**Reading Log:**

**Part II**

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LIBR-266: Collection Management

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**Table of Contents**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
| **Synthesis** | **2** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Chapter 6: Review Sources** | **6** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Chapter 7: Acquisition Procedures** | **15** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Chapter 8: Budget** | **18** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Chapter 9: Evaluation and Weeding** | **21** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Chapter 10: Merchandising and Promoting the Collection** | **23** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Chapter 11: Reconsideration Policy and Procedures** | **28** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **References** | **31** |

Synthesis

Though the course of this semester I have read a variety of articles and chapters that provided guidelines, trends, case studies, and best practices in the field of collection management. For this course, my group and I chose to focus on the children’s and young adult departments in a public library setting for our collection development policy manual. Because all three members of my group currently work at public libraries, we drew on our individual experiences at these institutions, in addition to the policy manuals and other documents used to guide collection development by them. Using a variety of materials from books, academic journals, and other resources I read a total of 52 sources of information, which covered 358 total pages of text. Though some of the readings that I completed for this reading log assignment are from the course’s web and print resources bibliography, I was able to successfully locate new resources to match my interests. Because of the focus of my group’s policy manual and my professional goal to enter a career in youth librarianship after graduation, I chose whenever possible resources that would enhance my knowledge about this particular area of collection development.

Collection development necessarily begins with the physical building in which these collections will be housed. Today more than ever, libraries must compete with a variety of similar services and offerings. As such libraries need to cater to the needs of library users, in order to entice them to actively use the library’s collections. One way that libraries can do this is by creating special shelf arrangements for children’s materials to match their needs, instead of relying on traditional cataloging schemes, which deter use. Libraries such as the West Baton Rouge Parish Library that have used this technique have found that access to collections is increased. Another technique for the physical spaces of libraries is to create aesthetically interesting designs to cater to the needs of children and young adults. Lastly, technology isn’t just changing the roles of libraries, but it also has an effect on their physical spaces. The future of librarian design must incorporate more learning spaces to accommodate collaborative technology that are become more commonplace. In order to do so the library must create more learning environments in new facilities to meet the current needs of library users. As time continues to pass and technology continues to become more collaborative demanding, library users will expect community institutions such as libraries to support these needs in their physical spaces.

Collection development plans are imperative for all libraries today. They are important because they can help to guide daily operations, in addition to outlining the steps of various procedures of the library. These collection development plans have also been transforming and evolving in order to meet trends in libraries. For example, there is a trend in academic libraries towards shared print repositories, which is itself reshaping the very meaning of collection. Because of the importance that cooperation plays in the sharing of collections between institutions, collection management plans are more crucial than ever to clearly define the roles of local libraries in relationship to these types of collective collections. The changing landscape of libraries and the types of materials they provide access to in their collections, also necessitate well thought out collection development policies. Today, library collections are increasingly becoming hybrid libraries of both print and digital materials. Because libraries received public funding, they must be accountable for how they spend their money. No longer can collection management plans and policies be an afterthought for libraries, they must rise to meet the new roles of libraries in today’s world.

What is necessary for the development of a solid collection development plan is for the policies and procedures outlined within them to be rooted in the needs and interests of the community service. But how do libraries determine what these needs and interest are? The answer is a variety of community assessment methods. There are a variety of techniques outlined in the professional literature, for all types of libraries and for all types of library users. Often, these assessment methods are difficult to use with young children, because they aren’t capable of filling out surveys or articulating their needs. Instead, there are a variety of techniques that can be used to uncover the needs of children and young adults. These include observation, suggestion boxes, youth advisory boards, and collaboration with teachers and agencies. Additionally, there are a variety of tried and true techniques such as surveys and focus groups, which can be used to collect data. New techniques of gathering and analyzing the needs of a community for libraries are also being influenced by technology. For example, there are many internet-based data and tools that libraries can use to understand the library’s community served better.

There are a variety of traditional and nontraditional materials that now make up the collections of public libraries. Technology has changed the face of what is considered part of a library collection. These now include digital materials like e-books, e-audiobooks, and other digitally access materials like music, streaming film, databases, journal articles, and even websites. An understanding of these different types of materials is needed in order to effectively select, manage, and evaluate them. Though technology has changed today’s library landscape, it is important to realize that collection development, vendor relationships, ethics, and stewardship of collections continue to be important. What will continue to be required of the selection procedures of libraries today is to collect a variety of materials to meet the needs and interests of users.

In order to aid the selection of materials, there are a variety of review sources that librarians can utilize to guide their decisions. What is important to realize in using these review sources, is to recognize that they are tools in collection building, and that librarians must also draw upon their professional expertise and the knowledge of their communities in order to make the most appropriate decisions. Just as technology has altered the face of so many aspects of collection management, review sources are no different. In today’s world, prevalent Web 2.0 technologies allow every reader to be a reviewer. This shift has definitely altered the review landscape over the past 15 years. Reviews don’t hold as much power, and readers of these reviews also seem to be less interested in what they have to say. The traditional major print sources have either been shut down completely or dramatically reduced in size. As of now, personal review blogs, reviews on social media websites, and reviews on consumer websites haven’t officially been made a part of selection because there is still a focus on authority, but this may shift in the future.

The theme of the synthesis, technology, rears its head again in the collection development aspect of acquisitions. Though acquisitions has changed more than any other technical function of library operations, the overall duties that they perform has remained constant. The main purpose of acquisitions is to order and receive the materials that are selected for inclusion in the collection, but what has changed is how these tasks have been affected by computers and the Internet. For example, in addition to obtaining physical materials for the library collection, acquisitions is also responsible for securing access to electronic resources. Despite these technological updates to some of the procedures of acquisitions, its goals remain constant: acquiring materials as quickly as possible, maintaining a high level of accuracy, keeping work processes simple to achieve the lowest cost, and developing relationships with vendors and other library units.

Funding for public libraries within the past decade has been far from secure. In 2008 the national economic downturn has a devastating effect on public libraries across the country. We discovered at this time that libraries became more heavily used than ever, yet these institutions struggled to keep their doors open to continue to serve their communities. What was often required were drastic cuts to a variety of aspects of the budget, including for services, materials, and outreach. Though it has been over 5 years since this economic downturn, many public libraries continue to struggle today. It is important for libraries to demonstrate their importance to their communities and to garner support, so that the next time another crisis is faced, libraries won’t be first on the chopping block. One idea is for libraries to get creative about fundraising and increasing revenue. Instead of selling all books at cheap fixed prices at library book sales, libraries can harness the power of the Internet to sell old and valuable books. There are a variety of tools available online which can help library’s determine the market price of these old books. Additionally, libraries can sell these items online in order to reach a much larger audience. Lastly, just as libraries have plans in place for natural disasters, they must also create a variety of plans for economic worst-case scenarios. The economic downtown from over 5 years ago may already seem like a distant memory to some, but these stories clearly make it clear that we always have to be prepared for the worst.

Weeding and evaluation of library collections is a task necessary to all types of libraries. It is the nature of library collections to grow and expand, and if left alone will quickly become unruly and irrelevant if not maintained. It is important for libraries to keep in mind that library users and their needs change over time. As such, library collections must also change along with these needs in order to continue to meet them. Selecting is one way to do this, and weeding is another. Weeding can be thought of as selectin in revere, as the same level of care that is applied to the selecting of library materials must be applied to those that will be removed from the collection. Weeding is a process that requires planning and direction before approaching, and must be completed on a continual basis to ensure that the materials that the library provides to its community fit into the scope of their needs and interests.

Though materials may have a tendency to sit on shelves because they don’t meet the needs of users, it is also possible that they may need a bit of highlighting to encourage their circulation. There are a variety of marketing and promotion techniques that libraries can use to highlight their collections. Some of these techniques have been used by libraries for a long time, these include booktalking, reading suggestion lists, press releases, newsletters, and programming. Other techniques have been borrowed from retail such as effective book displays and bright lighting. And of course there are new techniques that have sprung from the prevalence of technology in our lives. These include reaching out to the community to promote collections through social media, the library website, blogs, and e-mailed newsletters. Each library needs to determine the right marketing mix needed to effective promote its collections to potential users.

Lastly, libraries must actively defend their selection decisions by combating material challenges and removing censorship. Though the goal of material challenge is to censor materials that challengers feel are inappropriate for a variety of reasons, this isn’t the only way that censorship can occur in a library. Often librarians are guilty of self-censorship because of their personal bias or in an attempt to avoid potential challenges. Examples of self-censorship by librarians include: placing books in locked cabinets, moving a book meant for children into the adult department, requiring permission to check out materials, or not buying a particular material. The danger of self-censorship is that users are denied the freedom to read and ultimately the ability to develop critical thinking skills. Technology has also changed the landscape of material challenges. Individuals who bring forward these challenge have the opportunity to reach more people through e-mail, attract the media, and to conduct research and gain supporters on the Internet. For these reasons, it is important for libraries to have strong collection development plans and policies that are rooted in the needs and interested of the community served. Additionally, every library must have in place a set procedure on how to handle such challenges. Every library needs to be aware of how today’s unique world may affect the handling of a challenge at their own institution.

As can be seen from this synthesis of the variety of resources that I have read about during the course of this semester, much of what lies at the foundation of collection development and management has remained the same. Strong policies and procedures rooted in the needs and interests of the community served by the library remain paramount in importance. What has changed is the way that technology has impacted not just the way that some of these procedures are done, but also the very landscape of what is considered a collection. I predict that this influence of technology is not going to stop anytime soon, in fact, I believe we will continue to see changes in collection management due to it. I believe that if we continue to remain true to the foundational aspects of this part of librarianship, then we can easily adapt to each new change that technology brings.

\*Article citations that include a ♦ indicate readings that have been located personally, and do not appear on the bibliography of print and web resources provided.

Chapter 6: Review Sources

Agee, J. (2003). Selecting materials: a review of print and online resources. *Collection Building, 22*(3), 137-140. Retrieved from <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/loi/cb>

(4 pages of content) ♦

This article written by Jim Agee, a member of the Library Acquisitions and Adjunct Faculty at Central Missouri State University, provides a reviews of a variety of selection tools that can be used by librarians to aid them in library collection building. Agee (2003) argues that the selection of materials is the “heart of library acquisitions, and the best way to build a quality collection” (p. 137), and that busy librarians in charge of this task should acquaint themselves with the tools of the trade to aid it. The articles presents a variety of print and online accessible tools in the categories of catalogues, core collection tools, free digital format literature, and online review sources. Publisher catalogues are noted to be promotional and nature and often lacking in objective reviews, but can be helpful because they list newly published titles first. Vendor catalogues are helpful as they showcase new and popular items, which is important to many public libraries. Core collection tools are publication lists that include “standard core collection titles, which are important to the discipline and are usually available for large libraries” (Agee, 2003, p. 138). The value of these tools are they can provide a benchmark for starting a new collection, in addition to evaluating and maintaining current collections. Digital format literature include e-books and other downloadable literature available for free from the Internet. Though there is not much demand for these titles, they are free and easy accessible to users. Online review sources include both professional and personal sources. The author outlines some common sense criteria that can be used by librarians in order to evaluation the selection tools discussed. These include questions such as: How often is the selection tool published? What is the cost of the tool in relation to its expected use? Does the tool include various formats? Are reviewing policies included? Is it arranged for easy use? Who writes the reviews? What Information is included in the reviews? The evaluating questions for selection materials help to insure that “you are reading good quality objective reviews” (Agee, 2003, p. 140).

This article serves as an excellent introduction into a variety of selection tools that can be used by librarians to aid their collection development duties. This information is especially helpful for students in library school who do not have first-hand knowledge of selection, or new librarians to the field who may lack experience with collection development tasks. Agee clearly outlines a variety of selection tools such as catalogues, core collection tools, and online review sources that are all valuable tools used in collection development. Though this article seems to be geared towards academic libraries because of its inclusion of the review journal *Choices*, the rest of the article is general enough in nature that it can aid librarians in a variety of library settings including public, academic, and school. The most valuable part of this article is Agee’s inclusion of evaluative questions that librarians can use when trying to decide either what selection tools to use or when determining the value of a particular selection tool. These questions can easily be applied to all types of selection tools besides the ones mentioned in this article, and can help librarians determine just how useful and valuable a particular tool will be to them. As Agee (2003) notes, “if reviewers do not take a critical view of the material, the resultant review is little better than a sale catalogue blurb” (p. 140). Overall, this article is highly recommended for reading for a variety of librarians to help them chose the best selection tools to aid their collection management duties.

Bromann, J. (2001). Too many journals, too little time. *School Library Journal, 47*(9), 46-47. Retrieved from <http://www.slj.com/>

(2 pages of content)

This article written by Jennifer Bromann, the author of *Booktalking That Works*, provides many tips to librarians who are busy handling a number of responsibilities in how to make use of reviews when time is limited. Bromann notes that it is important to not just read the content of reviews written in journals but to do so with a critical eye. She notes that though all reviewers strive to be objective, sometimes biases come through in reviews, and that librarians must be careful to not let good books slip through the cracks. The author argues that librarians should learn to read reviews so that “you can weigh if the negative comments that have been pointed out really are serious enough to decide against the purchase of a title that students might find useful or enjoyable” (Bromann, 2001, p. 46). She also notes that reviews shouldn’t be the “final word” in determining a books value for addition to a collection, but rather should serve more as a guide to selection. She provides 10 different tips for librarians who simply don’t have the time to read every single review. Some of these tips include: 1. Glance over all the titles and authors of books. The author notes that catchy titles have the power to draw readers, no matter how the content. 2. Look at starred or highly rated reviews in a journal. These books should be considered for purchase if they are of use and interest to your library users. 5. Skim. Quickly browse the beginning or end of reviews because these is where praise or criticism is usually placed by reviewed. Check for age level and number of pages also included in reviews to determine appropriateness for the collection. 7. Don’t be swayed by every negative comment. Negative comments don’t necessarily indicate the book is useless. 8. Don’t be swayed by every positive comment. Reviews tend to be positive in nature as they don’t seem to want to offend. The author also notes that it is okay to purchase books when using recommendations from the following places: publishers’ catalogs, peer discussion groups, booksellers’ catalog, websites for or about children and teens, online reviews from retail sites, best booklists, and magazines reviews.

These tips have been written for use by school librarians to help in critically reading a great number of reviews, but many of these suggestions are broad enough in nature that they can easily be adaptable in other library environments. What was the most important aspect of this article was the acknowledgement that for librarians, there is never enough time to read and review every single material selected for inclusion in a collection. This is a very honest and real look at a challenge that is faced by all librarians who seem to be taking on more and more responsibilities, but without any extra time given. Some of the suggestions given by Bromann in this article may be controversial to librarians, such as purchasing an item without reading the review, but this is probably something that real-world librarians often must do. Bromann provides a great list of hints, tips, and tricks to honing in on the important details given in a review when time is limited, while at the same time also stressing that understanding your user base is crucial in determining what items to choose. Bromann’s reminder at the beginning of this article that reviews should be treated as guide to selections, rather than the ultimate deciding factor for what to add and what not to add. Librarians need to keep this in mind, and also rely on their professional expertise, knowledge of library users and the community, and the library’s selection policy in addition to the tool of reviews to make the best selection decisions.

Credaro, A. (2004). Walking through the valley of the shadow of happy talk: Book reviews and collection development. *Library Media Connection, 23*(3), 51. Retrieved from <http://www.librarymediaconnection.com/lmc/>

(1 page of content)

In this article Amanda Credaro, author of *Guide to Warrior Librarianship: Humor for Librarians Who Refuse to Be Classified* and editor of *Librarian Weekly*, poses a question to readers to ponder what extent can librarians rely on assessment and reviewing tools for the purposes of collection development. She notes that because a book may contain elements of quality, these do not guarantee the popularity of the work. She also makes the point that if the library only stocked classic works and not popular, current items, libraries would quickly lose their usefulness to many users. Credaro asks readers to consider how honest are reviews published in review journals. She points out that in a search through one years’ worth of reviews from four different review journals, there were no negative reviews to be found, and this calls into question the usefulness of said reviews. She also notes that review journals also don’t allow for “self-reviewed” items, and claims this is another bias of these journals. She asks, “who best to describe such a unique offering than the author?” (Credaro, 2004, p. 51).

This article presents an interesting question to librarians who use review journals and the reviews presented in them as guides to selection of materials. In the beginning of the article, Credaro’s discussion of the quality versus popularity of materials of is one that has been brought up and pondered by many librarians several times before. This doesn’t necessarily make it any less valid of a discussion to have, but Credaro doesn’t seem to be presenting any new insight to the topic. Credaro’s next questions the very validity of reviews and reviewers themselves. She asks readers to consider how honest reviews actually are and mentions as evidence the lack of negative reviews found in her examination of a few different journals. Again, Credaro’s questions are good ones, but yet she only seems to delve into these very superficially. It would be more effective to bring up these questions perhaps in the context of a published research articles, in which the methodology of her examination of different journals and their inclusion of positive and negative reviews can be clearly outlined. Additionally, the findings of this type of research would be more effective at illustrating the author’s point, and would lend it credibility that this anecdotal evidence just cannot provide. Lastly the author points to the fact that review journals don’t allow for the authors to review their own works in review materials. It seems quite strange that the author, though seemingly arguing for more critical reviews, can’t seem to understand the bias that self-reviewing of works might present to readers of these reviews. While the article started off quite interestingly, the example the author brings up about her own review of her own book seems to make clear the intention of the article. Overall, while several good questions have been posed in this article, overall the purpose of it doesn’t seem to provide any novel insight to librarians about using reviews for more effective collection development and rather seems to serve the purpose as a place for the author to air her personal complaints. As such, this article isn’t recommended for those looking for a way to improve selection using reviews as a tool.

Hoffert, B. (2010). Every reader a reviewer. *Library Journal, 135*(14), 22-5. Retrieved from <http://lj.libraryjournal.com/>

(4 pages of content) ♦

This article written by Barbara Hoffert, editor of *Prepub*, discusses the changing landscape of material reviews and how librarians can utilize this change in order to aid with selection of materials and collection management tasks. Hoffert notes that in the last 15 years the review landscape has changed as it is no longer centralized. Reviews don’t hold as much power, and readers of these reviews also seem to be less interested in what they have to say. The traditional major print sources have either been shut down completely or dramatically reduced in size. What has arisen in this same time is book talk on the web on sites like LibraryThing and Goodreads, on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, and on retail sites that allow reviews like Amazon.com. Big review sources still focus on high-power publication, but the addition of reviews created by individuals has led to more obscure works being reviewed and discussed, which reflect the diversity of tastes present today. Hoffert (2010) argues that in this new review environment, the concept of authority is being called into question, but she believes that traditional reviews and the new concept of reviews can “coexist comfortably because they fill different needs” (p. 23) She (Hoffert, 2010) also points out that we won’t know if the new style of reviewing currently increasing will one day take over traditional review sources but “today’s raging stream of voices has radically altered the idea of reviewing, with huge consequences for book culture itself” (p.23). In terms of collection development, Hoffert notes that personal review blogs and consumer reviews haven’t officially been made a part of selection, but that they can be useful for niche topics. Hoffert (2003) notes that authority is still an important question that plays a part for all reviews, readers and professional still face the problem of “figuring out who to trust” (p. 24). Hoffert closes by arguing that reviews of all types will continue to ensure because different readers will use them for different purposes, and that readers today have many more options that ever before.

Though this article was written four years ago, the topic is still extremely relevant today, if not more relevant than when it was published. The expansion of Web 2.0 technologies has allowed for users all over the world to create content and publish it only themselves. As Hoffert points out in this article, there are endless opportunities for people passionate about a diverse variety of subjects, genres, topics, and formats to express their opinions about different materials. In the article Hoffert notes that those these types of reviews as increasing in numbers, they still don’t factor into collection development practices used by professional librarians. I’m not sure how true this statement holds today, especially as many professionals and experts in their fields utilize these technologies as much as a lay reviewers. This article is effective in introducing this area to librarians today who may not be aware of it, but I think it would have been even more useful if it discussed some of the ways that librarians could use these new form of reviews for selection. Overall, I would recommend this article to librarians, especially those in public and school libraries who would benefit from understanding the different pros and cons of this discussion,

Jonker, T. (2013). Social media’s best-kept secret. *School Library Journal, 59*(1), 32-34. Retrieved from <http://www.slj.com/>

(2 pages of content) ♦

In this article Travis Jonker, a school librarian and blogger for *School Library Journal*, introduces the website Goodreads and discusses some of the key aspects of it that can be of use to librarians. Jonker begins the article by noting that users of Goodreads only have to be 13 years or older in order to sign up and use the site. He notes that because of this, the site is a great way for librarians to recommend books to young adults, and to keep in touch with them outside of the school year. Jonker provides a basic overview of Goodreads, what the site does, how many people use the service, and how users can rate and review books. As a school librarian there are specific aspects of Goodreads that Jonker finds especially useful and exciting. These include creating virtual bookshelves of physical collections, sharing books in custom user-defined shelves, connecting users through groups, and finding basic information about books. In the relationship to collection development, Jonker specially discusses the ability for Goodreads users to rate and review books through the website. He makes note of the authority of traditional sources, and the perceived lack of this authority by users on Goodreads. Despite this he points to a Harvard Business School study that found that in general, reviews by users on Amazon.com (a commercial site that allows for user created reviews) are actually quite similar to a professional critic’s opinions. Jonker notes that this topic is still controversial in nature, but that it is something for readers to ponder. Lastly, Jonker highlights another positive aspect of Goodreads- the ability for users to connect directly to authors. This allows fans to interact with authors in way not possible before.

This article serves as not only a good introduction to the layout and capabilities of Goodreads, it also provides several helpful suggestions for those working with young adult in libraries. Though the article is written by a school librarian and appears in *School Library Journal,* the suggestions outlined throughout the work can be easily used by public librarians who also work with youth. In addition to the overview of Goodreads, and the ways that the author uses the website himself, he also introduces at the end of the article the concept of Goodreads user reviews for professional purposes. In the article, the author notes the controversial nature of stating that these reviews as on par with those created by professional reviewers, but he doesn’t completely discount their potential usefulness. The article could have further strengthened if Jonker provided some suggestions about how librarians could utilize this reviews for collection development purposes. Overall, this article serves as a good primer for those unfamiliar with the social media book site, especially because the info within it is up-to-date as it was published relatively recently.

Koelling, H. (2007). Making the list: Behind the scenes of the best books for young adults committee: A retrospective. *Young Adult Library Services, 6*(1), 28-31. Retrieved from <http://www.yalsa.ala.org/yals/>

(4 pages of content)

In this article Holly Koelling, Outreach Services Manager for the King County Library System and chair of the YALSA Best Books for Young Adults (BBYA) committee, discusses the ins and outs of the process of creating this recommended book list and some of the many benefits it brings to both professionals and teens. At the beginning of the article Koelling notes that the biggest challenge for those on the BBYA committee, is the large amount of material they are required to read and review. Despite this Koelling notes that the list that are created by the committee are highly regarded, appreciated, and used by library professionals. Koelling divides the benefits of the BBYA into four different categories: professional standards, recognition, & development; teen connections; readers’ advisory and collection development; and industry and author connections. Koelling (2007) notes that the BBYA lists are “exceptional readers’ advisory and collection development tools for professionals who work with and build collections for teens” (p. 30). The lists serve as guides that can be used to recommend books to teens by library professionals. They also are helpful for building strong and attractive collections for teen library users. They are useful because they collect a number of quality materials which is much smaller than the total number of published items that are released each year. Additionally, books on this list are also highly regarded, which lends them credibility. As such, this is useful to librarians who are faced with challenge because they can say the book was selected for the BBYA list. Koelling closes the article by noting the importance of the work of the committee involved in creating the BBYA list every year in showcasing the outstanding and appealing books for teens created in that it serves to ensure there will be more books created in the future.

This article provides a comprehensive view into the world of a popular source, the Best Books for Young Adults list, from how it is created to the many benefits the lists creates. This is a wonderful introduction to anyone who is concerned with young adult librarianship, because it provides insight into the greater picture of what goes into the creation of the list any why it is so helpful to library professionals. Koelling discusses a variety of benefits, and supports them with the real words as evidence of those who have served on the BBYA committee. Most interesting and relevant to this course is the section about the BBYA list as a resource for both readers’ advisory and collection development. The guide is a great way not only to connect teens to books, but for librarians to use the list to help them do so. One way that library professionals can do this is through readers’ advisory- directly recommending the books on the list directly to teens. The second way is to include this books in the library’s collection. As such, the list serves as a collection development selection tool and review source because the books have been carefully selected and reviewed by a group of professionals in the field. This article really gives great insight to the usefulness of the BBYA list for collection development and to young adult librarianship.

Macleod, B. (1981). Library Journal and Choice: a review of reviews. *Journal of Academic Librarianship, 7*(1), 23-28. Retrieved from <http://www.journals.elsevier.com/the-journal-of-academic-librarianship/>

(6 pages of content)

In this study by Beth Macleod, a reference librarian at Central Michigan University Library, the review process of two prominent review publications are discussed and reviews from both were analyzed using computer analysis. The two review journals that are discussed in this study are *Library Journal* and *Choices*. Macleod notes that both of these journals publish reviews that librarians rely upon heavily when choosing books for purchase. She (Macleod, 1981) notes that the “two journals have a decided impact on both the sales of the books reviewed and the availability of these books to library users and the public” (p. 23). Books chosen for review by *Library Journal* first are decided upon by four subject editors. They help to pare down the 25,000 to 30,000 books that the publication receives each year, to a manageable 6,000 that will be reviewed by reviewers. *Choices* review books mainly selected for undergraduate libraries. The journal receives 18,000 to 20,000 books per year, and books for review are decided on by either the main or subject editor. This study by Macleod sought to systematically evaluate the content of the reviews in both of these publications, using computer analysis. Criteria was formulated to encompass what might be found in an ideal review. 1,300 reviews from each publication were evaluated. The study found that there was little difference between the content of reviews in each journal. Macleod notes that both publications include a number of positive reviews with little negative recommendations included. As such she (Macleod, 1981) concludes that “this high percentage of recommended books suggest an important conclusion about the function of reviews. For most books, simply getting reviewed is the main hurdle” (p. 27). The main purpose of the reviews in this publications then isn’t so much recommending the books be purchased, but rather for recommending what type of library should buy them. Lastly, the study found that reviewer anonymity did not appear to create more critical reviews, as there was little difference in critical commentary in signed *Library Journal* reviews and unsigned *Choice* reviews.

This study provides a critical look at the purpose of reviews in review publications through examining their content closely with computer analysis. It was interesting to learn that the main purpose of the book wasn’t to just review books, as overwhelmingly all reviews were positive in nature and didn’t contain critical content. More than anything, this finding seems to call into question the very nature of which library professional use these as selection tools. Some of the other articles discussed in this section have provided tips for librarians who don’t have enough time to read reviews in these publications. This study seems to suggest that many librarians don’t actually need to read the majority of the reviews, because the fact that the book has even been selected for review is a purchase recommendation in itself. Though this study was conducted over three decades ago, the findings are still very useful to librarians today because reviews as still used as importance selection tools. It would be interesting to see this same study conducted today to determine if the results would be the same or not. Overall, the study provides a very interesting look at reviews from *Library Journal* and *Choices*, and the findings definitely have implications for all library professionals.

Sutton, R. (2006). Stars. *Horn Book Magazine, 82*(5), 557-561. Retrieved from <http://www.hbook.com/horn-book-magazine-2/>

(5 pages of content) ♦

This article written by Roger Sutton, the editor in chief of the *Horn Book Magazine*, discusses the implications and purposes of starred reviews in this publication. Sutton (2006) begins the article with an acknowledgement that the starred reviews in this publication are the “most valuable product” (p. 557). He notes they have the ability to sell books, are able to alert the potential book purchase that a particular book is noteworthy. Sutton (2006) early on in the article poses the question, “do stars actually mean what people take them to?” (p. 557). He then goes on to discuss this question throughout the article. He begins by pointing out that each reviewer who recommends a book for starring may believe a star to mean something different. He also notes that a star review isn’t just a decision made by one person, but by both the reviewer and the editor of the publication. Sutton posed the question to library professionals on the Public Libraries, Young Adults, and Children (PUBYAC) listserv. Many librarians pointed out in their replies that they used the stars as aids for selection, but that they don’t cede their professional knowledge in doing so. Sutton notes that with more books being published, and less time for library professionals to review books, starred reviews are not going to be eliminated anytime soon. He notes that they should only do what they do- “shed light” (Sutton, 2006, p. 561).

This article is extremely interesting because it provides insight directly from a publication that produces reviews on materials about the importance of certain aspects of the reviews. The article presented specifically discusses starred reviews that are included in the *Horn Book Magazine*. It seems perhaps problematic that the publication has one intention for this starred reviews, while library professionals use them in other ways. Sutton notes that these starred reviews should be only used to shed light on outstanding materials, but at the same times acknowledges that librarians often use these reviews to select materials for their collections. Perhaps Sutton is living in a different world than librarians, which accounts for the idealistic discrepancy. As noted in many articles in this section, these review publications have so much power because librarians uses these to purchase materials. This exchange of money necessarily has large implications, and Sutton while acknowledging this briefly seems to be ignoring the power of the starred reviews of his magazine. The purposes and use of starred reviews is complicated, as they should be. Librarians shouldn’t be using reviews as an end all selection tool, and the befuddled purposes of a starred review by the very publication which creates this illustrates this point perfectly. Review sources are a great resource that can help librarians get a better idea of materials they don’t have the time to review as part of their determination of what should and shouldn’t be added to their collections. This article is highly recommended to all librarians because it does a great job at pointed out the necessarily flawed and imperfectness of reviews, which is something that should constantly be kept in mind during collection development tasks.

Vaughn, M. (2010). Authority, collection development, and Amazon.com. *Knowledge Quest*, *38*(2), 46-47. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/aasl/kq>

(2 pages of content) ♦

This article by Martha Vaughn, a school librarian from Tennessee, discusses the use of reviews written by real users of materials on commercial websites such as Amazon.com. Vaughan recounts her personal experience with using reviews from both professional review sources in addition to nonprofessional review sources like Amazon.com. She notes that readers of these reviews need to be critical about them, because they aren’t always going to determine if a book will or won’t appeal to a reader. Vaughn turns to Amazon.com when she is interested in what actual readers of materials think about materials that are being considered for addition to the collection. She makes sure to look at reviews that have 5 stars and reviews that have 1 star to provide a balanced view. Vaughn believes that one of the most beneficial aspects of Amazon.com reviews are their perspectives on edgy books. She notes that many school media specialists worry about purchasing these books, and that reading reviews on these websites can provide better insight to character development, plot, and story resolution. She also notes that often professional reviews don’t mention aspects of books such as vulgar language or graphic situations, but these are usually mentioned in Amazon.com reviews. Vaughn states that she uses these Amazon.com reviews to “balance” the professional reviews in making her final decision about materials for her students. She has found that the evidence of her selection tactics working are that books rarely stay on the shelves.

This article is incredibly useful to librarians of all types who use professional reviews as a selection tool for collection development tasks. There have been several recently published articles that I have reviewed for this chapter that have mentioned the value of Web 2.0 technologies and reviews, but thus far this the only article that has specifically mentioned using these types of reviews for collection development tasks. What is important to note about this article is that Vaughn is not advocating for these as only selection tool to be used by librarians, rather she suggests using these more in a supplementary manner to professional reviews. This article is valuable because it provides real suggestions and techniques that can be replicated by librarians in their selection tasks. As has been clear from all of the readings in this section, librarians cannot only rely on these review sources as the only determining factor of whether or not to add materials to the collection. Instead review sources such be one of the many selection tools that librarians can use in conjunction with their professional expertise and knowledge of their unique communities in order to make the best possible selections about materials. There is no scientific formula or exact science to selection of materials for any collection, but when librarians use a variety of tools they can ensure they are making decisions based on a plethora of useful information.

Chapter 7: Acquisition Procedures

Evans, G. E., Intner, S.S., & Weihs, J. (2011). Chapter 5: Acquisitions – overview. In *Introduction to technical services* (8th ed.) (pp. 81-104). Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited.

(22 pages of content) ♦

In this chapter of *Introduction to Technical Services* authors G. Edward Evans, Sheila S. Intner, and Jean Weihs provide a comprehensive overview about the current state of acquisitions duties, responsibilities, and goals in relationship to collection development. The authors begin the chapter by noting that acquisitions works has changed the most than any other technical function since this book was first published, but also point out that overall the duties of acquisitions have remained constant. They (Evans, Intner, & Weihs, 2011) state that the contribution of a public library acquisitions “consists primarily of handling the business of ordering and receiving the materials selected for inclusion in the collection” (p. 81). What has changed is how these tasks have been affected by computers and the Internet. In addition to handling materials, acquisitions departments are also responsible for securing access to electronic resources, and handling the financial aspects associated with the library being able to legally make information available to users. The authors stress that though acquisitions departments and collection development work very closely together, a common misconception is that the former is in charge of determining what materials are in the collection. Rather it is the responsibility of collection development to make these decisions. The internal goals of acquisitions as outlined by the authors include: acquiring materials as quickly as possible, maintaining a high level of accuracy, keeping work processes simple to achieve the lowest cost, and developing relationships with vendors and other library units. As the authors note speed, accuracy, and thrift are incredibly important goals of this unit of library operations. The authors discuss in detail the general procedures of the acquisitions department. The first step is request processing, or organizing the incoming requests for materials. The second step is verifying, which consists of two important steps- verifying the existence of an item and determining if the library needs to order it. The third step is ordering, which is mostly handled electronically today. The fourth step is reporting, in which it is the concern of acquisitions to keep track of the window of time that vendors have to deliver items to the library and of understanding various reports from vendors. The last step is receiving orders, which is a process in which acquisitions must verify that items have been correctly received and rectifying and errors with vendors. There are eight methods of acquisition, these are: firm order, standing order, approval plans, blanket order, subscriptions, leases, gifts, and exchanges. These all employed for different purposes depending on the material and purposes for the library, and acquisitions must be familiar with all these different methods.

This chapter is an excellent introduction to the goals of acquisitions and the various work that is completed by it. Before reading this chapter, I only had a very vague understand of what exactly acquisition departments were in charge of. This chapter provided not only a discussion of the theoretical implications of acquisitions work in relationship to collection development, but provided very clear points of the exact nature of the steps that are taken by this department to secure materials. Additionally, the authors provided very clear descriptions, in addition to listing both the pros and cons of the different methods of acquisitions available. This chapter is highly recommended not only to those who are interested in acquisitions work itself, but to anyone interested in work in a public library. The chapter provides a great overview of just exactly where and how acquisitions fits into the overall flow of various library procedures. The in-depth insight provided by the authors in this chapter provided a much better understanding of the relationship between collection development tasks and acquisitions, and has helped me to understand both of these areas much better.

Langendorfer, J. M., & Hurst, M. L. (2003). Comparison shopping: Purchasing continuations as standing orders or on approval. *Library Collections, Acquisitions, & Technical Services, 27*(2), 169-172. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/alcts/resources/lrts>

(3 pages of content) ♦

In this article Jeanne M. Langendorfer and Michele L. Hurst discuss two methods of purchasing continuations from vendors and the pros and cons of these various methods depending on the needs of libraries. Langendorfer and Hurst (2003) define continuations as “a work issued as a supplement to one previously published, or a part issued in continuance of a monographic set of series. Libraries normally place such materials on continuation order” (p. 170). The authors begin by discussing the purchasing of continuations on standing order. They note that though some continuations are available for purchase from vendors, they don’t handle all types such as subscriptions, memberships, leased titled, and loose-leaf. They state that advantages of standing orders of continuations fall into two categories: vendor services and library-managed activities. Vendor service advantages include discounts, quality control, and notification of status changes of a series. Library-managed activity advantages include the ability to generate claims via the integrated library system (ILS), and that expenditures are easier to track. One of the main disadvantages of this method is that the library must purchase every volume. Another is that though there is a discount, it is less than if the item was purchased on approval. Approval plans defined as “a formal arrangement in which a publisher or wholesaler agrees to select and supply, subject to return privileges specific in advance, publication exactly as issue which it a library’s pre-established collection development profile” (Langendorfer & Hurst, 2003, p. 171). The advantages of this type of purchasing of continuations is that there is often a higher discount given, there is more flexibility as a library can evaluate volumes and accept the ones needed. The disadvantages of this method are that the library cannot track expenditures of individual series titles or of total continuations in their ILS, it isn’t possible to ensure the acquisition of all volumes, the library isn’t informed of status changes in the series, and there is a greater possibility of cataloging mistakes. As the authors (Langendorfer & Hurst, 2003) note, the challenge for libraries is to “decide the importance of collection a complete series. Where the complete series is desired, a standing order is the best way to achieve success. Where the library wishes more flexibility…purchasing these items on approval is more beneficial” (p. 171).

This article provides a good introduction to two different acquisition methods for continuation materials. The authors clearly define all of the different concepts discussed in this article, so that anyone new to these concepts can clearly understand what they mean. This article is a great way to delve into a discussion of the various advantages and disadvantages of the standing order and on approval methods of acquisitions. The authors provide in-depth rationale about why libraries may choose one of these acquisition methods over the other, depending on the needs of that library. Though this article is written for those in academic librarianship, the acquisition concepts are broad enough to be applied to other types of libraries including public and school. Overall, this article is highly recommended to anyone who is going to be involved with collection development on some level because it helps to provide a good understanding about these various concepts.

Van Dyk, G. (2014). Demand-drive acquisitions for print books: How holds can help as much as interlibrary loan. *Journal of Access Services, 11*(4), 298-308. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/wjas20/current#.VIoyVTHF-So>

(9 pages of content) ♦

In this study by Gerrit Van Dyk of the Brigham Young University (BYU) Harold B. Lee Library, the concept of demand-driven acquisitions (DDA) for print books is discussed and expanded to include both ILL and holds queue demand to make collection development decisions. In this article Van Dyk argues that that value of demand-driven acquisitions has mostly been discussed using interlibrary loan (ILL) as a collection development tool. With DDA, when a book is requested through ILL, libraries review it for purchase instead of borrowing based on a variety of criteria. As Van Dyk notes, ILL works well for items that are old and low demand, but not for titles that are new and in high demand. Often, when users use ILL for these latter materials, their requests are often cancelled and never filled. These user’s then must resort to other options such as waiting on a long hold queue or purchasing the material themselves. Van Dyk argues that hold queues can be helpful to study because they can illustrate the needs of users of time and can help to gauge the level of interest in different subjects at different times. He notes that ILL and holds should be examined together to determine what is the best option for the current parent and for future patrons with similar needs. In this study the Lee Library of BYU purchased additional copies of titles with long hold queues. In studying the number of ILL requests purchased through DDA and holds queue purchases, the study found that ILL may be most cost-effective than buying and adding a book to the collection, but this was only if the book was checked out once. The study found that for less than twice of the upfront costs to borrow an item through ILL, an item could have been purchase for local holdings. Based on these findings BYU modified its policy to purchase titles sooner, and only will resort to ILL when a title is not new or popular. He notes that what is required for this process to work is for ILL and holds staff to meet often to discuss what titles are popular. Overall the purpose of this method of considering both ILL requests and the holds queue in influencing DDA is to provide materials to users more quickly and in a more cost-efficient way.

This study is interesting in that is fills a research gap of the influence of holds queues on demand-drive acquisitions. As the author notes in the literature review, there have not been many studies conducted about this area of DDA. Because this article was published very recently, it will be interesting to see if there is further research done in this area. This study was conducted at an academic library, but the method that the researcher uses to examine both ILL and holds queues can certainly be implemented for use by large public libraries that offer both of these services to users. From a collection development standpoint this study is very important and interesting, because it shows how professional staff and use these two types of input in order to make purchase decisions to better meet the needs of users. Though ILL has been shown to cost less than actually purchasing a new item, the overall cost per use (CPU) of the purchase item decreases with every use while a part of the library’s local holdings. What is required for this method to work is a good working relationship between different departments of a library in order to determine what items should be purchased and what items should be placed on hold. What is required for this is a clear understanding of the various needs and interested of the community in order to make the best decisions for purchases. This article is definitely recommended to all who might be interested in implementing this technique at their institutions in order to better meet the needs of users.

Chapter 8: Budget

Hill, N. M. (2009). Three views. *Public Libraries, 48*(4), 8-11. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/pla/publications/publiclibraries>

(4 pages of content)

This article written by Nanci Milone Hill provides interview responses with three different public libraries to determine how they have been dealing with the recent economic crisis. The three libraries interviewed include the Joliet Public Library, the Shaker Heights Public Library, and Durham County Library. Hill begins the article with an introductory note about the changing role of public libraries due to tough economic times. She notes, that “public libraries often see an increase in circulation and use…unfortunately, the increase in circulation and use is often not met with an increase in funding” (Hill, 2009, p. 8). She offers the responses by these public libraries during these economic times as a way for other libraries who may be facing similar situations to get ideas to use for themselves. Interestingly, though these libraries are located in different geographical locations across the United States, they had similar responses posed by Hill. For example, each library responded that use and circulation has increased at each of their libraries. Another similarity is that none of the libraries have reduced the number of staff at their libraries. Rather, each library has used a different strategy to reduce spending in other areas such as hours, materials, or outreach services. Each of these libraries seem to agree that staffing cuts will hurt their ability to serve their users at a time when these services are needed more than ever. Lastly, each of the libraries have noticed that during these difficult economic times that the ways patrons are using libraries has changed. Each library reported that there is an increase in patrons using computers, and that job seeking services and collections are up in use. Additionally, library facilities themselves seem to be increasing in use by patrons. This may account for people looking for cheaper ways to spend their leisure time, or those who have lost jobs may be turning to the library as a place to get out of the house.

Though this article was written in 2009, some of the effects of the economic difficulties that libraries were dealing with at that time continue to be felt today. Though some libraries may have been able to get back on their feet in the past 5 years, some of the increases in use of facilities, collection, services, and resources provided by libraries continues to be a reality for many locations. What each of these libraries has demonstrated is that there are clear trends of public libraries being used more by their communities during economic hard times. There are a variety of reasons why this is the case. Because of the economic hardship that created problems for many social service nonprofit organizations such as public libraries, many continue to feel its effects all these years later. Though we may be out of hot water at the moment, this article is still very relevant to those working in public libraries today as a cautionary tale. Even when times are going well, we must be cognizant and careful about all of the funds we spend, and make sure we are putting money aside for the future, if possible. Additionally, public libraries also need to be aware of the message they are sending out to the public, so that when times are tough the library can use this support to help secure funding. Lastly, just as libraries have disaster plans in place for times of natural disasters, they must also create a variety of plans for economic worst-case scenarios. The economic downtown from 5 years ago may already seem like a distant memory to some, but these stories clearly make it clear that we always have to be prepared for the worst.

Hogan, C. (2008). Library book sales: Cleaning house or cleaning up? *Searcher, 16*(3), 36-46. Retrieved from <http://www.infotoday.com/searcher/default.asp>

(11 pages of content) ♦

In this article by Cecilia Hogan, she contends that libraries have the potential to increase funding from book sales by focusing on the sale of old or rare books using a variety of technology tools. As Hogan states at the beginning of her article, traditional book sales by libraries usually set prices for all books at 50-cents or $1, because there is an imperative to book books out of the library. She argues that today’s “electronic world offers savvy library supporters a new avenue for valuing books and for raising badly needed library revenues” (Hogan, 2008, p. 36). As she notes, “a few dozen books selling for $30 or $50 each instead of $1 would add up to a significant increase in revenue for a small-to-medium book sale” (Hogan, 2008, p. 38). The first step that is required to estimate the market value, or the price a buyer is willing to pay a seller, of such a book. There are professional appraisers, but their services cost money the library probably cannot afford. Instead there are websites that can aid those looking to determine the market value of old books. These resources include BiblioBot, Antiquarian Booksellers’ Association of American, and BibliOza, which all provide values for books that can help libraries determine the value of books. Other sites that include book selling databases such as BookFinder.com and AddAll, in addition to commercial websites like Amazon.com can also help to find out how much a book may be valued at. Hogan (2008) doesn’t recommend using an online auction site like eBay to determine market value because “an auction generates dramatic elements that distort market value” (p. 42). Lastly, Hogan highlights websites like Library Book Sales, on which libraries can sell their books online, and Better World Books, which accepts and sells books for libraries, takes a portion of the sale, and gives the rest of the profits back to libraries.

This article provides an introductory guide to libraries who are looking to sell their books beyond the traditional pricing scheme. Because of many of the technology tools available today on the Internet, and the world of potential buyers that libraries can easily be connected with, libraries have the opportunity to make profit from selling more valuable books. As is discussed in this article, one of the most difficult aspects of getting into this market is accurately determining the market value of these items. Professional appraisers are out of the question, unless an item is especially rare and valuable, because libraries generally don’t have the funds to cover the fee charged by them. This article is a great primer to those are looking for a variety of websites so determine the value of their books for sale. Perhaps the main thing that I found missing in this article was a discussion of who would be in charge of all of the work involved in such book sales at a library. Generally libraries use a simply pricing scheme for their book sales because it requires less work. Spending time researching a book online may end up costing more staff time than a book may actually sell for. Perhaps these sort of book sales could be handled by a volunteer Friends group at a library? Ultimately, if the library has the resources available, selling old and rare books seems like a great way to boost the income of a library.

Holland, S., & Verploeg, A. (2009). No easy targets: Six libraries in the economy’s dark days. *Public Libraries, 48*(4), 27-39. Retrieved from [http://www.ala.org/pla/ publications/publiclibraries](http://www.ala.org/pla/%20publications/publiclibraries)

(11 pages of content)

In this article by Suzann Holland and Amanda Verploeg there is an in-depth look at six different public libraries and their responses in service due to the 2008 economic downturn. In this article the authors note that “libraries all over the nation are feeling pain, often in the form of cuts to hours, programming, materials, or even staff” (Holland & Verploeg, 2009, p. 27). Each of these different libraries and the ways the economic downturn has effected them is outlined at the beginning of the article. The different libraries profiled in this article include Saxton B. Little Free Library, Oskaloosa Public Library, Oak Lawn Public Library, Washoe County Library System, Phoenix Public Library, and the Brooklyn Public Library. Factors common to each of these libraries are discussed at the end of the article. The first factor is increased usage. Each of these six libraries have noticed that more and more people are coming to the library for their needs. These increases in usages are great for libraries, but unfortunately funding to meet these increases aren’t happening. There have also been reduction considerations by all of these libraries. These include reductions in the number of staff, salaries, money for materials, programming, hours, and services. As the authors note, deciding on where to make these reductions have been difficult for libraries. In order to do so they have to “evaluate their communities’ needs as well as their mission in serving the public” (Holland & Verploeg, 2008, p. 31). Use of statistics such as circulation records, and library usage can be used to understand what cuts and sacrifices are needed. The authors pose the question if the role of public libraries has changed due to this economic downturn. They note that many public libraries today may fulfill less of an informational role, and more of an entertainment hub. The authors believe that “the public library has always been, and will continue to be an organic entity. To best serve the public, library administrators must work to embrace evolving technology to fund new and exciting ways to fulfill classic roles” (Holland & Verploeg, 2008, p. 36).

This article is similar to the first one reviewed at the beginning of this section of the reading log. A difference between the two is that in this article though there were several similarities between how libraries were facing the economic downtown of 2008, there were also many differences as well. Reading this article in 2014, 5 years after it was published, the situation for many of these libraries seems incredibly bleak. At the same time, I’m not sure how much better things are going today. Many of the questions posed by the authors of this article are those that are important, despite the economic climate. For example, the changing roles of public libraries has been something that has been discussed long-before and long-after the date of publication of the article. I think though we are not currently in such a bad shape as we were when this article was initially published, I think that it is important for us to still read it today. These stories should serve as cautionary tales about the worst-case scenarios about just how things can quickly turn bad. Because of this, I think libraries need to plan for such scenarios in order to be best prepared. Additionally, libraries should continue to seek the support of the public and their communities so that if something like this happens again, the case can be made for cuts to not happen at the library.

Chapter 9: Evaluation and Weeding

Boon, B. (2009). Using the CREW method to enhance public and school library collections. *Journal of Access Services, 6*(3), 324-336. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/wjas20/current#.VI4w9CvF-So>

(12 pages of content) ♦

In this article Belinda Boon of the Kent State University School of Library and Information Science provides and overview about using the CREW method to enhance public and school library collections. As Boon (2009) states at the beginning of the article, “the nature of library collections is to grow and expand, filling shelves and covering every available surface” (p. 325). She argues that it is easy for staff to ignore or forget their weeding duties because of the large number of responsibilities they are in charge of. Boon believes that the CREW method is good for such libraries, because it breaks down a seemingly large and impossible tax into a logical sequence of smaller steps. Boon notes there are three categories that books and materials that are going to be removed from the collection will fall into: 1. Books and materials in bad condition, 2. Books and materials that contain inaccurate or outdate information, and 3. Books and materials that don’t fit the scope of a library’s collection. In order to determine if books fit into the third category listed, the library needs to evaluate a number of things to figure out its scope. These include the library’s mission, its selection policy, the goals of the collection, and the library’s roles in the community. Boon breaks down the steps of the CREW methods into three categories: 1. Before weeding, 2. During weeding, and 3. After weeding. Before weeding tasks include making weeding a part of the library’s policy, reading the shelves, and conducting an inventory of library materials. During weeding activities include gathering usages statistics and weeding tools, examining the collection item by item, and checking standard indexes. After weeding tasks include disposing of materials, incorporating weeding into the library’s routine, and creating displays of low circulating materials. As Boon (2009) concludes, “maintaining an up-to-date and useful collection must be a top priority for any librarian who desires to successfully fulfill the information needs of her community of users” (p. 335).

This chapter provides a quick overview about the more complex steps of the CREW method. I personally think this is an excellent article to read *after* one has already finished reading the CREW method manual itself. The article gives several good reasons why libraries of all types should be weeding on a continuous basis. Unfortunately, this isn’t the best article to read if a library is looking for explicit steps on the CREW method process itself, as this article merely highlights key aspects of it. The article does serve as a good reminder or refresher for those who have already read the CREW method manual, and probably best serves in that capacity. Overall this articles makes good arguments about why librarians should be doing weeding of their collections, but those looking for specific steps on how to begin weeding at their libraries are best served by more in-depth treatments.

Doll, C. A., & Barron, P. P. (2002). Chapter three: Weeding. In *Managing and analyzing your collection: A practical guide for small libraries and school media centers.* (pp. 59-73). Chicago, IL: American Library Association.

(13 pages of content) ♦

In this chapter of *Managing and Analyzing Your Collection: A Practical Guide for Small Libraries and School Media Centers* authors Carol A. Doll and Pamela Petrick Barron provide an overview about the collection development process of weeding. They begin the chapter by defining weeding and its purpose. As the authors note, “library collections should always be evolving to reflect changes in the information needs of its users and changes in the information itself. Weeding affords librarians the opportunity to reevaluate their collections” (Doll & Barron, 2002, p. 59). The authors encourage readers to think of the weeding process as selection in reverse, as the same care that is applied to the selecting of library materials must be given to materials that are removed from it. There are a number of reasons why librarians should weed their collections. These include creating space, removing materials that are not useful or inaccurate, improving access to information by users, and reducing the costs of maintain and adding shelving. The authors note it is important to keep in mind that library users and their needs change over time, and it is important for the library collection to change along with these needs in order to continue to meet them. Weeding is an integral part of meeting this change. Weeding is a time-consuming project, but the authors argue that the benefits outweigh the time spent. Some general factors to consider for weeding include a materials physical condition, no long needed duplicate copies, materials that are superseded by newer editions, or materials that don’t meet the changing demographics of the community. The authors stress that these considerations are just guidelines. They argue that “the librarian’s personal experience, knowledge of availability of resources in a wide variety of formats, access to information resources, and familiarity with the users are also vitally important” (Doll & Barron, 2002, p. 59) to determine a weeding strategy for a particular library.

This chapter provides a good overview about weeding practices for a variety of different libraries. The authors provide a few different good guidelines about what to weed out of collections. Overall, I found that there wasn’t enough information given if a library was to use this as its only guide. The authors provide a good rationale about why it is important to weed, and even debunks several common excuses to not weed. What I think was the strongest point about this piece was the author’s suggestion that librarians need to carefully evaluate the needs of the local community in order to best determine what the scope of the library’s collections should be. I recommend this chapter to libraries that may be new to weeding, and looking for some advice on where to start. I wouldn’t recommend it to those who are looking for more specific guidelines, such as how to weed specific types of materials and formats, as this seems to be beyond the scope of this chapter.

Chapter 10: Merchandising and Promoting the Collection

Goldsmith, F. (2005). Chapter 6: How does the collection find new readers?: Marketing and promotion. In *Graphic novels now: Building, managing, and marketing a dynamic collection.* (pp. 63- 72). Chicago, IL: American Library Association.

(10 pages of content) ♦

In this chapter of *Graphic Novels Now: Building, Managing, and Marketing a Dynamic Collection*, Francesca Goldsmith discusses tips, tools, and techniques that can be used to promote library graphic novel collections to potential and established users. She argues that “the library needs to alert its target audience to the various formats it has to offer, explain why it offers them, and emphasize that it is open to considering suggestions for new materials” (Goldsmith, 2005, p.63). Goldsmith notes that for graphic novels in particular the library may encounter spoken or unspoken prejudices due to lack of unfamiliarity. The library can help to combat these prejudices by providing access to these materials and using a variety of promotional techniques such as placing them on genre lists or creating physical displays that include graphic novels. Goldsmith outlines a variety of marketing formats that can be used to promote graphic novels. For example she discusses various shelving options that can be used such as inter-shelving graphic novels with traditional print sources, or providing easily visible and accessible shelving space for graphic novels to promote visibility and usage. She also suggests suggesting graphic novels in various aspects of readers’ advisory work such as promoting them directly to readers or by including them on reading lists. Goldsmith suggests a variety of techniques that the library can borrow from retail to market graphic novels. These include buying multiple copies to provide visual redundancy in displays which draw in users, supplying sufficient light to the collection to provide a positive tone, posting signs, and booktalking. Lastly, Goldsmith introduces the idea that formal and ongoing programming is another form of marketing and promotion of the graphic novel collection because it takes materials off the shelf and makes them the focus of activity.

Goldsmith provides a comprehensive discussion of the necessity of promotion and marketing of a library’s graphic novel collection as an aspect of collection management. What was interesting to learn in this chapter was that graphic novels are more subject to both spoken and unspoken prejudices. Because of this I think it is even more crucial that a multi-step promotion plan be in place in order to effectively market these materials to both users and potential users. Goldsmith outlines and discusses a variety of techniques that can easily be uses in different departments of a public library to increase awareness of the graphic novel collection. In particular, Goldsmith’s tips for how to successfully booktalk graphic novels will be especially useful to children’s and young adult librarians who are looking for the best way to highlight books in this unique format. Lastly, Goldsmith introduces a very interesting concept in this chapter, the idea of programming as a tool for marketing. Generally programming is thought of as a way to get users into and engaged with the library. Thinking of programming as a way to highlight the collection opens up an entire other venue of how public libraries and librarians can help to bring the books on shelves to life. This chapter is highly recommended to anyone looking for techniques to promote materials of all formats, not just graphic novels, because many of the techniques outlined in it can also be applied to other collections.

Henkel, N. M. (2011). Getting started. In *Ready-made book displays.* (pp. ix-xii). Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited.

(5 pages of content) ♦

Nancy M. Henkel introduces the basis of creating effective book displays to market the print collection of a library in the “Getting Started” section of *Ready-Made Book Displays.* Henkel begins this section by introducing a set laws of book displays that she has created, in a similar vein as S. R. Ranganathan’s “Five Laws of Library Science.” These “Five Laws of Book Display” penned by Henkel serve as a theoretical grounding for this aspect of collection development work. The first law is, “Every book accessible.” This book display law states that books shouldn’t be locked in display cases or kept behind the circulation desk, but rather should be place where users can get at them. The second law is, “It’s not about the props.” This law states that props, when used selectively, can enhance a display. The third law is, “Every display has a theme.” This law states that items in a book display should be united under one theme, and these should be chosen based on what resonates with patrons. The fourth law is, “Educate the reader.” This law state states that librarians should use themes that are timely, interesting, and though-provoking in order to educate users. The fifth and final law states, “Location is everything.” This law states that displays should be placed in physical locations that make them visible to users. In addition to these laws, Henkel also discusses some of the benefits and rationale behind using effective book displays. These include: increasing circulation, giving patrons a reason to come back, practicing readers’ advisory, and highlighting collections and programs. Locations in the physical space of the library that Henkel suggests for placing book displays include: points of checkout, endcaps, table tops, open cases, windows, and in shelves. Additionally she notes that playing with height or dimension of displays to give them more depth. Henkel suggests looking to current events for ideas for display themes. Lastly, Henkel (2011) argues that a step to successful displays is “to involve your staff” (p. xii). They can help to fill display holes when you aren’t around to do so, and they can also generate ideas for future displays. Henkel (2011) notes that the best displays are “cheap, quick to create, easy to maintain, and, most important, they are effective” (p. xii).

This introductory chapter by Henkel about the laws of book displays and suggestions about how librarians can create effective displays of their own serves as a foundational piece to this common promotion technique. Henkel’s, “Five Laws of Book Displays” provide key points that every librarian should always be keeping in mind when creating displays of their own. What is the most valuable information provided by Henkel is how librarians can use the suggestions she has outlined in this piece to quickly get started on creating effective book displays. All of the points that are outlined here should be required reading for anyone who works in a library and is looking for a way to promote its collection. Henkel provides several reasons why libraries and librarians should be concerned with creating effective book displays when she outlines some of the benefits of doing so. That being said, Henkel’s steps for creating book displays should be carefully followed, otherwise book displays may end up doing more harm than good. Overall, this work is a good overview of how anyone can get started on creating effective book displays today.

Horn, L. P. (2011). Online marketing strategies for reaching today’s teens. *Young Adult Library Services, 9*(2), 24-27. Retrieved from <http://www.yalsa.ala.org/yals/>

(4 pages of content) ♦

This article written by Laura Peowski Horn, a teen librarian intern at the Farmington Public Libraries, outlines ways to use online marketing strategies to reach teens in public libraries. Horn (2011) notes that librarians today need to be constantly aware of the different groups of teens using the library and to be open to “adopting innovative ways to bring the library and all that it has to offer to those teens” (p. 25). Horn argues that the following five points are the most important to keep in mind when marketing to teens: 1. Don’t be afraid to try new technologies. 2. Don’t get discouraged when what you try doesn’t work. 3. Know your audience. 4. Choose your delivery methods wisely. And 5. Having a good foundation is crucial. There are several tips that Horn gives in order to create that good foundation. Her first suggestion is to create Facebook page, group, or profile for the library, to reach teens on social media. Her second suggestion is to create a dedicated teen library website. This site can be used to highlight library resources, host pictures of the library’s physical space, and to link to other Web resources. Lastly, she suggests creating a teen library blog. The benefits of a blog are that they are easier to create than websites, and visitors don’t have to be members to access its content. Most important in this article Horn provides several suggestions for how to market the teen collection using these online technologies. These suggestions include creating book trailers on the web, using Shelfari to highlight recently acquired titles, use an embedded Twitter widget on the teen website, creating QR codes for materials, and RSS for blogs. Horn (2011) reminds readers to try a variety of these techniques to reach teens, because “what works for one public or school library may not work for another” (p. 27).

Though this article is a few years old, the online marketing strategies that Horn discusses still remain relevant and useful to reaching out to teens. What is perhaps the most evident from this article is that it is crucial for libraries that are working with young adult populations to utilize the technologies that they are already using and comfortable with. Many of the suggestions that Horn provides may seem basic to younger librarians, but Horn is correct in suggestion a basic web presence through a teen website, a blog, and on a variety of social media sites collectively create a foundational base for marketing to teens. Horn provides a lot of suggestions and tips in this article about ways to reach out to teens, though not all of them are concerned with collection development. The section of the article titled, “Marketing the Collection”, specifically highlight ways that librarians can use a variety of online marketing techniques to highlight the collection. Despite the broad subject matter of this article, it is highly recommended for anyone who is interested in working with young adults in a professional capacity, whether in a public or school library. The article provides a foundational understanding of the basics of marketing to teens in online spaces that are expected by this population of library users today. These technologies must continue to be used and developed in the future if we hope to reach teens in meaningful ways.

Koontz, C., & Mon, L. (2014). Chapter twelve: “Promotion: Not the same as marketing!”. In *Marketing and social media: A guide for libraries, archives, and museums.* (pp. 149-168). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

(18 pages of content) ♦

In Chapter Twelve of *Marketing and Social Media: A Guide for Libraries, Archives, and Museums*, authors Christie Koontz and Lori Mon discuss the promotion aspect of marketing. They argue at the beginning of this chapter that people often confuse promotion with marketing, but “promotion is only *one* of the most important tools of marketing” (p. 149). They note that marketing is comprised of four steps, in which promotional tools comprise a part of the 3rd step- the marketing mix strategy. The marketing mix strategy is comprised of the 4 Ps: product, price, place, and promotion. The authors note that there are five major types of promotional tools, these include: advertising, sales promotion, publicity, personal selling, and direct marketing. Each of these different types of promotional tools can be used with a variety of media including print, people, broadcast, and Internet based. Koontz and Mon (2014) note that the “goals of all promotional tools and media must be tied to the organization’s overall promotional mix strategy and goals” (p. 150). Additionally choosing the right mix of promotional tools and media requires that libraries do their homework in order to identify, segment, and prioritize customer groups. The authors note there are several considerations that libraries must keep in mind to select the optimal promotional mix. These include: being knowledgeable about media strengths and weaknesses, understanding which media your targeted segments consume, understanding what various media are best for certain products, understanding that the complexity of the message dictates media, and to be realistic about costs. Lastly, the authors discuss the potential pros and cons of utilizing social media for promotion. They define social media as “the means of interactions among people in which they create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks, built upon Web 2.0 technologies that facilitate creation and exchange of information” (Koontz & Mon, 2014, p.158). Marketing with social media “focuses on efforts to create content that attracts attention and encourages readers to share it with their social networks (Koontz & Mon, 2014, p. 158). A pro of using social media for marketing and promotion are that it is relatively inexpensive to implement campaigns. A challenge of using social media for marketing include the significant time it takes to build up a sizable following. The authors argue that all social media sites have strengths and weaknesses. Various characteristics that social media managers need to consider in determining what social media sites to use include: audience, usage, format, features, and costs. The authors close the chapter by arguing that “successful promotional messages must be built upon knowledge of *unique* customer markets, *their* media habits, and the *nature* of the product or offer” (Koontz & Mon, 2014, p. 162).

This book and this particular chapter are excellent resources for a variety of librarians who are seeking to use a variety of promotional techniques to market their services, programs, and collections to users and nonusers alike. What I found interesting about this chapter is that the authors make the distinction between marketing and promotion, which I used to think of as the same thing. Understanding promotion as part of the marketing mix, which is just one of the many steps of marketing helped me to better understand the purpose of it. The main benefit about this chapter and about this book as a whole is that it was published this year, so all of the information within it is still highly relevant to today’s world. Another thing that I found valuable about the work was the inclusion of social media as another venue for promotional tactics. Again, viewing it social media in this way, instead of a completely new world in which a wholly different promotional approach is needed helped me to understand that we can adapt many of the promotional techniques already used for this environment. This book should definitely be required reading for anyone who is interested in effectively marketing their libraries in the 21st century Web 2.0 world. Every chapter of this book was interesting, I found it hard to stop reading. I will definitely be consulting with this text again in my future professional career as a librarian.

Sullivan, M. (2005). Chapter 21: Public relations, promotion, and marketing. In *Fundamentals of children’s services*. (pp. 203-212). Chicago, IL: American Library Association.

(10 pages of content) ♦

Chapter 21 of *Fundamentals of Children’s Services* by Michael Sullivan discusses the importance of public relations, promotion, and marketing as a necessary component of library service to children. He argues that in today’s information saturated world, we have to actively work to make the library a presence in the lives of our community members. He notes that, “you can grow a library either be convincing your current customers to use more and more of your services, or by introducing yourself to new customers” (Sullivan, 2005, p. 203). In order to aid children’s librarians with both of these tasks, he discusses a variety of topics in depth including building media relations, press releases, public service announcements, newsletters and other publications, and web writing. All of these various promotion techniques are used to provide positive and aggressive outreach to your community and specific constituency. All of the techniques described by Sullivan in this chapter are forms of outside of the library marketing. As he states, “in-library marketing is not enough, because it fails to reach those who do not already use the library.” The goal in this outside of the library marketing is to control your message when possible, in order to give the best representation. This requires careful writing and editing so that they library is shown in the light in which you want it to be portrayed. Sullivan dedicates a section on web writing by children’s librarians. This includes creating content for the library’s web site or the children’s page to promote programs, activities, services, and collections. As Sullivan (2005) ends this chapter, “all of our good work is for naught it we are not effective in saying to people, ‘Here we are, and here is why we matter.’” (p. 212).

This chapter is a basic introduction of some promotional techniques that can be used by children’s librarians to promote programs, activities, services, and collections. Though this book is specifically aimed towards these professionals, the promotional techniques and tips described by Sullivan in this chapter can easily be used and applied by librarians in other departments, or of different library types (public, academic, school, and special). Sullivan does a great job outlining more traditional methods of promotion such as press releases, direct mail, newsletters, and public service announcements, but what was definitely lacking was more Internet influenced techniques. Perhaps this is because the book was published 9 years ago, so at that time many of the Web 2.0 and social media capabilities that we have grown so accustomed to today, were still in their beginning states at the time. Sullivan does mention web writing at the very end of the chapter, but the techniques discussed are less in-depth than all of the other promotional techniques mentioned earlier on. The majority of this section mentions the importance of librarians to create content for a library web page, but doesn’t really give too many specific ideas of things that can actually be done besides replicating print flyers and documents on a library’s children webpage. In today’s world, much content is now “born digital”, so often many flyers and promotional material created doesn’t even get printed, but rather only lives on websites and social media pages. This chapter is recommended to those who are interested in some of the more basic forms of promotional techniques, but shouldn’t be the only resource consulted. Those seeking a more in-depth discussion of modern promotional techniques should seek works that have been published more recently.

Chapter 11: Reconsideration Policy and Procedures

Auguste, M. (2012). Chapter 11: Librarians and censorship. In *VOYA’s guide to intellectual freedom for teens*. (pp. 123-131). Bowie, MD: VOYA Press.

(8 pages of content) ♦

In this chapter of *VOYA’s Guide to Intellectual Freedom for Teens* author Margaret Auguste discusses the topic of librarians and their role in censorship. One topic that is discussed throughout the chapter is self-censorship. Auguste notes that sometimes librarians self-censor in order to avoid potential challenges by the parents of teens, or other community members. Materials that were self-censored by librarians were on the basis of sexual content, language, violence, homosexuality, racism, and religion. As Auguste (2012) states, “the selection of books is supposed to be an objective process that is shaped solely by the needs of the library users that we serve. However, due to outside criticism and influences as well as personal values and culture, this seemingly simple activity becomes complicated” (p. 125). When librarians restrict access to materials to library users, because they are worried what might happen, this is self-censorship. When librarians restrict access to materials to library users, because they are worried what might happen, this is self-censorship. Self-censorship scenarios include placing books behind glass or in a locked cabinet, moving a book meant for children into the adult department, requiring permission to check out a material, and not buying a book. The danger of this self-censorship by librarians is that “students who are denied the freedom to read lose out on their opportunity to expand their minds and outlook on life when the literature that they read is so sanitized that their critical thinking skills are impaired” (Auguste, 2012, p.126). Other forms of censorship discussed in this chapter include leveled reading, book labeling, and recommended book lists. Suggestions in the chapter to avoid this is to address the issues of reading levels by providing workshops for parents, using careful consideration when labeling books, and to keep communication open with colleagues.

This chapter provided an interesting discussion about some of the ways that librarians may consciously, or unconsciously be practicing self-censorship at their libraries. Some of the scenarios described in the chapter are more obvious in nature, such as locking a book in a cabinet, but others like not purchasing a book or moving it to another section are not. This chapter is good for librarians of all types to read, because self-censorship is a possibility in every department of the library, and librarians must actively work to make sure that they aren’t allowing their personal biases to mar their professional responsibilities. What I found especially interesting in this chapter was the discussion that leveled reading, book labeling, and recommended book lists all have the ability to censor, if not approached carefully. None of these things are inherently susceptible to censorship, but rather than can mirror a librarians biases if not carefully executed. These viewpoints will be important for me to keep in mind in my future professional career, in order to make sure that I am not inadvertently self-censoring.

Morse, B. (2010). Handling a book challenge in today’s world. *Florida Libraries, 53*(1), 10-11. Retrieved from <http://www.flalib.org/florida_Libraries.php>

(2 pages of content) ♦

In this article Barbara J. Morse, the Library Director of the Leesburg Public Library, discusses her personal experience with a book challenge and some of the way that today’s world has made them more complex to deal with. Morse beings by discussing the challenge processes that she used to address a parents complaint with a book. Morse notes that what made this challenge and the way that it played out in today’s world different than before were due to several factors. One factor included that the patron with the complaint was able to communicate her grievance to a large group of people because of e-mail technology. This allowed the patron with the complaint to gain broad exposure to a sizeable audience very quickly. Second, access to media is a lot easier today than it used to be. Due to the controversial nature of this book challenge, it was immediately jumped on by the media. It was hard for the library to represent itself and its message due to the misrepresentation perpetuated by the media. The Internet as a tool for research to support a book challenge is another aspect. Additionally, the Internet can also be used by the challenger to gain support from outside groups. As Morse (2010) notes, “this networked electronic world has changed much of what libraries do and how they do it; a response to a challenge to library collections is just one of them” (p. 11). All of these are new facets that are a part of what libraries must expect to face when handling a challenge in today’s world.

This account of Library Director Morse’s handling of a book material sounds like a very difficult and harrowing situation to have dealt with. Despite, this I think there are a lot of lessons that librarians can learn from her account. Morse outlines several ways in which our world today, which is more interconnected than every due to technology and the Internet, will positively and negatively affect a challenge and how libraries should handle them. The Internet provides a vast forum for those with similar ideas and thoughts to come together. In the case of a book challenge like the one Morse had to deal with, this required considerable resources for her library and her city to have to deal with. The prevalence of media is another reality that Morse found out the hard way is another challenge when trying to get the message of the library across. In this case, the media misrepresented many aspects about the book challenge in addition not allowing the library to properly represent itself. Perhaps a lot of what happened in Morse’s case was the worst-case scenario, but librarians everywhere should be prepared because a similar situation could happen anywhere. It is crucial for libraries to be able to present solid selection policies that they can present to those who challenge its decision, and to ensure that these decisions are rooted in the needs and interests of the community served. This article is definitely recommended to all librarians, because they need to be aware of how today’s unique world may affect the handling of challenge at their own institutions.

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