Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management

FIFTH EDITION

Peggy Johnson and Mary Beth Weber

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- Case Studies from fourth and fifth editions

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PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION

In the preface to the fourth edition of this book, my coauthor Peggy Johnson wrote, "The twenty-first century has brought into question the role and value of collection development as a professional specialty. The shift from collections-centered to services-centered libraries, patron-driven acquisitions, consortial buying, Big Deal serial bundles, aggregator e-book packages, mass digitizing projects, ubiquitous access to digital content, and the growth of open access can raise uncertainties about what a collections librarian's responsibilities might be."[1] Six years later, this statement remains valid. Libraries are shifting from being perceived solely as a physical location to an entity that can be both physical and virtual and can meet users at point of need. There is no doubt that the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and the resulting lockdown profoundly changed how libraries served users and spawned a new suite of services including Zoom programs, click and collect (also called curbside pickup), home delivery of books, controlled digital lending, and digitization requests. The new and evolving post-COVID environment has not diminished the collections librarian's role. In fact, it has become increasingly important as libraries strive to meet the growing demands for materials and services in the face of diminishing funding.

This book is intended to serve as a comprehensive introduction for students, a primer for experienced librarians with new collection development and management responsibilities, and a handy reference resource for practitioners to consult in the course of their daily work. The scope is intended to reflect the practice of collection development and management in all types of libraries, with a focus on the United States. Chapter 1 provides a history of libraries and collection development and management to set the context for current theory and practice. When pertinent, we have drawn from the literature outside library and information management.

Technology and the internet continue to reshape nearly all aspects of collection development and management in all types of libraries. The forces affecting our work and how we do it are made more challenging by sociological, educational, economic, demographic, political, regulatory, and institutional changes in our user communities and the parent organizations and agencies that fund libraries. Library users' needs and expectations are evolving concurrently. As the library as a physical place has changed, libraries have sought to find new ways to deliver resources to users at point of need. We have sought to reflect this rapidly evolving environment with updated examples and data.

Chapter 1 is an introduction to and an overview of collection management and development, including a brief history of the evolution of collection development and management as a specialty within the profession. Understanding the history

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of collecting and library development and the practices employed in the past are essential to managing the collections in our libraries. Chapter 2 explores the organization and assignment of collection development and management responsibilities in libraries. An important section of this chapter discusses ethical issues associated with building and managing collections. Chapter 3 addresses formal library planning and two important library planning tools—collection development and management policies and library budgets. Chapter 4 introduces topologies for types of materials that librarians select and explores the selection process, selection criteria, the acquisition process, and acquisition options. Chapter 5 offers an introduction to vendor relations, negotiation, and contracts, all important areas for today's collections librarians. Chapter 6 examines the collection management responsibilities of librarians after they have developed collections. Topics include weeding for withdrawal and storage; preservation and conservation; subscription review, renewal, and cancellation; and protecting collections from deterioration, theft, mutilation, and disasters. Chapter 7 defines marketing, places it in the library setting, and explores the importance of and techniques for building and maintaining community relationships. Chapter 8 covers approaches to collection analysis and how to answer questions about quality and utility using quantitative, qualitative, and use- and user-based methods. Chapter 9 focuses on collaborative collection development and management and considers the power that working together gives libraries in an environment of constrained budgets, limited space to house collections, and abundant print collections.

All chapters have new supplemental reading lists, which contain no sources published before 2017. These supplemental lists are not comprehensive bibliographies and are instead intended to offer representative and useful additional resources. Sources cited in each chapter are not repeated in the associated supplemental reading lists. Suggested reading lists from the fourth edition, which contain resources published and posted prior to 2018, along with this edition can be accessed at **alaeditions.org/webextras**. The fictional case studies that supplement chapters 2 through 9 are new. We hope that both practitioners and students will find them helpful and view them as catalysts for discussion. Case studies from the previous and current edition can be accessed at **alaeditions.org/webextras**.

The glossary is available as a web extra at **alaeditions.org/webextras.** The appendices have been updated. The appendixes are A, "Professional Resources for Collection Development and Management" and B, "Selection Aids." This edition does not have an appendix of collection development policies. The reader should consult the policies referenced in chapters; URLs are provided.

One challenge in writing a book about collection development and management is that all aspects of the work are interconnected. We determined which topics to address in each chapter and in what order to arrange them. Another challenge is to what extent should each topic be explored; many topics could easily be, and have been, the topic of entire books. We suggest that readers who are interested in more in-depth treatments consult the suggested reading lists at the end of the chapters. The intent has been to provide a logical sequence of topics for the novice, but also to create chapters that can stand alone for those who want to focus on a particular topic.

Data are drawn from various sources, and unfortunately many are not as current as desirable because of the delay involved in compiling and publishing. Readers interested in more up-to-date information are encouraged to seek the latest publications and visit updated websites. All URLs provided in this book were valid as of late winter 2024. Diligent searchers will find many of the sources referenced in

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the notes and reading lists freely available online. Some reports and studies can be obtained by completing a form on the publisher's website. Products, companies, projects, and initiatives referenced are provided as examples only and are not endorsements. Rapid change is a characteristic of the environment in which libraries operate. This includes commercial offerings, business models, and companies; note that some information in this book, while accurate at the time of writing, may no longer be current.

Finally, a change from previous editions of this book, is the inclusion of a coauthor (Mary Beth Weber). We have collaborated many times and both of us served terms as editor-in-chief of the peer-reviewed journal *Library Resources and Technical Services*. Writing is a time-consuming and laborious process, and sharing the responsibility with Peggy has been an honor and learning journey.

NOTE

1. Peggy Johnson, *Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management*, 4th ed. (Chicago: ALA Editions, 2018), xi.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction to Collection Development and Management

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How are *collection development and management* defined? What does this mean and what does it entail? The concise answer is that it encompasses all the activities involved in building and managing library collections in all formats and genres, both locally held and remotely accessed. This book distinguishes between c*ollection development*—the thoughtful process of developing or building a library collection in response to institutional priorities and community or user needs and interests, and *collection management*—the equally thoughtful process of deciding what to do after the collection is developed. Collection management includes long-term stewardship of resources and considerations of sustainability. It encompasses weeding, regular and ongoing collection analysis, and the decision to switch from tangible formats to e-preferred when user demand for a particular resource is especially strong.

One may wonder if collection development and management continues to be relevant in an increasingly digital world that includes open access (and often free) resources as an alternative to costly purchases. Many feel that traditional technical services practices, such as resource description as well as collection development and management, are relics of a previous era and can be outsourced, automated, or assigned to artificial intelligence (AI). Unfortunately, there is increasingly less emphasis on technical services responsibilities in library and information science graduate-level programs. There are indeed functions that can be outsourced; what is lacking in such cases, however, is familiarity with local needs and practices and decisions made by an individual who is an expert in their field of practice and draws on that experience. There is no substitute for that knowledge and experience.

Automation and digital resources have undoubtedly changed some things yet have not eliminated the need to build and curate collections. The emergence of the MARC format did not initially eliminate card catalogs, and migrating to online catalogs did not remove the need for MARC cataloging (nor has Resource Description and Access). Neither will the promise of vendor-supplied records, approval or blanket plans, and evidence-based acquisition plans negate the need to build a collection and to maintain it over time. Vendor offerings can coexist with the mandate to provide a dynamic collection that meets the continually changing needs of a given library's users and considers information in all appropriate formats. In *After the Book*, Stachokas refers to "electronic libraries."[1] Whether this will happen remains to be seen, as there are still strong reasons to purchase physical materials. Artist books or rare books, children's books (including pop-ups and movable books), and books with equations, formulas or other information that is not well-replicated in electronic versions, are categories of books that libraries will continue to purchase and will be guided by the decisions of collection development practitioners. And, as libraries,

particularly college and university libraries, continue to share space with other organizations in their communities, collection management is vital to repurposing space and determining which resources should be discarded and what will be relocated to a storage facility or kept in the library space. Collection management will also determine the best arrangement of those physical resources offered in the library to ensure easy access by patrons.

Collection development and management, typically taught as theory, is multifaceted and challenging in real-life situations. Challenges include shrinking budgets, inflation, weighing the cost of purchasing an expensive database against the purchase of books, and meeting emerging needs.

This chapter introduces concepts; offers a historical overview of libraries and their collections, with an emphasis on the United States; and examines the evolution of collection development and management as an area of focus in professional librarianship. Understanding the history of collection work and external forces that influence collections is valuable because contemporary practice builds on the past and influences emerging and future decisions. Librarians work with collections that were developed over the span of many years in accordance with earlier practices and conventions. It is very likely that in some cases, these collections (or portions of them) no longer serve the purpose for which they were originally intended. Disciplines change and new areas of collecting might subsume or supersede older materials in a collection. For example, being more inclusive and considering the needs of various communities are important issues both in contemporary collection development and the profession at large. School libraries are exploring the practice of "genrefication" to replace Dewey Decimal arrangement to facilitate easier access by students. This raises the question of whether one balances contemporary needs with older, and perhaps outdated, resources to provide a comprehensive or historical overview. These decisions are driven by factors that include staffing, space issues, and the demands of the user community. However, some of the challenges contemporary librarians face have remained constant over time, including budget shortfalls, equitable distribution of funds for various disciplines, and weeding. Topics introduced in this chapter are explored in more depth in subsequent chapters.

Finally, no contemporary book will fail to note how the COVID-19 pandemic was a major driver in collection development and management and has influenced business practices and models across all aspects of librarianship, as well as many other types of businesses. Some changes were necessitated by COVID, such as controlled digital lending and normalization of home delivery of books, and were implemented as safety measures that enabled service to patrons to continue despite great challenges. Other changes were slowly taking place within the profession, and COVID accelerated them. Unintended consequences of COVID included a profound change in the workplace, expectations for delivery of service, and increasing demand for remote access to resources. Several of these changes have been very positive. Remote and hybrid employment have the ability to expand and diversify the pool of qualified employees and provide needed flexibility for caregivers, parents, and employees with disabilities. Additionally, remote access supports distance education, for K–12 and higher education. The availability of remote and hybrid work following the COVID pandemic has led some parents to opt for online education for their children.

A September 2021 piece in the *New Yorker*, "The Surprisingly Big Business of Library E-books," explores the financial implications of the shift to e-books on libraries that was driven by lockdown. The author notes how the first-sale doctrine, which enables libraries to lend books to an unlimited number of readers at no cost, is limited

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to print books and does not apply to e-books. This in turn gives vendors more control over prices. Michelle Jeske, Denver's city librarian, asserts that digital content gives publishers more control over prices, and they treat libraries differently than other types of buyers.[2] David Kahn's book *The Codebreakers* illustrates this point: a consumer may purchase the e-book for $59.99, while a library will pay $239.99 for access to that e-book during a specified time period.[3] And when the access ends, the library must pay an additional cost if continued access to an e-book is warranted.

COMPONENTS OF COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

The terms *collection development* and *collection management* are often used synonymously or together. While they are interrelated, they are also distinct and separate operations. There are professional organizations with committees or sections that address collection development and management. The American Library Association (ALA) consists of numerous divisions and sub-associations devoted to different aspects of librarianship. In 2020 ALA merged three former ALA divisions—the Library Leadership and Management Association (LLAMA), the Library Information and Technology Association (LITA), and the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS)—to create Core, "a national association that advances the profession of librarians and information providers in central roles of leadership and management, metadata and collections, and technology." Core includes a metadata and collections section with committees and interest groups devoted to acquisitions, collection development, and management; a Core acquisitions committee, and interest groups for the chief collection development officers of large research libraries, collection management in public libraries, collection evaluation and assessment, and open access, including OA and collection development. The Reference and User Services Association (RUSA, another ALA division) has a comparable section, the Collection Development and Evaluation Section (CODES). The CODES website describes the organization as "*the* place in ALA for reference/user services librarians and staff from all types of libraries to discuss the rapidly changing landscape of collection development." ALA also includes the Public Library Association (PLA) and the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC). Although PLA does not have committees or task forces, it includes a robust section on collection management that includes guidelines for general and multilingual collections, self-published works, and weeding. ALSC has the Collection Management Discussion Group. The Medical Library Association has a Collection Development Section, and the American Association of Law Libraries Special Interest Section has the Collection Development Committee. Finally, the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) has an Acquisition and Collection Development Section.[4]

Regardless of the term used, librarians generally have a common understanding of the practice and purpose of collection development and management, namely:

> The goal of any collection development organization must be to provide the library with a collection that meets the appropriate needs of its client population within the limits of its fiscal and personnel resources. To reach this goal, each segment of the collection must be developed with an application of resources consistent with its relative importance to the mission of the library and the needs of its patrons.[5]

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Although written more than thirty years ago and before libraries experienced the profound changes in technology, society, and the economy that now characterize their environment, Bryant's description remains valid. Many have noted that libraries have shifted from a collection-centered focus to a user-centered orientation, yet the needs of the client population have been a concern of collection development and management from the earliest times. The materials that librarians purchase and lease for their user communities and how they make choices remain critically important.

A variety of job titles are used for collection development and management practitioners (selector, bibliographer, collections librarian, subject specialists, liaison, collection strategist, for example). There is no standard terminology used for these librarians, which is often the case for professional positions. Some use older, and perhaps dated, terminology, while others adapt terms from other disciplines to convey the complexity and depth of their responsibilities. A scan of ALA's JobLIST reflects this diversity: two jobs with the title "selector" were posted; one used "bibliographer" in the expected responsibilities, but not as the position title; two posts used "collections librarian," but for particular types of collections (rare book and special collections librarian and open science and collections librarian). There were no postings for the titles subject specialist, library liaison, or collection development librarian; subject liaison was listed in responsibilities, but not as a title; there was one posting for a collection manager; one for collections strategist; one for collections analyst; and one for collection developer.

In corporate libraries, personnel with collections responsibilities have various titles, including librarian, systems librarian, knowledge center manager, and information specialist. In smaller libraries, the individual developing and managing collections may simply have the title of librarian, or in schools, school librarian or media specialist. Titles, such as scholarly communications librarian, electronic resources librarian, open access librarian, and user experience librarian, describe responsibilities that have emerged from more traditional collections positions and have evolved to meet the demands of new and emerging needs. Like their counterparts who handle tangible formats, these positions oversee removal of outdated resources to which a library no longer subscribes and include stewardship of resources through their lifecycle.

Collections responsibilities may be part of a suite of responsibilities that include:

- selecting resources in all appropriate formats to acquire and making them accessible
- reviewing and negotiating contracts to acquire or access e-resources, including restrictions on access and number of concurrent users
- managing the collection through informed weeding, cancellation, storage, and preservation, and supplementing the collection with e-resources or replacing physical with electronic as warranted
- developing and revising collection development policies, including donated materials and open access resources
- promoting, marketing, and interpreting collections and resources through outreach, LibGuides, instruction, embedded librarianship, and liaison responsibilities
- evaluating and assessing collections and related services, collection use, and user experiences, including issues such as turnaways for e-resources and controlled digital lending

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- responding to challenges to materials selected and being responsive to DEI issues
- conducting community liaison and outreach activities
- preparing budgets, managing allocations, and demonstrating responsible stewardship of funds
- working with other libraries to support resource sharing and cooperative collection development and management
- soliciting supplemental funds for collection development and management through grants and monetary gifts

The focus of collection development has been shifting to e-resources, while physical resources are being weeded or sent to storage to repurpose existing space for new initiatives, including learning commons, maker spaces, or shared space with other organizations on campus or in the community. The assignment and importance of these responsibilities will vary by library and librarian and are typically found in all types of libraries. Thus, this book does not provide separate chapters for various types of libraries.

Each of these responsibilities requires knowledge of the library's fiscal and personnel resources, mission, values, and priorities, plus those of the library's parent organization and knowledge of the library's user community. Collection development and management cannot be successful unless integrated within all library operations; thus, a collections librarian must understand their library's operations and services and have a close relationship with the units that provide them. These units are interconnected and build upon each other's work. The end result of enabling users to find, identify, select, and obtain desired resources is not possible without the contributions of each functional group. Essential considerations for the collections librarian include determining who has access to the collection on-site and remotely, circulation and use policies, consortial arrangements, and ease of resource discovery. Collections librarians who work with contracts and licenses must understand the legal requirements and considerations of the library and its parent organization. A constant theme throughout this book is the importance of the internal and external environments within which collections librarians practice their craft.

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HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Several ancient libraries, for example, those in Hattusha and Pergamum (modern Türkiye), Nineveh (modern Iraq), and Alexandria (modern Egypt), have been documented, but no records of selection criteria in these libraries have been found. Many of the oldest libraries, such as that at Hattusha (ca. fifteenth century BCE to ca. twelfth century BCE), which had between 1,500 and 2,000 cuneiform tablets, functioned as archives that preserved legal codes, official correspondence, treaties, and contracts.[6] The earliest libraries served primarily as storehouses of official documents and sacred texts or as treasuries reflecting wealth and power rather than as instruments for the wide dissemination of knowledge or sources for recreational reading for local citizens.

Over time, libraries began aggressively adding items, becoming centers of learning and translation and serving as resources for scholars. The library at Alexandria, which flourished between the third century BCE and the first or second century CE as a center of scholarship, held more than 400,000 mixed scrolls with multiple works and another 90,000 individual scrolls that were reportedly acquired both through

theft and purchase.[7] Evidence suggests that some scholars enjoyed patronage and visitors were not limited by doctrine or philosophy.[8] In Morrocco, the Al-Qarawiyyin library, the world's oldest operating library, was founded by Fatima al-Fihri in 859 CE to support education and research at the university of the same name in Fez.[9] One can assume that the scarcity of written materials and their value as unique records made comprehensiveness, completeness, and preservation guiding principles. These continued as library goals through the growth of commerce, the Renaissance, and the invention of movable type, expanding lay literacy, the Enlightenment, the public library movement, and the proliferation of e-resources.

Systematic philosophies of selection were rare until the end of the nineteenth century, although a few early librarians wrote about their guiding principles. Gabriel Naudé, hired by Cardinal Mazarin to manage his personal library in the early 1600s, addressed selection in the first modern treatise on the management of libraries. He wrote, "It may be laid down as a maxim that there is no book whatsoever, be it never so bad or disparaged, but may in time be sought for by someone."[10] Completeness as a goal has been balanced by a desire to select the best and most appropriate materials. John Dury, in his 1650 tract *The Reformed Librarie-Keeper*, wrote, "I do not think that all Books and Treaties which in this age are printed in all kindes, should bee inserted into the Catalogue, and added to the stock of the Librarie, discretion must bee used and confusion avoided, and a course taken to distinguish that which is profitable, from that which is useless."[11]

In 1780 Jean-Baptiste Cotton des Houssays, librarian at the Sorbonne, stated that libraries should consist only of books "of genuine merit and of well-approved utility," with new additions guided by "enlightened economy."[12] Appropriate criteria for selectivity and determining what has merit and what is "useless" have been a continuing debate among librarians and library users for centuries.

Public Libraries

Contemporary public libraries had various precursors in the United States. Thomas Bray, an English Anglican cleric, arrived in the Colony of Maryland in 1699 with a commission to organize the Church of England parishes and to supply them with books, for which he was granted funds.[13] When he returned to England two years later, he had established seventeen parish libraries that primarily supported clergy but also were open to the public. The largest was in Annapolis and held 1,095 volumes, then the largest public collection of books in the Colonies, and "probably the first free circulating library in the United States."[14]

Social libraries, also referred to as *subscription libraries* or *membership libraries*, were limited to a specific clientele and supported by members. One of the better known, and perhaps the first, was the Philadelphia Library Company, founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1731 and supported by fifty subscribers to share the cost of importing books and journals from England.[15] Many subscription libraries became public libraries when a library society lost interest and turned the collection over to the town government, which then began to support it financially and opened it to citizens.[16] Glynn notes in *Reading Publics: New York City's Public Libraries, 1754–1911*, that supporters of the idea of public libraries were "genuinely concerned about the plight of the poor in a modern, industrialized economy and hoped to promote good reading to mitigate class divisions and mend a fractured public."[17]

Mercantile libraries were membership libraries founded by and for merchants and clerks both to educate and to offer an alternative to immoral entertainment.[18]

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Their goal was to teach morality, provide a more wholesome environment, and offer self-education opportunities to the poor and uneducated who were drawn to cities. They often featured presentations by prominent writers and thinkers. Examples were found in New York (1820), Boston (1820), Philadelphia (1821), and Cincinnati (1835). The Mercantile Library of New York (now the Center for Fiction) was the largest mercantile library and, by 1871, was the fourth largest library in the United States. Only the Library of Congress, Boston Public Library, and Astor Library (also in New York City) were bigger.

Free African Americans formed literary society libraries in the northeast United States between 1828 and 1860. One of the earliest, the Colored Reading Society of Philadelphia, founded in 1828, directed that all income from initiation fees and monthly dues (excluding that devoted to rent and light) be spent on books. The Phoenix Society of New York, established in 1833, aimed to "establish circulating libraries in each ward for the use of people of colour on very modest pay—to establish mental feasts."[19]

Sunday school libraries, which generally served communities without regard to class, race, and gender, were another early form of free libraries. For example, in 1817, the New York Female Union Society for the Promotion of Sabbath Schools was instructing 5,500 students, both black and white.[20] Many Sunday schools provided a library where students could borrow religious literature without barriers of race or gender, offering access opportunities similar to today's public libraries. When considered together, these early libraries, while not publicly supported, were furnishing the collections that libraries provide today—materials that are used for information, education, and recreation.

A library established in Franklin, Massachusetts, using funds from Benjamin Franklin to purchase 116 volumes, was opened to all inhabitants of the town in 1790. Though open to the public, it was not supported by public funding.[21] The Peterborough Town Library (Peterborough, New Hampshire) was established in 1833 and is usually identified as the first free publicly owned and maintained library in the United States. The success of this library prompted the New Hampshire State Legislature to become the first state to authorize towns to raise money to establish and maintain their own libraries in 1849.[22]

Boston was the first major city to establish a public library, which opened in 1854. The trustees defined the purpose of the public library as education and, though they had no plans to acquire novels, they were willing to include the popular "respectable" books. In their first report, the trustees wrote, "We consider that a large public library is of the utmost importance as the means of completing our system of public education."[23] The responsibility of libraries to educate their users and to bring them to the "better" books and journals remained a topic of debate in public libraries for many years. Controversies persist in public libraries about the appropriateness of some types of materials such as romance novels, graphic novels, video games, comic books, and materials on controversial subjects.[24] Andrew Carnegie had a powerful influence on libraries between 1883 and 1929, when he gave more than $60 million to build 2,509 library buildings.[25] Of these, 1,689 were built in the United States and 125 in Canada. While most were public libraries, a few were academic. Carnegie paid only to construct the libraries and did not fund maintenance, staff, or collections. His intent was to compel communities to tax themselves and to assume responsibility for the libraries. In some cases, communities declined his offer because they did not want to provide a collection and continuing support. Often those who accepted a library building did not have to develop a collection from scratch. Many towns had some type of small public library housed in less-than-optimal conditions, such as the

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basement of the courthouse, a millinery shop, or an abandoned church, and these materials formed the nucleus of the new Carnegie library's collection.

Acquiring materials to fill the new libraries became a priority. Trustees or committees appointed by trustees selected materials in early public libraries. Some cities sought to be inclusive and representative in board appointments to represent the diversity in urban centers. In 1874 a Chicago public library trustees' meeting erupted "into cacophony" as some board members protested ethnic and religious bias in selecting books, complaining that Jewish authors were excluded and Catholic authors favored. The chair regained order and the board passed a motion that any member could select from a list of possible titles, resulting in a "fair show upon the shelves."[26]

By the end of the 1800s, as librarianship evolved as a profession, John Cotton Dana was advising that book selection in public libraries be left to the librarians, directed by the trustees or a book committee.[27] The rise of library schools and the professionalization of librarianship encouraged public library trustees and boards to transfer selection responsibilities to librarians.

Despite being assigned selection responsibilities, librarians' collection decisions continue to be monitored and questioned by library boards and trustees, parents, the public, and government at all levels. Often this takes the form of challenges to individual titles, but in 1996, the US federal government assumed the responsibility of protecting children who were using libraries by blocking access to harmful materials on the internet. The Communications Decency Act (Title V of the Telecommunications Act of 1996) sought to regulate internet access to both obscene and indecent materials but was ruled unconstitutional by the US Supreme Court for violating the First Amendment. Eventually, the attempt to regulate obscenity was addressed in the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), which became law in December 2000.[28] Public librarians protested against CIPA, which they viewed as infringement on the right to read and a form of censorship. ALA challenged the law as unconstitutional in 2001, but the Supreme Court upheld it in 2003. CIPA requires schools and public libraries to use internet filtering software on computers with internet access to protect against "visual depictions that are obscene, child pornographic, or harmful to minors." If a library receives the federal E-Rate discount only on telecommunication services, compliance with CIPA is not required. But if a library receives the E-Rate discount on even one item classified under internal connections or internet access, the library must comply with CIPA. A library must comply with CIPA if it uses Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant funds to purchase one or more PCs that will access the internet or if it uses these funds to pay an internet service provider.[29]

Local and state appropriations remain the primary funding sources for public libraries. During times when the economy is growing, libraries benefit. After World War II, economic growth resulted in increased tax revenues and thus increased funds for public libraries. Much of this money supported collections growth. Funding for public libraries began to plateau or to decline in the late 1970s. Pressures to contain taxes at all levels of government reduced the flow of funds to libraries as municipalities began to make difficult choices about how to allocate limited resources. Libraries, in turn, faced choices about their priorities and where scarce funds should be directed—to hours of operation, staffing, services, facilities, or collections. Many public libraries closed branches and reduced the purchases of duplicate copies of popular titles. Book vendors began to offer rental collections that provided a rotating collection of popular titles, often with multiple copies, to help libraries manage limited collections budgets. This added the burden of ensuring

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against adding titles to the collection that would compete with books that were more likely to have enduring value.

LSTA was signed into law in 1996 and remains the only federal library grant program, although other legislation may include some funding for libraries. It replaced the Library Services and Construction Act, which allocated funds for library construction and focused on underserved or disadvantaged communities. LSTA made technological infrastructure the first priority while continuing emphasis on the underserved and assigned responsibility to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). LSTA is funded annually by Congress as part of the Labor, Health and Human Services, Educations, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. Funding for LSTA was increased in fiscal year 2023 to $13.5 million, raising the program to $211 million and is a critical funding source for American libraries.[30] LSTA serves all types of libraries, including public, school, academic, and special, and is usually administered by the state libraries under the oversight of IMLS. State libraries or their equivalent award a variety of grants to libraries and museums. The Great Recession that began in late 2007 compounded libraries' fiscal problems. As local and state revenues decreased, public library funding in turn was reduced. Nearly 60 percent of public libraries reported flat or decreased operating budgets in 2010–2011.[31] Public investment in libraries stabilized in 2013 and library funding began to increase in 2014, growing by 3.0 percent.[32] The fiscal year 2020 federal budget included a $10 million increase for IMLS that included $6.2 million for LSTA and was the largest increase in funding to LSTA in twelve years.[33]

The budget crunch hit public libraries just as they began to offer e-books, forcing choices about where to spend limited funds. Despite financial constraints, urban libraries saw a 60 percent growth in e-book collections between 2005 and 2008.[34] E-books, primarily fiction, are now ubiquitous in public libraries. A 2015 *Library Journal* study found that e-books were now a normal part of 94 percent of public libraries and the median number of e-books per library offered exceeded 14,000 titles.[35] Primary Research Group surveyed sixty-two representative public libraries and found spending on e-books continuing to increase: spending in 2015 increased 23.3 percent over that in 2014 and was projected to increase another 15.8 percent in 2016.[36] Most public libraries use an e-book aggregator, such as Bibliotheca Cloud Library, Libby/OverDrive, Axis 360, or Hoopla, and provide access to e-content from multiple publishers through a common interface. The COVID-19 pandemic led to a mass effort to make e-books and other digital resources more widely available to users when libraries were forced to close their doors in 2020. E-books include features that provide access to disabled patrons with screen or audio features. They also serve patrons in rural or remote areas with the necessary technology to access them. The higher cost of licensing e-books, as compared to purchasing print copies, was questioned by the US Congress in 2021. Lawmakers believed that the higher cost of licensing e-books jeopardized libraries' ability to fulfill their mission.[37]

WordsRated, an international research data and analytics group, reported that 30–34 percent of all e-books sold are self-published. Twenty percent of public libraries provided access to self-published e-books in 2015.[38] This number has likely grown since that time, and "92% of librarians regularly make purchases from small-presses and self-published authors."[39] Previously, libraries were hesitant to acquire self-published books due to concerns such as lack of review sources, quality, and hosting. Self-published books carried some of the stigma associated with vanity publishing, in which books are produced at the author's expense, often with no or little quality control. The main reasons libraries offer self-published books are because a patron

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requests a title or the author is local. Burns notes that when a decision is made to include self-published books in the collection, a stringent inclusion policy that aligns with the library's policy for acquiring new materials is needed.[40] Further, establishing legitimacy of self-published books is a consideration. Simmons provides guidance for self-published authors who wish to promote their work to libraries. He advises them to discuss why they think a library's patrons would be interested in their work, their book's genre, where it can be purchased, how it is doing in the retail marketplace, and where it has been reviewed.[41] Additionally, self-published authors must ensure that their book is available from the vendors the library uses.

Public libraries offering e-books must address several troubling factors. ALA has been active in pressuring publishers to be more accommodating to their needs. E-books cost significantly more than print books, sometimes three times as much. For several years, libraries had limited access to front list e-books due to publisher restriction, though all the Big Five (Penguin Random House, HarperCollins, Macmillan, Simon & Schuster, and Hachette) now make their full catalog of e-books available for library lending. The variety of access models can be confusing. Most e-book access is through aggregators, and libraries usually pay for access for a specified period of time but do not own the book. Some publishers limit the number of circulations after which the library must buy access again. In 2011 HarperCollins had a limit of twenty-six circulations, and in 2013 Macmillan titles were available for two years or fifty-two loans (whichever came first).[42] Libraries usually prefer perpetual access and simultaneous access by multiple users, but this is not always possible. Some books are limited to one user at a time and are "checked out" for a specified timeframe and unavailable to other users until that person has finished using the book. There are options where a library can notify a patron of their place on a waiting list to use the book. Some publishers have become more flexible. In 2016 Penguin Random House began offering perpetual licenses with no limits on the number of circulations, although limited to a single user.

In 2019 HarperCollins continued its twenty-six circulations loan policy. Furthermore, in 2019, Macmillan introduced an embargo that limited libraries to purchasing one copy of an e-book in the two months following its release date. Hachette instituted a two-year license with lower prices in 2019, as did Simon and Schuster.[43] However, the COVID-19 pandemic led to changes in vendor practices, and in 2020, Penguin Random House and HarperCollins announced changes to their policies, and Macmillan dropped its embargo.

Contemporary public libraries offer a variety of media, including e-audiobooks and streaming audio and video. The 2020 Public Library Technology Survey, which gathered 1,550 responses, indicated that "the most widely available technology-enabled service or resource is e-books and e-audiobooks," offered by 90 percent of respondents. Additionally, 49.1 percent of all the responding libraries provided streaming and other downloadable media, including video, music, and magazines.[44]

Simultaneously, libraries continue to maintain print collections, but this practice is decreasing over time. Librarians are challenged to provide digital content because of uncertain funding and a constantly changing technology environment as they continue to provide the print materials that some readers prefer and there are resources that might only be available in print. Print resources are not without their own unique problems: their use is limited to one patron at a time, they are fragile, and they can be difficult and costly to replace if lost or damaged. They also occupy large amounts of space. Collections need space to grow. Crowded shelves can lead to damaged spines and make it difficult to browse or take a book off a shelf. Weeding

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initiatives should be undertaken regularly to make room for newer books. However, more contemporary weeding projects are often undertaken to make room to repurpose library space. The weeded items are often relocated within the library, moved to offsite storage, or discarded.

For the most part, standards and guidelines for public libraries are issued at the state level in the United States and at the provincial and territorial level in Canada. Examples include In Service to Iowa: Public Library Standards, Colorado Public Library Standards, and Ontario Public Library Guidelines for Municipal and Country Public Libraries.[45] IFLA issued IFLA Public Library Service Guidelines, 2nd ed., in 2010. The Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) has developed the YALSA Teen Services Evaluation Tool, which defines essential elements in providing public library services to teens.[46] Though not a standard per se, each element in this tool is accompanied by characteristics that define it as distinguished, proficient, basic, or below basic. For example, the essential element "collection of materials in a variety of formats, reading levels, and languages" in a distinguished collection is characterized this way:

> Young adult collection represents a wide variety of formats including print and digital. The entire collection is continually evaluated & weeded. Collection reflects languages other than English that reflect the library community YA staff is familiar with all types of materials that teens consume in all types of formats.[47]

A 2014 Aspen Institute report identified the greatest challenge facing public libraries as the need to transform their service model to meet the demands of a knowledge society while securing sustainable funding. While the challenges are formidable, the report observes:

> This is a time of great opportunity for communities, institutions, and individuals who are willing to champion new thinking and nurture new relationships. It is a time of particular opportunity for public libraries with their unique stature as trusted community hubs and repositories of knowledge and information.[48]

Jones notes that the authors of the Aspen report did not imagine a major disrupter like COVID but did foresee rapid change and a digital divide that continued to widen. Her paper "Optimizing Public Library Resources in a Post COVID-19 World" questions how libraries can leverage their greatest assets—people, place, and platform—to continue to be a vital resource to their communities going forward.[49] Public libraries drew on their technological expertise to provide virtual programming and had already offered remote access to e-books, streaming video and music, and databases as services. The experience of lockdown has provided an opportunity to rethink how service is provided, and how funds are allocated for different materials. It may no longer be feasible to provide access to print magazines and newspapers, for example. Both types of resources are labor intensive, occupy large amounts of space, and subscriptions are costly. This does not imply that their digital counterparts are not labor intensive or are better products. The COVID-19 pandemic will likely have driven many future purchasing decisions.

In a 2019 editorial, Smith stated that the top ten challenges facing public libraries were a growing mistrust of government; the erosion of faith in objective information; the decline in civility and civic engagement; the disappearing middle class; tax revolt and the tyranny of ROI; the decrease in attention span; the decline in reading;

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PEGGY JOHNSON is a frequent speaker and trainer on collection development and management. She has published several books, including *Developing and Managing Electronic Collections: The Essentials*, and numerous journal articles. She edited the peer-reviewed journal *Library Resources & Technical Services* for more than nine years and continues to edit *Technicalities: Information Forum for the Technical Services Professional*. Prior to retiring from the University of Minnesota Libraries, she served as associate university librarian. During more than thirty years at the University of Minnesota, her responsibilities focused on collection development and management, technical services, institutional planning, grants management, and budgeting. A past president of ALCTS, she received the ALCTS Ross Atkinson Lifetime Achievement Award in 2009. Johnson has consulted on library development in Uganda, Rwanda, Senegal, Morocco, and China.

MARY BETH WEBER has worked in library technical services in academic libraries for over thirty years. She has held various technical services positions, and is an expert on cataloging nonprint materials, acquisitions workflows, and non-MARC metadata for digital collections. She also has extensive managerial experience. Weber has authored numerous books, including *Virtual Technical Services: A Manual* and *Rethinking Library Technical Services: Redefining Our Profession for the Future*. She has given presentations on cataloging, mentoring, and publishing for various organizations. She chaired Rutgers University Libraries' faculty mentoring program committee for two years and participated in ALCTS's inaugural mentoring program. Weber is an active member of Core: Leadership, Infrastructure, Futures, a division of ALA. She served as editor-in-chief of *Library Resources & Technical Services* (LRTS) for nine years and helped transition the journal from ALCTS to Core. Weber was awarded the ALCTS Presidential Citation in 2011 for her service as the *ALCTS Newsletter* editor. She received the ALCTS Honors award in 2015 for her contributions as LRTS editor. Weber is currently the head of central technical services at Rutgers University Libraries and oversees resource description (MARC and non-MARC) for all four of Rutgers' campuses.

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