



# Community Engagement in Collection Development Social Responsibility or Professional Abdication?

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## Community Engagement in Collection Development: Social Responsibility or Professional Abdication?

A pedagogical case study on the question of responsibility for selection, exploring the introduction of a historical perspective to enrich understanding of contemporary professional issues and practices

- Academic libraries – online discussion forum
- Patron-driven acquisitions (PDA)
- Active learning strategies







LIS 2771 ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Discussion Board

**Module 11: Users as Selectors**

Selecting items for the collection has traditionally been seen as a core professional task, typically performed in academic libraries by subject/liaison librarians, although some libraries have expected faculty to act as selectors. Many libraries are now using patron-driven acquisitions (PDA) systems and reducing selection by librarians.

70

70

For this discussion forum, you are asked to use literature from the Module 8 reading list to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of librarian-selected and user-selected models of collection management, and then decide whether you agree with those who advocate replacing item-by-item book selection with demand-driven purchasing.

Please summarize your thoughts in one or two paragraphs, supporting your argument with evidence from your reading, and post your conclusions to the forum by **11:55 PM on Sunday evening of Module 11**. For this forum, you are expected to read the posts of other students, compare their views with your own, and **post a comment** in response to **at least one other student** within the following week (Module 12).





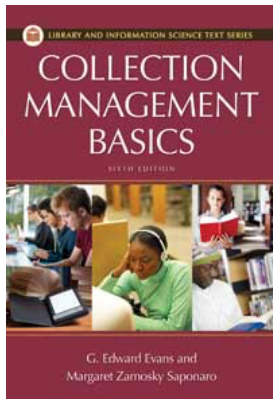
## Discussion forum: Users as selectors?

- Draw on literature from module reading list to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of librarian-selected and user-selected models of collection development/management
- Decide and state personal position on replacing item-by-item book selection by librarians with demand-driven purchasing
- Read the contributions of other students and respond to the post(s) of at least one classmate during the following week





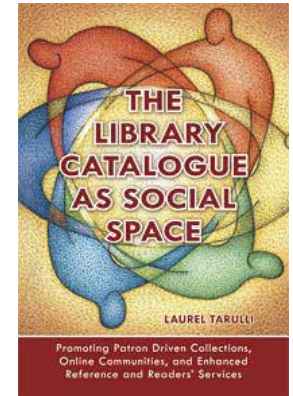
# Collection development: Selection in context



(Evans & Saponaro, 2012)



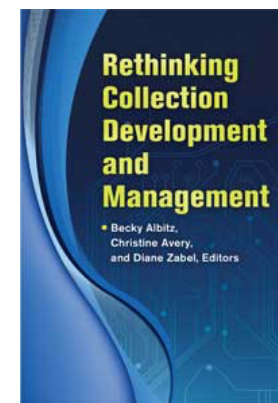
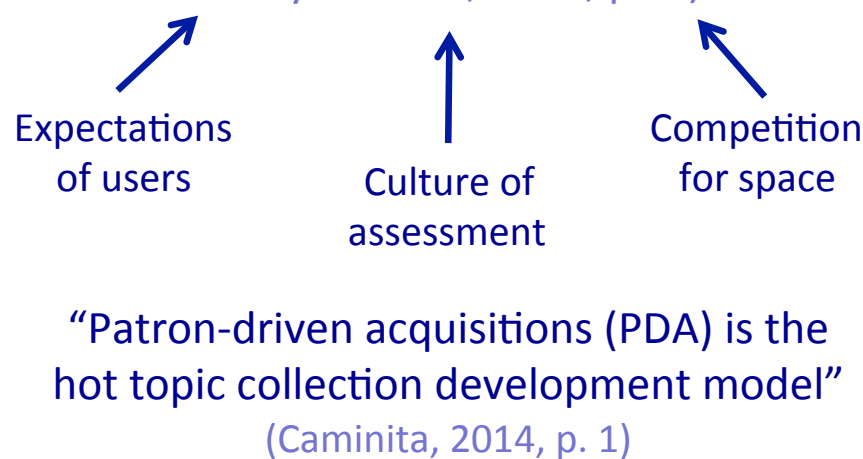
(Fieldhouse & Marshall, 2012)



(Tarulli, 2012)



(Johnson, 2014)



(Albitz et al., 2014)



(Bridges, 2014)





## Pros and cons of users as selectors

- ✓ Enables quick flexible responses to information needs
- ✓ User selections have higher usage and lower cost-per use than librarian selections
  - 50% do not circulate in first 10 years
- ✓ PDA/DDA can strengthen collecting for emerging fields and interdisciplinary activities
- ✓ Can facilitate collecting to support personal, social, and occupational needs of students
- ✓ Librarian attitudes have shifted from highly skeptical about ILPOD to highly supportive of PDA
- X Libraries do not get discounts traditionally offered by vendors
- X PDA/DDA models complicate library resource sharing
- X Risk of individuals using library funds to build private collections
- X Users may choose material of poor quality with no future use

“...both librarian-selected and patron-driven purchases form part of a collaborative process benefiting the library collection”

- librarians set profiles for PDA programs
- librarians base selections on requests from faculty, staff, and students

(Hodges, 2014, p. 186)





## Reflections on the forum discussions

- Part-time students were more likely to supplement points from the literature with observations from their experience, including experience of working in public libraries
- Concentrating the reading lists on recently published material did not encourage students to make connections between current and past issues, practices, and values
- Experimenting with alternative learning activities in place of or in addition to the discussion forum could help students consider the selection question from other perspectives
- Giving the forum a more challenging, provocative title pointing to the bigger picture could also elevate the debate





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## Goals for Graduates of the MLIS Program

Upon completion of the MLIS degree, graduates will incorporate the theories, knowledge, skills, ethical foundations and social responsibilities of the information professions into professional practice for the benefits of users. Specifically, graduates will be able to:

- Draw upon the ethics, values and history of library and information science and other related disciplines.
- Apply the principles of information management.
- Advance the creative and ethical applications of information technologies.
- Apply the principles of management to various functions in information environments.
- Plan, implement, evaluate and advocate information services to meet the needs of diverse users.
- Promote intellectual freedom and equity of access to information.
- Understand and apply research in library and information science.
- Promote a commitment to the advancement of the information professions through advocacy, continuing education and lifelong learning.

*Revised and affirmed by the faculty of the Library and Information Science Program on April 6, 2011.*



## Library History Round Table

### Statement on History in Education for Library and Information Science

*Rather than simply train students to be competent, successful practitioners, faculties need to make greater efforts to prepare people who will look beyond their practice and strive continuously to raise the standards of the profession and improve the system in which it functions...Faculties could do much more to expand the vision of their students by encouraging them to study the history and structure of their profession.*

—Derek Bok, *Higher Learning*, (1986)

A knowledge of history and an understanding of historical methodology are indispensable elements in the education of library and information professionals. A knowledge of history provides a necessary perspective for understanding the principles and practices of information science. Many of the most important issues of our day -- including, for example, intellectual freedom, fees for service, service to minorities, access to government information, the role of new technologies, and the place of women in the profession -- can only be understood in the light of their historical contexts. And the research process, an essential component of contemporary professional education and practice, can be significantly informed by awareness of both historical precedents and historical methodology.

The Library History Round Table of the American Library Association therefore strongly advocates that history and historical methodology be fully incorporated into the curriculum of all programs of library and information science education. Schools of library and information studies are urged to implement this recommendation in the following ways:

1. The entire curriculum should be informed by historical contexts. All courses, regardless of subject matter, should provide a foundation in the historical background of the subject rather than focusing only on current practices and principles.
2. A strong historical component should be part of any required core curriculum.
3. There should be offered, every year, one or more courses devoted specifically to the history of recording, communicating, organizing, and preserving knowledge, and of the institutions, individuals, and professions engaged in such efforts. Such courses should be taught by a qualified member of the faculty and be based on the research literature.
4. Historical methodology and historical approaches to knowledge should be included in the study and discussion of research methods.
5. The use of historical methodology should be encouraged, where appropriate, to investigate issues and problems in library and information science.

(1989)





# Evolution of selection

## Situation in the 1950s (Bach, 1957)

1. “Self-effacing libraries” – over-reliance on faculty (and library committee), 20C version of 19C model of book selection
2. Materials selected by faculty with library aid and advice (e.g., reference books, reviewed and listed titles, new periodicals)
3. “The avant-garde” – materials selected by librarians with faculty aid and advice (may still include close cooperation)

## Prediction from the 1980s (Cogswell, 1987)

“Although the nature of research collections will always require materials selection, this function will likely diminish in its importance as the principal task and the ultimate source of pride of many collection specialists” (p. 270)

## A contemporary opinion (Lewis, 2013)

“If academic libraries are to be successful, they will need to... move from item-by-item book selection to purchase-on-demand and subscriptions; manage the transition to open access journals ...and develop new mechanisms for funding national infrastructure” (p. 159)

By HARRY BACH

### Acquisition Policy in the American Academic Library

Problems of acquisition policy are in many ways the most important confronting administrators of university libraries. This, unfortunately, does not mean that these problems have never been dodged; many of the difficulties now besetting great research libraries at Harvard and elsewhere result from failures to face such problems squarely.<sup>2</sup>

legitimate libraries; in the discussion of present practices it refers to (1) research libraries listed under Group I in the annual *CRL* statistics; (2) college and university libraries that in 1953-54 had a total book and periodical budget of \$50,000 or more; and (3) state university libraries that do not fall under either (1) or (2).

THIS STUDY is a summary and evaluation of past acquisition principles and practices in the American academic library. Attention is given to what has happened even what should be. It is an acquisition philosophy and reality, it compares trends of the trends of the present, and it presents with trends of the future.

The word *acquisition* in this study applies to the acquisition of materials whether they be by gift, or purchase. Since funds play a role in determining the acquisition of library book collection, the study is on acquisition by purchase.

*Policy* refers to the guiding adopted and followed by American libraries in developing acquisitions. *Acquisition policy* is in a broad sense and encompasses written and unwritten, formal statements of policy.

*Academic library* in the history of the paper refers primarily to

<sup>2</sup> Kegan D. Matsell, "Problems of Acquisition in a University Library," *Harvard Lib. IV* (1958), 263-80.

Mr. Bach is head, Acquisition

ment, San Jose State College, Calif.

NOVEMBER 1957

### The Organization of Collection Management Functions in Academic Research Libraries

by James A. Cogswell

Eight principal functions necessary for effective collection management in modern academic research libraries are discussed. Several organizational models for collection management are then described and evaluated according to how each may facilitate those eight functions.

Although librarians have long been viewed as guardians of book collections, it has been only recently that they have exercised any real control over building those collections out in the treatment in *Libraries* latter part of the 19th century the matter of the library's primary and in building the demic research that primary re- tion should re- termed "avant- academic librar-

tional structures and strategies to address the issues posed by its expanded scope and complexity. Since 1984, at least three formal surveys of ARL institutions have

### From Stacks to the Web: The Transformation of Academic Library Collecting

David W. Lewis

The existence of a ubiquitous and cheap worldwide communications network that increasingly makes documents easily and freely available will require a transformation of academic library collecting practice. It will be driven by a number of specific developments including: the digitization of content; the development of print repositories; the development of e-readers and print-on-demand publishing; the growth of open access; challenges to establish academic publishing organizations; and the growth of new forms of scholarship based on openness and social productivity. If academic libraries are to be successful, they will need to: deconstruct legacy print collections; move from item-by-item book selection to purchase-on-demand and subscriptions; manage the transition to open access journals; focus on curating unique items; and develop new mechanisms for funding national infrastructure.

Different parts of the Ocean contained different sorts of stories, and as all the stories that had ever been told and many that were still in the process of being invented could be found here, the Ocean of the Streams of Story was in fact the biggest library in the universe. And because the stories were held here in fluid form, they retained the ability to change, to become new versions of themselves, to join up with other stories and so become yet other stories; so that unlike a library of books the Ocean of the Streams of Story was much more than a storeroom of yarns. It was not dead but alive.

—Salman Rushdie, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*<sup>1</sup>



Academic libraries are about to undergo a transformation in their collection practices. The change will be fundamental and will affect nearly every aspect of library service. It will require a rethinking of budgets and alter the longstanding collaborative relationships between academic

ic libraries. It will require an examination of the fundamental practices and values of academic librarianship. Once we make sense of what we need to do and how we need to do it, we will have to explain it to faculty, many of whom will be appalled and angry; and administrators, many of whom will hear only the parts of the mes-

David W. Lewis is Dean of the University Library, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis. e-mail: [dlewis@iupui.edu](mailto:dlewis@iupui.edu). © 2013 David W. Lewis. Attribution-NonCommercial (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/>) CC BY-NC





## Learning from other places – public libraries

### ‘Reads versus Needs’

“For many years in the UK library materials were exclusively selected by professional library staff with little or no input from local people. At best, the needs of local people would be determined by recourse to official data such as census returns and community profiles. At worst the needs of local communities would be assumed by library staff based on their own knowledge and perceptions of those communities.”

“There has been an ongoing debate in UK public libraries about the type of materials which should be stocked, and this debate dates back to the origin and purpose of the library service itself.”

### Libraries as Agents of Social Control, or Agents of Social Change?

“It is necessary to understand **the early history of public libraries** because this heritage was absolutely fundamental to the development of professional attitudes and values which still shape modern library services.”

(Pateman & Williment, 2013, pp. 123-125)





# Teaching methods to engage learning

- Guided reading and viewing (current material and historical background)
  - Blog posts, book chapters, conference papers, journal articles, videos, etc.
- Lectures (with team-teaching)
  - Instructor gives overview of the topic as theoretical framework (including historical background), guest speaker adds contemporary practical perspective
- Discussion boards/forums
  - Instructor provides questions, problems, or activities as foundation for dialog
- Case studies/reports/materials
  - Instructor-created learning resources, practitioner-authored publications and library documentation for analysis and discussion, with questions and/or commentaries for critical reflection
- Formal debates (with voting)
  - Divide class into groups and teams, provide a debate motion, assign students to particular sides (proposing or opposing), supply instructions/resources, and have team members develop arguments to support the views assigned
  - Onsite workshops or online (synchronous web conferencing or asynchronous)





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What Faculty Want Librarians to Know

## Hyde Park Debate: The Friday Opening Session

November 7, 2014 Donald Hawkins Charleston Conference Blog

**Resolved: Wherever possible, library collections should be shaped by patrons, instead of by librarians.**

This debate followed the Oxford Union rules. Before it began, attendees were asked to vote on the resolution, and again afterwards. The winner of the debate is the one who caused the most audience members to change their votes. At the beginning, the vote was 58% in favor and 42%.



Hyde Park Debaters: David Magier (L) and Rick Anderson (R)

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had become the norm across America." ...

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Hyde Park Debate - Resolved:  
Whenever possible, library collections should be  
shaped by patrons, instead of by librarians

Rick Anderson and David Magier  
November 7, 2014

0:00 / 42:17



## 2014 Charleston Conference Hyde Park Debate



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## Sintoblog

A blog on library and information management issues for members of SINTO - the information partnership, a consortium of library and information services in Yorkshire and the north Derbyshire.

**Thursday, 28 February 2008**

### Equity & excellence in the Public Library

Library professionals inevitably spend a great deal of their time focusing on the day-to-day issues of running library services but occasionally we debate the principles that underpin what we do. One such debate is currently taking place in the pages of our professional journals and librarians from our area are taking a leading role in this debate.

This debate was sparked by Bob Usherwood, Emeritus Professor of Librarianship, University of Sheffield and Chair of SINTO. His new book *Equity and Excellence in the Public Libraries: why ignorance is not our heritage*, was published last year by Ashgate. Prof Usherwood summarised his views in an Opinion piece in Update 6(12) December 2007 p22.

His argument is that too many public librarians steer clear of making value judgments when choosing stock and as a result are "failing to counteract the ignorance and prejudice engendered by a society that cultivates celebrity, cash and trash." It is a cause of concern for Bob that so many librarians "appear unable or unwilling to make a judgement about the quality of books or other material." He further suggests that libraries should focus on services to encourage and support people with learning difficulties and others who do not deliberately embrace ignorance rather than "larger louts, chavs and other imposters masquerading as [the] true working class" (Usherwood quoting Knightley). "Such groups" claims Bob "are not by any means genuine representatives of the disadvantaged, and public librarians have to be very wary of the siren voices of those policy makers and others who mistakenly seek to promote their interests on the name of inclusion and equity."



**CILIP blogger**



CILIP blogger

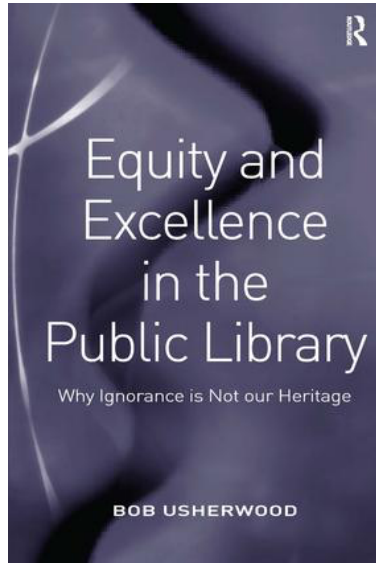
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- **2011** (47)
- **2010** (29)
- **2009** (65)
- ▼ **2008** (54)
  - **November** (3)
  - **October** (1)
  - **September** (2)
  - **August** (2)
  - **July** (4)

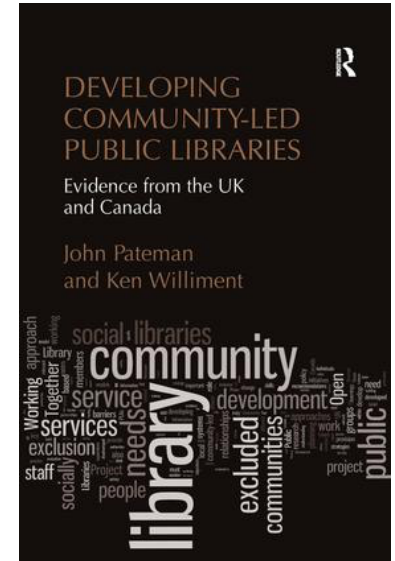




Should users be directly involved in core aspects of the public library service or can only professional judgment create an excellent service – a prerequisite of true equity?

### Bob Usherwood vs John Pateman

“...being excellent for a dwindling number of traditional library users will not safeguard our future”



“To advocate social inclusion without being concerned about the quality and standards of the inclusive experience is dishonest”

- IS EXCELLENCE ELITISM and equity populism?
- Are the two for ever in opposition?
- Does the principle of universal access have to mean dumbing down?
- Does equity rely on access to excellence, or does excellence, in fact, compromise equity?

**The Sinto Debate**  
**Equity & Excellence**  
**in the Public Library**  
Sheffield, 2008

(Walker & Manecke, 2009)





# Conclusion

- Providing the historical context for a professional topic can help students gain a fuller understanding of the issues
  - and of attitudes they may encounter in the workplace
- Courses that emphasize complex fast-moving environments can benefit particularly by referencing their common heritage
  - and drawing on material from other settings and cultures
- We need to go beyond just citing seminal papers in lectures to assigning classic articles as required readings for activities
  - and providing questions or specific points for consideration
- We need to move historical background to the foreground and be sure students appreciate its importance and value
  - and engage actively with the issue via collaborative inquiry



# Questions and comments

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