

23A Literature Class

Philatelic literature may be entered for judging and exhibition at those APS nationally-accredited philatelic exhibitions offering the Literature Class. Literature judging shall be done using the criteria outlined in this chapter.

Historically, philatelic literature competitions have been well supported. Every author or publisher entering a competition must be fully aware that, for a case bound volume, many or most, if not all, of the comments or criticisms offered by the jury cannot be acted upon until a revised edition or reprint is published. Thus, the real reason for entry in literature competitions is to receive the reward of recognition for effort through a medal. Moreover, a good level medal may lend credence and awareness to a work and lead to increased sales.

Periodicals are most likely to gain potential immediate benefit from the judging in that comments and suggestions from the jury may be implemented, as desired, right away.

Literature Types

- ***Accepted Philatelic Literature***

Philatelic books, compendiums, handbooks, monographs

A compendium is a concise, yet comprehensive compilation of a body of knowledge, usually gathered from several resources (standard definition).

Non-philatelic books about the hobby, e.g., guides to collecting or exhibiting

Catalogs (both specialized and/or priced philatelic and auction formats)

Articles (limited acceptance, see below)

Philatelic society journals, periodicals (including philatelic study group bulletins)

Language: To assure a meaningful and equitable evaluation,

Literature must be primarily in English. Literature in other languages cannot be fairly judged and therefore must be declined. Bilingual (English and another language) literature is accepted.

Exception: Catalogs in a primary language other than English may be accepted. The evaluation will include their value as a guide, reference and tool for the monolingual English-speaking audience user.

- ***Catalogs***

General, specialized and many auction catalogs are widely recognized as essential references and tools of philately. While not all will stand up to the rigors of literature judging, all can be evaluated using the same criteria as for any other form of literature; notably treatment of contents, originality, significance and depth of research, technical matters, and production.

In many cases, priced catalogs are a principal tool for collectors in a field, and therefore clearly have substantial and lasting value whether an annual priced catalog or an occasional specialized production that becomes the authority for the subject. Significant research can be found in pricing guides and the constant updating of listings and information included in the general catalog and value should be awarded for this. Layout and arrangement of listings, price relevance, consistency, originality, completeness and ancillary/explanatory information are all parts of this genre that should be considered.

Auction catalogs may be of value to the specialist of an area where a “named sale” is involved. These sales represent an important record for census and reference for philately as a

whole and for the specialist in particular. The same basic aspects can and should be applied to these productions as well. In the spirit of open literature competitions, editors and publishers are free to enter any catalog; the jury will evaluate the catalog based on these criteria.

- **Limited Acceptance: Bound Volumes of Articles or Columns**

A *bound* collection of articles (on the same subject) may be entered as a “handbook,” but there is no provision for single articles. A bound serialized work from a philatelic periodical, originally published in several issues, *when bound together* (not just stapled) could comprise a handbook.

Bound works that are a series of articles, either by the same author written over time or an anthology on a specific topic written by various authors, some of the articles perhaps having been published elsewhere as stand-alone articles in a different media, are accepted as “handbooks.”

- **Excluded: Newsletters, Show Programs, Articles, Columns**

APS Chapter Activities Committee (CAC) provides a venue for newsletters and programs. Single or unbound articles or columns are excluded.

Specialty Society Journals and Philatelic Periodicals

It is imperative to note the following criteria provided for philatelic periodicals:

For society journals and periodicals, consider diversity of content, allocation of space to substantive and informative articles, columns and features, and overall value to membership.

All these are important facets of a quality specialty society journal or philatelic periodical.

In judging philatelic literature, we seek to judge and evaluate scholarship, the advancement of philatelic knowledge. That means a “journal” must perforce have diverse “substantive and informative articles.” Non-philatelic content, for example, society news and announcements, should be expected as providing service to the society membership, but while no specific limits are imposed on such content, the overall balance there must be relatively light. Journals with minimal “substantive and informative articles” cannot expect to do well against the judging criteria

Disqualification by the Jury

Acceptance of a literature entry by the show committee is not determinative of its acceptability as philatelic literature as defined and limited above. The jury, in its collective judgment, may decline to judge any entry – to *exclude* it. Any entry not meeting the requirements for entry as defined by the prospectus shall be disqualified.

Judging Criteria for Literature

Literature exhibits are evaluated according to the following criteria and weights:

Treatment of contents 40%

Originality, significance and depth of research 40%

Technical matters 15%

Production 5%

These criteria and weights align the APS Literature Judging with the FIP, which was found to be logical and meaningful in principle. These criteria were developed over a period of years, they are well tested and provided an excellent foundation.

- **Treatment (of contents) or “Authorship and Editorship”** **40%**
Literary style, clarity, and skill in communication.
Correct grammar.
Readily understood and usable.

Utilization of illustrations, charts, graphs, tables.

Format and layout, text flow (editor's aspects).

CD: Utilization of CD features unique to electronic media. Searchability, ease of navigation, logic of flow.

Catalogs: Organization, format and layout, text flow, clarity. Readily understood and usable. Utilization of illustrations.

- ***Originality, Significance and Research***

40%

Overall significance of the subject matter, i.e., significance of the subject in terms of its scope, degree of difficulty and philatelic interest.

Significance of the work to the subject.

Degree to which the work displays original discoveries, research, analysis or approaches to a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

For society journals and periodicals, consider diversity of content, allocation of space to substantive and informative articles, columns and features, and overall value to membership.

Catalogs: Value as a guide, reference and tool for a user. Completeness of listings, value as a pricing guide, general and specialized information provided. Substantive change over prior edition.

- ***Technical Matters***

15%

Evaluation of such aspects as title page and imprint, pagination, credits, bibliography, index, and clarity of illustrations.

CD: Ease of loading, compatibility, clarity of images, contents page, index.

- ***Production***

5%

Binding, typography, and similar production aspects on the usability of the publication. To avoid the impact of purely commercial aspects, this criterion will only be evaluated to the degree that it represents a negative factor

It is notable that these criteria track quite closely with the criteria for philatelic exhibits, but with significant and appropriate variations applicable to literature.

Medium

Publication may be either (1) hardcopy, i.e., paper, or (2) electronic, i.e., CD. Web sites are excluded, primarily because there is no permanency.

The FIP draft guidelines were used to note CD aspects for the criteria shown above.

Conclusion

The evaluation criteria are simple, easily understood and readily applied. An evaluation form is provided.

APS Literature Exhibit Evaluation Form

Show _____ Date _____ Award _____

Exhibit _____

Evaluation Judge _____ Chief Judge _____

Treatment (of contents) or “Authorship and Editorship” 40%

Literary style, clarity, and skill in communication. Correct grammar. Readily understood and usable.
Utilization of illustrations, charts, graphs, tables. Format and layout, text flow.
CD: Utilization of CD features. Searchability, ease of navigation, logic of flow.
Catalogs: Organization, format and layout, text flow, clarity. Readily understood and usable.
Utilization of illustrations.

Originality, Significance and Research 40%

Overall subject significance: Scope, degree of difficulty and philatelic interest. Significance of the work to the subject. Discoveries, research, analysis or approaches to a comprehensive subject understanding.
Society journals and periodicals: Diversity of content, allocation of space to substantive and informative articles, columns and features, and overall value to membership.
Catalogs: Value as a guide, reference and tool for a user. Completeness of listings, value as a pricing guide, general and specialized information provided. Substantive change over prior edition.

Technical Matters 15%

Title page and imprint, pagination, credits, bibliography, index, clarity of illustrations.
CD: Ease of loading, compatibility, clarity of images, contents page, index.

Production 5%

Binding, typography, and similar production aspects on the usability of the publication.

Comments and Recommendations (use reverse as necessary)