Age -- 6.4
Rating – On track

that are popular, well-used, and relevant to current teen interests were updated and replaced. Currently we are also focusing on college preparatory materials. Homework materials are not included in this collection. Additional weeding and marketing of the collection are required.

Young adult nonfiction is a collection whose focus has changed. Initially the intention of the collection was to provide light coverage of all subject areas relevant to current interests and educational needs of young adults. After an extensive weeding project completed in summer 2005, almost all items over five years old were weeded from the collection and only subject areas

CHILDREN'S COLLECTION

The Children's Collection serves children from birth to 5th grade. Evaluative reports are included for fiction, easy books, audiovisual materials, reference, and selected areas of the nonfiction collection.

J PRINT

54. J Fiction

Items owned – 9,771
Circulation – 36,935
Turnover Rate – 3.79
Average Age -- 11.1
Rating – On track

The juvenile fiction could use some extensive weeding, concentrating on books in poor condition, low-circulating items, and books no longer appealing to today's readers. Circulation rates could be higher. To help improve this, we recently shifted the collection and added some comfortable seating in the vicinity. Displays do make a difference, and new titles seem to circulate

quite well. In addition, we have been concentrating on purchasing multiple copies of books that are popular. Thus, our goal is for the collection to consist of many tried-and-true favorites, as well as interesting new books. New books, series titles, and classic authors are continually recommended by adults and read by children; movie tie-ins are popular; and award-winning books are being checked out regularly.

55. J Easy Books

Items owned – 9,744
Circulation – 85,198
Turnover Rate – 8.74
Average Age -- 7.4
Rating – Excellent

During the past year, a serious effort was made to weed the bulging collection of older titles of lesser importance. The overall condition of the easy picture books is good to very good. Priority is given to having multiple copies of core titles, famous books, award winners, important subjects (e.g. new baby, potty training), books by popular authors, books featuring multicultural characters,

and hot items, such as *Thomas the Tank Engine*. All books are ordered in hardback whenever possible. The collection is aimed at children from birth to about second grade, but picture books have to appeal not only to the child but also to the adult. The collection is also used by teachers and students in children's literature classes. So it becomes something of a dilemma when considering what older titles to keep. The collection is in good shape, and probably at its ideal size now.

56. J General Nonfiction

Items owned – 6,187
Circulation – 25,917
Turnover Rate – 4.18
Average Age -- 9.9
Rating – Needs attention

The juvenile nonfiction collection is a highly used collection. However, the high circulation is in spite of some definite weak spots. Strengths are the fairytale and poetry sections, as these areas have been given a lot of attention over the years, and literature does not lose its currency like other areas of the collection. Beginning with the move to the new building, it has also been a priority to beef

up the sports, arts/crafts, space, foreign language, and countries of the world sections based on expected high usage due to programming, curriculum requirements, and recreational demands.

57. J Science and Math

Items owned – 6,970
Circulation – 10,578
Turnover Rate – 1.52
Average Age -- 8.1
Rating – On track

All the basics of this collection appear to be covered. We could use more books aimed at preschool through 2nd grade throughout the entire science section. Parents are showing an interest in introducing science to their children before they begin school, and this should be reflected in the collection. We are strong in nature books with an emphasis on nature in the backyard, but could use

books on the seasons. The math section is appealing and includes mostly new titles. Books on dinosaurs are a highly used collection and look appealing. More is needed on plants and trees for younger readers, such as books explaining why leaves change color. The animal collection is starting to show its age, although our insect area is particularly strong.

58. J Geography and History

Items owned – 4,707
Circulation – 9,701
Turnover Rate – 2.06
Average Age -- 9.6
Rating – Excellent

Books on explorers could use some sprucing up. With the exception of Lewis & Clark (thanks to the publishing explosion for their 200th anniversary), the other books on explorers are mainly older unappealing titles, heavy on text. Maps and atlases are very new. The country books look fabulous, and state books are in good condition.

This has been a collection priority, and an effort was made to represent as many countries as possible based on what's being published for our audience. European countries are typically strong, but the Asian, Middle Eastern, and African countries have multiple titles for a range of

reading levels as well. Most books have been published in the last five years. The Native American section is well used, but looks presentable. Books on immigrants need an update. We have added quite a few general books on the presidents, and the colonial period has also been updated recently.

59. J Biography

Items owned – 1,910
Circulation – 3,148
Turnover Rate – 1.65
Average Age -- 10.8
Rating – On track

Ideally this collection will emphasize biographies of people with names recognizable to children. Unless specifically assigned someone they've never heard of, children will rarely read about them on their own. For example, a scan of books that didn't circulate in the past two years included biographies of Ignace Paderewski, Elizabeth Arden, and Agnes de Mille. The biography collection should include the people kids always ask for: Amelia Earhart, Thomas Edison, Martin Luther King, Abraham Lincoln, Rosa Parks, George Washington. This collection could use a boost of popular biographies and an update of newer books on the historical figures.

60. J Reference

Items owned – 1,490
Circulation – NA
Turnover Rate – NA
Average Age -- 10.8
Rating – On track

This nicely streamlined collection concentrates on the most popular topics and reference questions. Up-to-date sets focus on famous people and authors, science, and world cultures. The huge impact of the Internet on reference service and materials has resulted in a scaled back collection of traditional print resources and needs to be looked at library-wide.

J NONPRINT

61. J DVDs

Items owned – 623
Circulation – 19,950
Turnover Rate – 32.03
Average Age -- 3.1
Rating – On track

Attractive, inviting, and wildly popular, this is the newest collection in the Children's Department. It offers a nice mix of classic and current favorites and there are many duplicates in response to demand. Durability is a problem with DVDs, and we are working on ways to keep our discs circulating longer.

62. J VHS

Items owned – 1,756
Circulation – 26,788
Turnover Rate – 15.26
Average Age -- 8.3
Rating – Excellent

This collection shows a great combination of exceptionally high quality materials, along with titles that kids (and parents) love to watch. Nonfiction is especially strong in science, art, history, and biography.

63. J CDs

Items owned – 477
Circulation – 4,897
Turnover Rate – 10.27
Average Age -- 8.5
Rating – Excellent

This wonderfully diverse collection offers great choices in music, folktales, and stories. There are multiple copies of popular performers (i.e. Ella Jenkins, Jim Gill, Raffi). Folksongs from other lands are in the collection, as well as movie soundtracks.

64. J Books on Tape

Items owned – 836
Circulation – 3,472
Turnover Rate – 4.48
Average Age -- 6.7
Rating – Excellent

This collection offers the best of children's literature for listening. Many children still prefer the cassette version of audio books. The goal is to have a recorded version of many of our print books, because many children learn better using auditory skills in addition to visual.

65. J Books on CD

Items owned – 217
Circulation – 2,148
Turnover Rate – 9.9
Average Age -- 5
Rating – On track

This is a relatively new and, therefore, smaller collection of audio books. High quality, popular materials of lasting value are offered in the CD format and utilization is very high.

66. J Kits

Items owned – 541
Circulation – 2,768
Turnover Rate – 5.12
Average Age -- 11.5
Rating – On Track

This collection consists of book-and-tape or book-and-compact disc packages for preschoolers and beginning readers. Classic works of fiction and nonfiction are represented in this part of the collection, and foreign languages as well as English.

67. J CD-ROMs

Items owned – 324
Circulation – 2,544
Turnover Rate – 7.85
Average Age -- 6.6
Rating – On track

These include popular games and educational games, compatible with Microsoft or MacIntosh. In spite of competition for games on the Internet, parents still check them out for their children, especially the math games. Unfortunately, the number of new games on the market has decreased.

THE BRANCHES

Branches have a role that is different from the Main Library's. Branch collections focus on popular materials for adults and children, and offer reference and homework materials at a limited level. Evaluative reports are included for adult, young adult, and juvenile fiction and reference materials. Selected areas of nonfiction were chosen for evaluation by each Branch Manger.

MAZE BRANCH

ADULT COLLECTION

68. Maze Fiction

Items owned – 4,531
Circulation – 13,483
Turnover Rate – 2.98
Average Age -- 8.9
Rating – On track

The year 2005 may not be a totally representative year for Maze collections due to preparation for renovation. Genres at Maze are interfiled, there is a mix of new and old titles, and the quality of titles is exceptional. There are concerns, however, about the physical condition and user interest of many titles. Integrating the two adult fiction collections (lower level and main level) in preparation for renovation proved to be a wonderful project, helping the collection to be seen more fully. This will be very helpful as we address the need for weeding and questions of use and demand. More attention needs to applied to weeding, as repeated studies have shown that loosely shelved, smaller collections receive greater use.

69. Maze Paperbacks

Items owned – 1,129
Circulation – 2,187
Turnover Rate – 1.94
Average Age -- 8.7
Rating – On track

The paperback collection is very attractive and inviting, which is especially impressive since this collection has been developed primarily from donation books.

70. Maze General Nonfiction

Items owned – 1,422
Circulation – 3,061
Turnover Rate – 2.15
Average Age -- 8.9
Rating – On track

The physical condition of the nonfiction collection is generally good due to recent weeding. The collection is attractive and seems quite appropriate for a branch, being largely a reflection of what is in demand in the neighborhood for recreational reading and for school assignments.

71. Maze Social Sciences

Items owned – 999
Circulation – 2,474
Turnover Rate – 2.48
Average Age -- 9.2
Rating – On track

This very good section shows a nice balance of conservative and liberal, new and classic, popular reading and homework-appropriate materials. Keeping legal books current must be ongoing and superseded editions must be weeded even if the new edition is not purchased. Financial information provides informative, popular resources for personal finances, and preliminary information on small business start-ups.

Additional concerns are to get better information on costume, reduce the number of etiquette books, and improve the holiday holdings. The true crime books are excellent.

72. Maze Applied Technologies

Items owned – 1,508
Circulation – 4,036
Turnover Rate – 2.68
Average Age -- 9.1
Rating – On track

This is one of the most heavily used areas at Maze. Attractive and well-chosen, the cookery section is the strongest, followed by animal care and gardening. There are currency concerns in the medical, business, and home repair sections, and these areas need weeding and updating.

73. Maze Arts and Recreation

Items owned – 1,239
Circulation – 2,769
Turnover Rate – 2.23
Average Age -- 9.5
Rating – On track

With home decorating included, this is a well-used segment of the nonfiction collection. The section could use some weeding and updating, but it is a good, solid collection, working to reflect local demand. There are appealing materials on crafts and decorating, and a nice collection of art books for browsing as well as homework.

74. Maze Travel

Items owned – 445
Circulation – 1,679
Turnover Rate – 3.77
Average Age -- 8.9
Rating – On track

This general collection is strongest in the most popular destinations of Europe. It is well-used and could use some updating.

75. Maze Biography

Items owned – 910
Circulation – 1,038
Turnover Rate – 1.14
Average Age -- 8
Rating – Needs attention

Classification issues and the ongoing popularity of Kennedy family biographies cause this collection to look very politically inclined. The collection is somewhat older than is ideal, but it has responded well to weeding and its circulation has picked up.

76. Maze Reference

Items owned – 667
Circulation – NA
Turnover Rate – NA
Average Age -- 14.8
Rating – Needs attention

Adult and juvenile reference materials are interfiled at Maze. It is time to re-think the resource sharing plan and only hold current copies of print reference materials at the branch. The huge impact of the Internet on reference service and materials has resulted in a scaled back collection of traditional print resources, and needs to be looked at library-wide.

MAZE CHILDREN'S COLLECTION

77. Maze J Fiction

Items owned – 3,160
Circulation – 11,246
Turnover Rate – 3.56
Average Age -- 8.4
Rating – Needs attention

This is a large collection, but crowded shelves and many older titles are less than optimal. Purchases in this area have been minimal over the years, creating an older collection. As Maze prepares to reopen, we need to explore and address the role of a branch and size concerns for this collection. The collection should favor new popular materials over older classic titles.

78. Maze J Easy Books

Items owned – 4,663
Circulation – 21,374
Turnover Rate – 4.58
Average Age -- 9.2
Rating – On track

Circulating strongly, the most popular collection at Maze needs to be weeded to fit comfortably on the shelves and encourage browsing. A large question that needs to be addressed is whether the collection should focus on a wide variety of authors or on the complete works of particular authors. Easy readers are a large, highly popular collection meeting a variety of reading levels. Most

of the board book collection is in good condition, and an effort is made to keep this collection clean since so much of it ends up in the mouths of babes! The “little books,” literally books too little to go on the shelves, are stored on the windowsill and are in good condition.

79. Maze J Nonfiction

Items owned – 4,343
Circulation – 7,077
Turnover Rate – 1.63
Average Age -- 9.6
Rating – Needs attention

The nonfiction collection is used both for pleasure reading and homework assignments. Books about saints and Christianity are popular, as are mythology books – both for pleasure reading and homework. Books on other religions are in the collection but do not circulate as frequently. Social issues and government are up-to-date and accurate but don't circulate well. Fairy tales are

very popular for pleasure reading. The foreign language collection consists mostly of books in Spanish, with a few other languages represented. A few more books in French should be considered. Science books are the largest and most popular non-fiction area. The dinosaur collection is the most popular shelf at Maze. More books are needed on potty training, crafts and drawing, digital

photography, bike riding, jokes, and birthday parties. The emphasis should be on maximizing turnover rate instead of maintaining depth.

80. MAZE YOUNG ADULT COLLECTION

Items owned – 667
Circulation – 1,830
Turnover Rate – 2.74
Average Age -- 8
Rating – Needs attention

This small collection offers new titles and classics. Many copies are worn – attesting to their popularity. This collection includes the most popular genres, and would benefit from a general updating and the addition of more mystery titles. The tiny nonfiction collection covers hot topics and must be kept current, but is so small that it is frequently missed by users.

DOLE BRANCH

ADULT COLLECTION

81. Dole Fiction

Items owned – 5,235
Circulation – 10,049
Turnover Rate – 1.92
Average Age -- 5.84
Rating – On track

This is a very attractive and inviting collection. Primarily made up of popular reads, there are enough literary titles to broaden the audience, and it is well balanced between male and female authors. The collection is new and recent, with good back runs for the most popular authors. Genres are interfiled, except for science fiction, and this seems to be an effective technique. The

paperback collection is small, with a tiny science fiction selection, small fiction and mystery selections, and a proportionally larger romance area. Romance titles appear to receive the highest use.

82. Dole General Nonfiction

Items owned – 5,086
Circulation – 8,716
Turnover Rate – 1.71
Average Age -- 7.9
Rating – On track

The collection is attractive. It offers a good general collection of popular reading and homework-appropriate titles. Religious materials include representation on Islam and Buddhism, along with a nice selection of inspirational titles. The true crime section is good sized and looks well used. Business books lean toward entrepreneurial and home-based businesses – good choices for a

branch. Personal finance books are dated, with too many titles before September 11, 2001. The science books have an excellent focus on natural history. There is a good selection of health and fitness books, although some older titles should be weeded or updated. The gardening section is excellent, with very well-chosen titles. Crafts are outstanding. There is a small but good selection of poetry. Dole needs new copies of the most popular Shakespeare plays.

83. Dole Computer Books

Items owned – 77
Circulation – 203
Turnover Rate – 2.64
Average Age -- 8.5
Rating – Needs attention

There are two shelves of computer books, with fairly broad and popular applications, and they are somewhat dated. This tiny, underused collection illustrates the fact that we need a library-wide plan for developing the computer book collections, and that most of these materials are probably better borrowed from Main as needed.

84. Dole Travel

Items owned – 328
Circulation – 715
Turnover Rate – 2.18
Average Age -- 8.9
Rating – On track

The approach to travel here is wonderful for a small collection. Dole has chosen a very small broad overview of general U.S. and world travel – at sort of a dreamer level. There is deeper coverage of the Midwest, with an emphasis on travel plans for driving trips and weekend getaways.

85. Dole Biography

Items owned – 306
Circulation – 485
Turnover Rate – 1.58
Average Age -- 11.6
Rating – Needs attention

This collection is not particularly attractive. The fact that athletes and movie stars are not included causes it to look like a collection of political issues. It is not very inviting, and the books really only circulate well when they are new.

86. Dole Reference

Items owned – 502
Circulation – NA
Turnover Rate – NA
Average Age -- 10.9
Rating – Needs attention

The reference collection is minimal and needs attention. Dole might want to consider the Maze example of integrating the adult and juvenile reference books. The huge impact of the Internet on reference service and materials has resulted in a scaled back collection of traditional print resources and needs to be looked at library-wide.

DOLE CHILDREN'S COLLECTION

87. Dole J Fiction

Items owned – 3,140
Circulation – 6,478
Turnover Rate – 2.06
Average Age -- 9.5
Rating – Needs attention

This collection is somewhat spotty. We need to order a core collection of popular titles and enduring classics. There are still quite a few older books in poor condition that need to be replaced. In many cases, Dole has a paperback version of a fiction title, but not the hardcover version. This collection also needs more popular and recent titles, rather than so many older versions of books that kids don't read anymore. Series are a very popular collection, and as kids ask for their favorite series books on a regular basis, we should have a systematic assessment of them.

88. Dole J Easy Books

Items owned – 4,950
Circulation – 16,310
Turnover Rate – 3.29
Average Age -- 10.4
Rating – On track

Easy picture books are a highly popular collection at Dole. The physical condition of the collection is good to excellent. Weeding is needed because the picture books are packed fairly tightly into the existing shelves. We want these shelves to contain those items that have the highest circulation rates. Dole has a broad selection and most of the core authors are represented. In

general, this collection is meeting the needs of the patrons. Easy paperbacks are in very poor shape, but they circulate a lot due to their location in open browsing bins. Most of the easy readers circulate quite well. Board Books are a very popular collection, and need to be maintained with newer titles, unchewed copies, and core board book authors such as Wells and Boynton.

89. Dole J Nonfiction

Items owned – 4,757
Circulation – 5,886
Turnover Rate – 1.24
Average Age -- 10.5
Rating – On track

Dole could use more of the fun nonfiction that kids read for pleasure. These include high-interest topics such as dinosaurs, animals, crafts, sports, etc. The more esoteric books are not circulating at all at Dole. For homework purposes, Dole should move away from a deeper collection of circulating nonfiction, and rely more on broad, general reference sources. The new acquisitions that are

displayed circulate very well. Dole needs to continue to display books in new and interesting ways in order to promote some of their under-used collections.

90. DOLE YOUNG ADULT COLLECTION

Items owned – 609
Circulation – 1,198
Turnover Rate – 1.97
Average Age -- 7.2
Rating – On track

The Dole YA collection is a popular collection of recreational teen reading with both current and classic titles. There is a small “greatest hits” non-fiction collection, including some graphic novel titles. The collection provides a selection of titles representing all YA genres, including regular fiction, science fiction/fantasy, mystery, horror, and romance. The Dole collection also provides

additional copies of YA bestsellers.

**Oak Park Public Library
Turnover Rate Table - 2005
Highest to Lowest, from 2004 data**

Category	Holdings	Turnover
J DVDs	623	32.03
DVDs	2127	18.11
J VHS	1756	15.26
Books on CD	821	10.82
J CDs	477	10.27
J Books on CD	217	9.9
J Easy Books	9744	8.74
J CD-ROMs	324	7.85
CDs	9926	6.85
Books on Tape	3535	5.83
J Kits	541	5.12
Maze J Easy Books	4663	4.58
J Books on Tape	836	4.48
Romance Paperbacks	886	4.34
Decorating	756	4.32
Mystery	6263	4.27
J General Nonfiction	6187	4.18
Mystery Paperbacks	455	3.91
J Fiction	9771	3.79
Maze Travel	445	3.77
Computer books	1543	3.72
Maze J Fiction	3160	3.56
Careers	711	3.45
Dole J Easy Books	4950	3.29
Test Preparation	364	3.23
Fiction	20295	3.14
Science Fiction	1969	3.03
Cooking and Sewing	2904	3.01
Fiction Paperbacks	642	2.99
Maze Fiction	4531	2.98
Geography and Travel	4862	2.88
Maze Young Adult	667	2.74
Buildings	825	2.71
YA Fiction	4605	2.68
Maze Applied Tech.	1508	2.68
Dole Computer Books	77	2.64
Maze Social Sciences	999	2.48
Psychology and Self-help	2223	2.47
Gardening and Landscaping	1461	2.42
U. S. History	3241	2.27
Maze Arts and Recreation	1239	2.23
Crafts and Collecting	3211	2.22
Pets	925	2.2
Medical	4875	2.19

Dole Travel	328	2.18
Maze General Nonfiction	1422	2.15
Management	2495	2.07
J Geography and History	4707	2.06
Dole J Fiction	3140	2.06
Personal Finance	2414	2.02
Dole Young Adult	609	1.97
Maze Paperbacks	1129	1.94
Dole Fiction	5235	1.92
YA Science Fiction/Fantasy	1059	1.87
Science Fiction Paperbacks	376	1.84
Childcare & and Dev; Educ.	4016	1.83
Architecture	1653	1.83
Languages	1521	1.74
Sports	3136	1.72
Dole General Nonfiction	5086	1.71
Religion	4965	1.65
J Biography	1910	1.65
General Social Sciences	8563	1.64
Maze J Nonfiction	4343	1.63
Large Print	2983	1.59
Dole Biography	306	1.58
World History	7958	1.52
J Science and Math	6970	1.52
Art	3987	1.51
Biography	3728	1.48
Philosophy	1494	1.43
Political Science	1718	1.42
Movies	1513	1.42
Dole J Nonfiction	4757	1.24
Music	2793	1.22
Oversize Books	470	1.16
YA Romance	157	1.15
Maze Biography	910	1.14
Foreign Language	249	1.13
Engineering	2324	1.09
Literature and Rhetoric	10240	1.02
Science and Math	5156	0.99
YA Nonfiction	1674	0.93
Law	2762	0.86
Military	805	0.86
Adult Literacy	405	0.64

Overall OPPL Turnover Rate – 3.36

Materials Availability Survey

The *Materials Availability Survey* measured library users' success in finding the materials they needed during their visit. Success requires that the library own the item, that it is on the shelf, and that the user is able to locate it. Patrons, including children, visiting all three OPPL locations, were surveyed at various times: weekdays, evenings, and Saturdays. A self-administered questionnaire asked users how successful they were at finding what they were looking for. In addition, we tallied telephone requests and looked at e-mail/Web requests for the same time periods. We had a response rate of 64%. For each type of search, fill rates were calculated by dividing the number of successful searches by all searches.

Title Fill Rate is the proportion of specific titles sought that were found during the user's visit. *Subject and Author Fill Rate* is the proportion of searches for materials on a subject or by an author that were successful during the visit. *Browser's Fill Rate* is the proportion of users who were browsing (rather than looking for something specific) and who found something useful.

Oak Park Public Library Overall Fill Rate – 71%
Title Fill Rate – 59%
Subject / Author Fill Rate – 68%
Browser's Fill Rate – 98%

What does this mean?

The results are quite good, being generally higher than reported rates for surveys being done in other libraries around the country. Our fill rates may reflect several things: the match between our collection and the users' wants; the extent to which materials are owned and on the shelf when someone wants them; and how well users find things in the library. We're not looking for a perfect fill rate because extremely high fill rates might mean satisfied users, but they may also indicate a collection that is not being used. The highest fill rates could occur in a library with a totally non-circulating collection, because the materials would never be checked out.

Resource:

Output Measures for Public Libraries: A Manual of Standardized Procedures
Second edition. American Library Association, 1987.

Interlibrary Loan Analysis

As part of this collection evaluation, we reviewed and analyzed requests that our collection could not satisfy, examining samplings of interlibrary loan (ILL) requests from fall 2004 and summer 2005. These were requests that were sent to SWAN libraries or, that via Illinet and OCLC, were sent to other library systems, including academic libraries. In 2004, the Main library received 4,823 loans, Maze 1,333, and Dole 1,410.

Many of the materials that we have to borrow fall into two reasonable categories: materials with older publication dates, and scholarly works. Borrowed materials generally tend to include older fiction, audio books, video movies, and recorded music, most of which are not classics. Also requested are older manuals for specific computer applications or appliance repair, along with some specialized genealogy materials. Additionally, we frequently request multiple copies of literary fiction as part of our service to local book discussion groups. In spite of our poor foreign language collection, we receive very few requests for books in languages other than English. Surprisingly, there are more requests for children's materials than we had expected.

A few areas of concern include:

- Students' demand for course textbooks, which we generally do not purchase, and for which ILL should not be a substitute.
- The fact that we do have to borrow some titles that we own, which raises questions about loss and accurate re-shelving.
- The large number of audiovisual materials that we request because ILL is faster and more responsive than our current acquisition schedule allows.

Comparative Statistics

Public Library	Volumes held	Per Capita Expenditure
Oak Park	282,060	\$ 76.62
Arlington Heights	445,821	117.96
Barrington Area	270,480	90.95
Champaign	223,218	61.40
Cook Memorial (Libertyville)	308,767	99.45
Des Plaines	271,432	78.14
Downers Grove	268,716	61.60
Elmhurst	270,688	84.20
Evanston	501,982	51.91
Gail Borden (Elgin)	367,587	47.35
Mount Prospect	411,024	73.72
Naperville	523,891	69.10
Oak Lawn	340,101	62.56
Palatine	363,157	47.12
Skokie	519,230	111.15

From *Illinois Public Library Statistics 2003-2003*

Summary

- Our collection is meeting the informational, educational, vocational, cultural, and recreational needs of Oak Park's diverse community.
- Collection development is on track in most collection areas and other areas are receiving attention.
- A great deal of weeding, filling in, and updating has already occurred, but more is needed.
- Library materials are readily available; users generally find what they want when they visit; and browsers almost always leave with something useful.
- We are utilizing interlibrary loan in the best spirit of cooperation and resource sharing.

The Next Steps

Evaluation of the collection will be ongoing.

- In 2006:
 - We will examine, evaluate, and streamline standing order plans.
 - We will explore better methods of data analysis and reporting through our integrated library system.
 - We begin evaluation of the overall collection in terms of cultural diversity, addressing at least one third of the population groups identified below.
- In 2008:
 - We will review and update this collection evaluation document.

There are some large issues to work through in the upcoming year, including the impact of the Internet on print reference collections, and appropriate size and depth of branch collections.

In order to look at cultural diversity in the collections, we will examine and report on library materials with regard to specific population groups. The library profession is traditionally and statistically white, female, middle-aged, able-bodied, heterosexual, and English-speaking. Concerned that there may be

population groups where we may be doing a less than optimal job of addressing their needs, we will carefully examine our collections to ensure that we represent genuine diversity that goes beyond the occasional title. Groups of people that will be considered in coming years include African Americans; gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered persons; Latinos; Asian Americans; people with disabilities; twenty- or thirty-somethings without children; senior citizens; people with low incomes; and men.

Conclusion

The Oak Park Public Library's collection is very good and through additional attention will progress to excellent.

APPENDIX: **Dewey Decimal Classifications for Nonfiction Categories**

00s: Computers, Information, & General Reference

Computer Books (003-006)

100s: Philosophy & Psychology

Philosophy (100-129, 140-149, 160-199)

Psychology and Self-help (150-154, 156-158)

Childcare and Development; Education (*multiple Deweys*: 155, 370-379, 649)

200s: Religion

Religion (200-299)

300s: Social Sciences

General Social Sciences (300-319, 330-331, 334–339, 350-354, 360-369, 380-399)

Political Science (320-329)

Personal Finance (332-333)

Law (340-349)

Military (355-359)

400s: Language

Languages (400-499)

500s: Science

Science and Math (500-599)

600s: Applied Technology

Medical (610-619)

Engineering (620-629)

Gardening and Landscaping (*multiple Deweys*: 630-635, 710-719)

Pets (636-639)

Cooking and Sewing (640-646)

Management (650-659)

Buildings (690-698)

700s: Arts & Recreation

Art (700-709, 730-739, 750-779)

Architecture (720-729)

Crafts and Collecting (740-746, 748-749)

Decorating (747)

Music (780-788)

Film (791-792)

Sports (793-799)

800s: Literature & Rhetoric

Literature and Rhetoric (800-899)

900s: Geography & History

Geography and Travel (910-919)

World History (930-969, 980-999)

U.S. History (970-979)