

QPIRG McGill Alternative Library Collection Development Policy

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Mission Statement

The QPIRG-McGill Alternative Library is a community library located on the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabeg nations, in the Milton Park neighborhood in Tiohtià:ke (Montréal). Mainly focused on social and environmental justice, it holds a variety of books, periodicals, media, and zines that are rare, independently published, formally unconventional, and/or intellectually marginalized. The library also organizes justice-based activities, from workshops and talks to reading clubs and community projects. Library membership is free to everyone, and members have access to resources and events free of charge.

The mission of the library is primarily to serve the needs of activists and organizers associated with QPIRG-McGill by providing access to materials which aid their diverse goals and causes. QPIRG-McGill is a student-funded, non-profit organization that strives to raise awareness and motivate grassroots activism around diverse social and environmental issues. We seek to make campus-community links and inspire social change through engaging, inclusive and non hierarchical approaches. QPIRG is a resource centre for student and community activism that is independent from the university administrations and student unions.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to help library staff with selection, maintenance, and weeding of library materials. The library does not have the physical or financial capacity to acquire an exhaustive collection of works related to social and environmental justice. This policy will provide aid to staff and volunteers with criteria that will support them in developing the collection to best meet the objectives and mandate of the QPIRG-McGill Alternative Library.

About the Collection

The QPIRG-McGill Alternative Library's collection is made up of rare and unconventional materials related to social and environmental justice, as well as popular books that are aligned with QPIRG's mandate. The library collects only physical materials in the form of books and zines. The majority of the collection is in English, however there are a number of French titles as well as a small number in other languages.

The classification system was developed internally, and the categories are as follows:

- 100s:
 - 100 - Political Economy & Anti-Capitalism
 - 110 - Consumerism & Consumer Activism

- 120 - Prisons, Criminalization & Police Brutality
- 200s:
 - 200 - Health
 - 210 - Sexual Health
 - 220 - Reproductive Autonomy
 - 230 - Body, Beauty & Fat Activism
 - 240 - Disabilities & Ableism
- 300s:
 - 300 - Colonialism, Imperialism & World Politics
 - 310 - War Crimes, Conflicts & Occupation
 - 320 - Migration & Refugee Studies
 - 330 - International Development & Human Rights
- 400s:
 - 400 - Environment & Ecojustice
 - 410 - Urban Issues & Industrialization
 - 420 - Food Politics & Animal Rights
 - 430 - Resource Extraction & Anti-Extractivism
- 500s:
 - 500 - Sexualities, Gender & Sex
 - 510 - Queer Theory & Politics
 - 520 - Feminisms
 - 530 - Trans, Intersex & Genderqueer
 - 540 - Consent, Survivors & Gendered Violence
 - 550 - Sex Work, Erotica & Kink
- 600s:
 - 600 - Race & Anti-Racism
 - 610 - Women of Colour
 - 620 - Indigenous Peoples
- 700s:
 - 700 - Activism & Community Organizing
 - 710 - Student Politics & Movements
 - 720 - Anarchism
- 800s:
 - 800 - Social & Critical Theory
- 900s:
 - 900 - Science & Technology
- 1000s:
 - 1000 - Arts, Media & Visual Culture
 - 1200 - Research Methodologies
 - 1300 - Religion & Spirituality
 - 1400 - Families & Relationships
- FIC: Fiction
- POE: Poetry

- GRA: Graphic Novels

The users of this collection are as follows;

- Members of the QPIRG-McGill community, including working groups who are directly involved in organizing towards social and environmental justice in Montreal.
- McGill students who are interested in the specific subject areas listed above. Many of the materials in the collection are not available through the McGill library.
- The larger Milton Park community who are interested in the specific subject areas listed above, including those involved in community organizing.

Criteria

The following criteria are used when selecting materials to develop the library's collection:

- Materials related to social and environmental justice, specifically those which fall into the in-house classification system described above;
- Relevance to QPIRG-McGill's anti-oppression and inclusion mandate and support and empowerment of marginalized communities;
- Representation of diverse authors and marginalized communities;
- Emphasis on local subjects and narratives, specifically to Montreal and Quebec;
- Rare, independently published, unconventional, and intellectually marginalized materials;
- Materials that are not easily accessible to the library's users elsewhere, through the McGill library or within the network of connected alternative libraries (QPIRG-Concordia, Simone de Beauvoir Institute, and the Centre for Gender Advocacy);
- Formats collected are books and zines. Only physical materials are collected.

The QPIRG-McGill Alternative Library does not acquire materials that are oppressive or hateful and are not aligned with the mission of the organization.

Suggestions for Purchase

Suggestions for purchase are welcomed and can be made using the google form available on the QPIRG-McGill website. All suggestions are reviewed by library staff using the above criteria, and may be purchased if they fit within the library's yearly budget.

Donations

To donate books to the QPIRG-McGill Alternative Library, please send us an email at library@qipirgmcgill.org or come to the library during opening hours, Monday to Thursday from 12-6pm. We do not accept unannounced donations, as our capacity is limited due to our small number of staff. Materials that are donated but do not fit into our collection may be donated to Open Door Books, a working group based out of QPIRG-Concordia that seeks to provide reading materials to prison libraries across Canada.

Resources to Use

The following resources may be used by QPIRG-McGill staff to help make purchasing decisions.

- ABQLA Book Reviews
 - <https://abqla.qc.ca/en/category/bookreviews/>
- American Library Association - The 13 Most Challenged Books of 2022
 - <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks/frequentlychallengedbooks/top10>
- The Anarchist Library Bookshelf - Librarian picks
 - <https://bookshelf.theanarchistlibrary.org/library/librarian-picks>
- Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion - Diversity, equity, and inclusion reading list
 - <https://ccdi.ca/media/4095/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-reading-list-en.pdf>
- Freedom to Read Canada - Challenged Works
 - <https://www.freedomtoread.ca/challenged-works/>
- Montreal Review of Books
 - <https://mtlreviewofbooks.ca>

Deselection and Storage

Weeding will occur annually at the start of the school year in September as well as on an ongoing basis at the discretion of the librarian. The limited physical space at QPIRG-McGill makes this process very important. The purpose of annual weeding is to maintain the size of the collection while allowing room for growth and acquisition of new materials. Materials may be removed from the collection when any number of the following criteria are met:

- Their physical quality has degraded;
- A duplicate copy in better condition is donated;
- An updated edition of the title is acquired;
- The subject area the title represents is over-represented in the library collection;
- The text no longer aligns with the mandate and goals of QPIRG-McGill;
- The text contains outdated information and/or misinformation;

Materials may be moved to the QPIRG-McGill office for storage for a period of six months, provided there is space for them. If the title is not requested by a library user within this six month period, it will be officially deselected from the collection. Deselected materials may be donated to Open Door Books, a working group based out of QPIRG-Concordia that seeks to provide reading material to prison libraries across Canada.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the outgoing librarian at the end of their contract in April. Annual review will allow for the librarian to make any amendments to the policy that they found would be useful during their time working at the library. This will help ease the transition in April and May to the new librarian to continually streamline the functionality of the QPIRG-McGill library and its collection maintenance and development.