Contemporary Issues in Collection Management

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Editor's Introduction

MICHAEL B. MCNALLY

It is a great pleasure to present the edited collection *Contemporary Issues in Collection Management (CIiCM).* This work arises from the excellent efforts of a diverse set of authors, and presents a series of thoughtful and engaging perspectives into collection management issues. While the book provides current, nuanced and informative discussions of various collection management topics, it more importantly highlights the changing nature of scholarship by underscoring the crucial role students can play as scholars and contributors to scholarly conversations and (open) educational resources.

As evinced by the topics in the books, the sub-field of collection management is faced with no shortage of current challenges. From the impact of technology and development of new publishing approaches and business models to an increasingly diversified array of formats and subject matter for collecting, librarians in public, academic and other settings are beset with numerous potential challenges in developing collections that reflect their community and users. *CIiCM* is not meant as introductory text on the subject collection management. For readers looking for an introductory treatment of the subject see Evans & Saponaro (2019), Gregory (2019) or Johnson (2018). However, *CIiCM* functions as a complement to these works by examining and explicating contemporary issues. While *CIiCM* has been written from a Canadian and North American perspective, the chapters hold relevance to librarians working in any jurisdiction.

The book also comes at a particularly timely period as libraries across North America face increased challenges over their collections. In 2022 the American Library Association (ALA) reported the highest number of demands to censor books since it began collecting such data (ALA, n.d.). Library collections have

become deeply politicized (Burnett, 2022; Carlisle, 2022; Gowen 2022; Kurtz, 2022), making the subject of collection management eminently relevant. The situation has become particularly critical and divisive in some jurisdictions, especially in relation to school library collections (Gore, 2023). While the politicization of collections is a salient concern within the field, other major issues such as the impact of new publishing and distribution models, technological change, the oligopolization of the publishing industry, and growing concerns around improving the accessibility collections are also important currents. Given these developments, *CIiCM*'s chapters serve a particularly timely role in addressing these and more contemporary issues.

CIiCM also demonstrates the power and potential of open education and open pedagogy. Arising from a need to move beyond disposable assignments (Wiley, 2013) and also in recognition of the Association of College and Research Libraries' *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* (ACRL, 2016), the book demonstrates the role students can play as contributors to scholarly discussions and resources. *Contemporary Issues in Collection Management* had its genesis in the in person class LIS 531 Collection Management from the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta in the Fall 2022 semester. While the Collections Management class served as the spring board for the book, all of the authors here have had to contribute their own voluntary labour outside of the classroom to further developing their work for *CIiCM*. In addition, while *CIiCM* stands to complement existing collections management textbooks, it stands out as an openly licensed work.

The book begins with "Physical or Digital: The Fundamental Challenge of Modern Collection Development" by Julia Sieben and Winston Pei. Their chapter explores the tensions in resource type, and underscores the considerations involved in managing physical or digital materials. Continuing the theme of technology, "As Seen on BookTok: Exploring Intersections Between TikTok and Public Library Collection Development" by Chelsea Chiovelli and Kelsey Cameron examines the impact of TikTok on library collections.

Chiovelli and Cameron guide the reader through several aspects including surges in demand and the need to ensure balance within a collection.

The third chapter, "Challenges to 2SLGTBQ+ Collections: A Guide for Libraries" by Marty Grande-Sherbert, Nicole Pope and Andrew Ip provides a through treatment of concerns related to 2SLGTBQ+ materials. In addition to extensive discussion of the subject, the authors foreground their work with a strong ethical commitment to inclusion.

In "Locked In: EBook Loan Limitations and Licensing Agreements in Public Libraries", Danielle Deschamps discusses the impact of ebook licensing agreements. The chapters presents a series of thoughtful options for librarians wishing to overcome the limitations of onerous ebook licensing terms. Complementing the focus on ebooks is Amy Nowakowsky and Kat Voy's "The Ebook Pricing War: The Fight for Control Between Libraries and Publishers." Nowakowsky and Voy's chapter scrutinizes the power of publishers, particularly in relation to price setting for ebooks. Taken collectively the chapters by Deschamps and Nowakowky and Voy provide a thorough treatment of ebooks.

The sixth chapter, "Issues in the Management of Accessible Collections in Public Libraries for People with Physical Disabilities", by Grace Turnbull, Reis Pouliot and Sadaf Hakimizadeh investigates another important and timely issue in collections – accessibility. Their chapter covers the range of challenges faced by users with physical disabilities and provides an illuminating discussion of potential responsibilities. This chapter is followed by Faye Willauer's "What Little We Know About the Hidden Challenges for Library Users with Invisible Disabilities." Willauer's contribution examines the often overlooked, but critically important issue of accessibility for individuals with a range of disabilities too often overlooked. Taken collectively, the two chapters probe the issue of accessibility in collections with considerable depth.

Melissa Ramsey's "'Just in Time' Collection Development: Background and Current Challenges" is a thoughtful exploration of

demand-driven acquisition. Ramsey covers both the the limitations of demand-driven approaches, as well as highlight several useful responses to such limitations. In "Climate Change Considerations in Public Library Collection Development" Olesya Komarnytska and Maia Trotter take a novel approach to explicate how public libraries can respond to the climate crisis through their collections. Their chapter specifically highlights new initiatives by two Canadian public libraries in this regard. Finally, Dandi Wang centers academic libraries and an important collection development consideration in her chapter "Collection Development and Management of Research Data." Wang's work sheds light on how academic libraries must address issues of research data management as a collection function.

To assist the reader each chapter has been structured with common main headings – each chapter has a section entitled Introduction, Background and Current Context, Challenges, and Responses. Additionally, chapters conclude with a list of suggested resources and a full set of references.

Finally, I wish to once again underscore the considerable effort and excellent work from the authors. Their dedication to seeing through what began as a class assignment is notable, and it serves as a critical reminder that "students are consumers and creators of information who can participate successfully in collaborative spaces" (ACRL, 2016, p. 8). I also want to thank Michelle Brailey and Sarah Shaughnessy from University of Alberta Libraries without whom this book would not be possible. Inevitably the book may contain some small errors, and I alone am responsible for these.

Michael B. McNally,
July 2023

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1. Physical or Digital: The Fundamental Challenge of Modern Collection Development

JULIA SIEBEN AND WINSTON PEI

Introduction

With the emergence of digital book and information technologies in the last several decades, libraries are increasingly having to make decisions not only about the content that will constitute their collections, but also about the format in which they will acquire this content.

Both academic and public libraries are working more and more on developing digital collections in an effort to keep up with this changing environment. As noted by the National Information Standards Organization as far back as 2007, the development of digital collections has moved from being "an ad hoc 'extra' activity" to a core service in many libraries and other cultural institutions (NISO, 2007, p.1). However, it is also worth acknowledging that reader preferences remain diverse despite the adoption of newer formats. Ebooks, print books, audiobooks, and combinations of all these forms are preferred by different readers, at different times, and in different situations, and it is the job of libraries to support all of these preferences and formats (Romano, 2015). Both print and digital materials have persuasive arguments for their adoption, as well as diverse and difficult challenges surrounding their acquisition, use, and retention. These new formats make necessary

a reassessment of collection use, user preferences, and collections policy and practices to enable effective collection development for both the short and long term.

This chapter seeks to give an overview of current trends and important considerations of collection development in the context of the physical vs. digital debate by investigating the benefits and limitations of both forms as well as aspects of their assessment, followed by a discussion of potential responses of libraries and scholars towards these challenges and issues, presenting both real-world examples and more general recommendations for best practices in our efforts to build balanced, effective, and sustainable collections.

Background and Current Context

The 'technology' for physical books has existed in some form for over 5000 years, with the earliest versions of libraries appearing soon after. That literal grounding in the physical has set the parameters for much of the traditions and practices of librarianship, with the specific development of the 'modern' western system of academic and public libraries taking place over the past two hundred years. But the much more recent development and widespread adoption of digital media – especially in the last two decades – has disrupted many of those practices and introduced the need for new ones designed for the digital age.

The Shift to Digital

A survey of the literature does suggest a general trend of movement towards more digital collections in libraries, both academic and public. Reviews of mid 2000's collection management and

development literature describe "the shift from print resources to electronic resources" (Xie & Matusiak, 2016, p.40) as a main characteristic of changing local collections, and this shift has continued. The academic literature is teeming with case studies of academic libraries' processes of moving to create more digitally focused collections and pare down physical ones (Haugh, 2016; Glazier & Spratt, 2016; Demoville & Wood, 2016; Boice et al., 2017; Rao et al., 2016; Goodwin, 2014), and a study done in regards to ebook collections in public libraries across the U.S. saw 94% of respondent libraries reporting that they offered ebooks to users in 2015 (Romano, 2015), suggesting a comparable emergence of digital materials in public libraries. Although trends of digitization exist across material types, this chapter speaks more largely to the collection of monographs, with an in depth examination of digital serials and other media and materials being beyond the scope of this chapter.

Regardless of type, digital collections are growing, and further evidence of this can be seen through examining library budgets. A recent study by the Institute of Museum and Library Services found that in public libraries in the U.S. between 2014 and 2018 "per person spending on physical materials decreased by six percent, while median per person spending on electronic materials increased 31 percent" (The Institute of Museum and Library Services, 2021, p.4). Other studies show that budgets for ebooks in U.S. academic libraries increased from 7.4% to 9.3% of total budgets between 2010 and 2016, with a "similar trend [apparent in] U.S. public libraries, with increased budget share from 1.7% in 2010 to 6.3% in 2015" (Maleki, 2021a, p.993-5). In some cases, budget changes are quite drastic. For example, the Australian Curtin University Library's ebook budget went from 52% to 90% of all monographs over a period of four years (Maleki, 2021a), and the Graduate School of Education in New York has seen ebook acquisitions take over 40-60% of the college's book budget (Haugh, 2016).

As apparent from the above discussion, there has certainly been

an increase in acquisition of electronic materials, and in some cases this very well could be at the expense of print. A 2016 study of U.S. academic libraries "showed that money spent on ebooks in about half of the libraries is likely to detriment print book budget (61%) more than any other area" (Maleki, 2021a, p.995), while a quarter of U.S. public libraries reported buying fewer print books, and 60% of U.S. public libraries reporting reallocating funding from other areas of their material budgets to purchase ebooks (Romano, 2015).

Maleki argues that "financial reasons are central to the substantial increase of ebooks and reduction in print books in academic libraries" (2021a, p.993), and cost and limited financial resources are a concern and unfortunate reality for all types of libraries. Conflicting conclusions can be seen throughout discussions of whether print or digital materials are actually more expensive, however. Some sources argue that print versions are often cheaper (Bailey et al., 2015; Rao et al., 2016), while some promote digital as the more cost effective option (Bunkell, 2009). Changing priorities in libraries, such as a shift to allocation of space to programming over shelving and storage, are also contributing to a new focus on digital over physical (Showers, 2015; Laerkes, 2016). However, cost and value should be considered with more complexity than solely dollar amounts, and consideration of immediate, long term, and peripheral costs such as storage, upkeep, and access all contribute to determining which format is most cost effective in a given library's context.

Reader Preference, Use, and Policies

The real question is whether this reallocation towards digital is actually reflective of user preferences and therefore warranted. Rose-Wiles et al. note a 25 year trend of declining print book circulation, with their study results aligning with other reports of trends in academic libraries towards a decrease in print book

circulation (2020). Other authors argue that the "decline in circulation is not universal" (Tanackovic et al., 2016, p.95) and that previous studies show mixed results on whether physical or digital books are more used (Goodwin, 2014). It is also worthwhile to note that Rose-Wiles et al.'s study continues on to suggest that "the declining use of print books is not due to increasing use of ebooks, since ebook use has declined at a similar rate" (2020, p.8), which somewhat muddles the conclusions that can be drawn on user preference. These uncertain conclusions are further complicated by developments in service delivery caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Significant spikes in ebook and electronic resource use (Goddard, 2020) due to restrictions on physical borrowing have made digital collections an even more unignorable consideration for libraries, although whether this trend will continue past the early years of the pandemic remains to be seen.

There is also evidence that material type and subject matter correlate with format preference. For example, digital journals are being embraced more widely than scholarly monographs, which are still generally preferred in print (Showers, 2015). While print is still used for some reading and research in almost any discipline (Tanackovic et al., 2016), some areas show a higher reliance on print materials, such as social sciences and liberal arts (McCombs, G. & Moran, A., 2016), art subjects (Downey et al., 2014), as well as children's and young adult materials (Romano, 2015).

Despite the growing prominence of digital materials, their ubiquity is not yet extensive enough to reasonably justify the abandonment of print materials. Some studies have found that significant numbers of print books lack electronic counterparts, while other studies report various levels of overlap between print and electronic duplicates, seeing ranges between about 17% to around 58% (Boice et al., 2017). These numbers also vary widely by subject matter and discipline of materials, but no subject area or discipline was found to have more than 70% of books also available in digital form (Rao et al., 2016), suggesting significant limitations in moving to entirely digital collections. Another factor Rao et al.

mention that creates different considerations and opportunities across collection areas, and between public and academic library contexts, is the tendency of publishers to focus on popular titles rather than academic materials, with "academic titles [constituting] just one tenth of all e-books available in the marketplace" (Rao et al., 2016, p.448).

One last noteworthy aspect of these trends to consider is the effect they have on institutional policies. Much like for physical collections, "[d]igital library collection development policy in general consists of goals/purposes, scope/types of content, priorities, and selection criteria" (Xie & Matusiak, 2016, p.41), and traditional collection development criteria – quality, relevancy, aesthetic and usability aspects, cost, currency, value, demand, etc. – are still largely applicable to digital materials. While the foundational principles and collection development criteria are similar, they can manifest in different ways when working with digital materials. Currency concerns may be more about updating frequency (Xie & Matusiak, 2016) or issues surrounding the delay in release of ebooks versus their print counterparts, which is noted to usually be between three to eighteen months (Rao et al., 2016). Usability concerns may require new considerations like technological literacy and access to devices, and cost may need to factor in new dimensions like contract and licensing agreements and costs over time like perpetual access or archiving ability (Xie & Matusiak, 2016).

In attempts to present a clear stance on these issues, libraries have made various modifications to collections policies. For example, the University of Texas Libraries has separate collection development policies for digital materials obtained or produced in various ways, dividing purchased or licensed materials, materials digitized by the University Library or the University, and collections of links and pointers (Xie & Matusiak, 2016). Other libraries, such as the Graduate School of Education (GSE) in New York have reworked policies to specify a preference for digital materials as much as possible (Haugh, 2016).

The Debate over the "Pros" and "Cons" of Physical "Versus" Digital

A final critical piece of background and current context that needs mentioning is the ongoing debate over the supposed "pros" and "cons" of both physical and digital formats, both in librarianship and academia as well as popular media. The wide ranging views and lack of consensus speak to the ongoing adjustment to these new formats.

The key advantages to the newer digital options include ease of access, ease of storage, and the availability of additional usability features such as links to additional information and personalization of the interface. A modern e-reader device can provide access to thousands of books through an object the same size and footprint as a traditional print book, if not smaller. Advocates also tout benefits such as ease of use (i.e. in-text searching, only accessing the parts needed) and personalization (changing layouts and appearance) (Haugh, 2016), and "24/7 access when visiting the library is inconvenient or impossible, as is the case with the growing number of distance learners" (Miller & Ward, 2022, p.43). Even advocates for print acknowledge benefits to digital:

> You can take thousands of digital texts on vacation without weighing down your suitcase. Electronic texts offer instant definitions or translations of words via dictionary software embedded in the reader. Digital texts often come with hyperlinks, videos, and websites embedded in the text. Plus, you don't have to kill trees to produce a digital text, making them far more sustainable than printed books (Brand, 2016, p.44).

That said, in the time since Brand made this pronouncement, there has also been an increasing awareness of the environmental costs of digital, such as the carbon footprint of running server farms and the mining of materials needed for the manufacture of electronic products. In an article on sustainability and e-waste in

InformationWeek, a U.S. west coast utility manager was quoted as saying "I can tell when a new data center comes online... The energy consumption in the system immediately spikes" (Shacklett, 2022). From energy to equipment, in his book World Wide Waste, Gerry McGovern points out how a single e-reader requires "50 times the minerals and 40 times the amount of water to manufacture than a print book" (2020), and how many print books one such device arguably 'replaces' is up for debate. So between the impacts from both manufacturing and ongoing usage, the sustainability advantage of digital is increasingly less clear, if it exists at all.

Meanwhile supporters of print highlight other features unique to the material physical objects, including being "human-readable," the issue already raised earlier in this chapter that not all materials exist in digital form (Huff, 2003), a sense of reliability and authority to a print copy, the browsability in physical stacks (Rose-Wiles, 2020), and the value of a tactile experience of reading (Brand, 2016). Recent research also continues to find a preference for reading in print, despite improvements in actual reading performance using digital platforms, as well as less cognitive load with reading in print formats (Clinton, 2019; Jeong, 2021).

And in perhaps the most important indicator in the battle of print versus digital formats, a 2021 Pew Research Center survey showed that, at least in the U.S., print still dominates reader preferences, with only three in ten Americans having read an ebook in the previous year (Favario, 2022).

Challenges

In discussing the challenges raised by the topic of balancing physical and digital materials, the elephant in the library is the fact that digital materials, platforms, and tools are still so new and also still constantly changing. This introduces a level of complexity and uncertainty to which the profession will need time to adapt, and for

which it will need to collect much more data with which to make better decisions. But even given this backdrop, already three key and interrelated challenges have emerged in addressing balanced collections development and management: storage, access, and preservation.

Storage

Whether addressing physical or electronic resources, storage of materials continues to present a fundamental challenge. On the physical side, there is a dual impact of not only natural limits to storage space for physical objects, but also a repurposing of existing space for uses other than stacks and storage. Showers raises the issue of the changing expectations of libraries, the result of which is that "large physical collections need to be rethought and space has to be reconfigured to meet the changing demands of users" (2015, p.24). Laerkes is even more direct, saying that simply housing collections and hosting fixed programming are "yesterday's needs. Modern libraries are less about books and more about people and community factors" (2016, p.90). At the University of Alberta, a Canadian top five university and medical school, the design of the new replacement Health Sciences Library will include onsite storage for only 80,000 of the library's current 200,000 titles, with the balance to be moved to the university's Research and Collections Resource Facility (RCRF), a closed stack storage facility located on a separate campus from which less frequently used items can be requested as needed (Miller, 2020). This raises the additional wrinkle that, even as libraries transform to address questions of patron need and space utilization, the displaced physical materials still need to go somewhere, whether that means moving them to dedicated – and in some cases even more specialized – storage space elsewhere, or disposal, with or without conversion to digital forms.

Meanwhile on the digital side, while digital materials do save on traditional physical storage requirements, content being held 'virtually' or 'in the cloud' is not in reality without the need of physical infrastructure and their associated costs, such as the energy expenditures mentioned above. Furthermore, Erin Passehl-Stoddart, Head of Special Collections and Archives at the University of Idaho, rightly points out that "[d]igital storage space faces its own challenges of people thinking there is no cost to server space, or just throw everything into the cloud for cheap" (Preservation and the Future in the Northwest, 2017, p. 15). The physical infrastructure is simply more hidden now, existing as massive server farms and digital storage facilities out of the sight of patrons and librarians, a condition that actually applies equally to off site, high density physical facilities. But even if we restrict the discussion to the digital realm, digital materials still take up "space" in the form of bits and bytes of data. For libraries maintaining their own digital resources and archives, that involves maintaining extensive in-house IT infrastructure. For subscription-based digital services, that cost is once again hidden outside/behind the contractual descriptions of the services being offered. In effect, the move to digital does not 'solve' storage challenges, merely adds options and complexity to a fundamental problem that must still be addressed.

So while the basic question of prioritization and weeding remains the same, the increased options in format add a new layer of complexity to questions of storage. And in either case, the question of where it is stored leads directly to the question of how we then access it. Whether in a physical or digital format, library materials will serve no one if they cannot be found and used.

Access

On the physical side, the redeployment of space away from stacks directly accessible by patrons (and also librarians) means that the

browsability of the physical collection becomes reduced, or at least changed. Carr provides an excellent summary of this debate in his 2015 article "Serendipity in the Stacks", saying serendipity is "in the eyes of many, an imperiled phenomenon," (p.832) although he concludes by saying that "librarians today will benefit from an understanding of the problematic processes and perceptions that may underlie this form of discovery" (p.840). In framing access in this way, Carr highlights not only that physical stacks may not be the only way to deliver serendipity, but that serendipity itself may in fact be a symptom rather than a solution. In particular, Carr identifies two issues with serendipity: "serendipity is problematic because it is an indicator of a potential misalignment between user intention and process outcome. And, from a perception-based standpoint, serendipity is problematic because it can encourage user-constructed meanings for libraries that are rooted in opposition to change rather than in users' immediate and evolving information needs" (2015, p.840). That said, in their later study of the use of print books, Rose-Wiles et al. argue that even with the spread of digital information, still "many authors stress the value of browsing physical collections, especially the serendipitous discovery of material" (Rose-Wiles, 2020, p.3). But regardless of whether serendipity is a symptom or a feature, the options introduced by digital materials, as well as digital cataloguing and searching, do cast the qualities of physical materials in a new light, with other basic characteristics of physical materials now potentially reframed as limitations. For example, the fact that access to physical materials requires physical presence and potentially travel, either by the patron or the object, creates a friction that has always been a limitation to access, but now heightened by the relative ease in the distribution of digital resources.

And yet access to digital resources is not without its own limitations. On one level, the fact that digital materials are not directly human-readable creates an immediate digital divide, where access to the materials also requires access to an extensive additional infrastructure that includes computers or computing

devices, electrical power generation, and the internet. This is compounded by a skills divide, where not only is basic literacy required for access to these materials, but an accompanying level of digital literacy is necessary now as well.

The required, and ironically very physical, 'digital' infrastructure is also a contributing factor in the reallocation of physical space in libraries, where the square footage formerly used for storage of physical materials is often being replaced, at least in part, with the computer workstations needed to access materials or for patrons to bring in and use their own equipment to do the same. To return to the example of the new University of Alberta Health Sciences Library, Chief Librarian Dale Askey describes how "[s]tudy spaces, group study rooms, more technology, and possible quasi-lab spaces are all part of the vision for the modernized Health Sciences Library space" (Miller, 2020).

Just as access to physical resources was limited by the control of the materials, for example the chaining of physical books to lecterns or the literal gatekeeping at the doors of monasteries and private libraries, digital materials bring with them similar challenges, again made more complex by the new options and dynamics they introduce. For example, the new digital subscription models, with their unique storage issues mentioned previously, also introduce the digital equivalents of chains and gatekeepers in the form of Digital Rights Management (DRM) and membership-only access, whether granted to individuals or institutions. The way these new digital gates and chains operate also represents a more fundamental shift in power in terms of control over information resources. The concern around such limitations is such that in 2019 the Canadian Federation of Library Associations released their "Position Statement on E-Books and Licensed Digital Content in Public Libraries," raising the issue that:

> Many publishers withhold ebooks from public libraries, or use excessive pricing and restrictive licensing to make purchasing functionally impossible for some libraries. This

situation will deteriorate if the Canadian government does not take action by identifying policy solutions that prevent restrictive licensing and pricing practices and encourage fair commercial practice (CFLA, 2019, p.1).

They conclude by arguing that the Government of Canada needs to develop policy solutions that ensure access to digital content through libraries, thus also highlighting the new legal complexities that digital materials have introduced to librarianship. While the underlying principles of copyright are certainly not new, their application in relation to new digital technologies and distribution models very much is. In discussing digital-native concepts like perpetual access, Polchow rightly identifies that "[i]n the process of exploring perpetual access, knowledge of licensing and the legal framework is important, as well as understanding copyright and fair use... perpetual access to e-resources encompasses a complex ecosystem of licensing agreements and copyright law, technological infrastructure, and staff expertise" (2021, p.111). And this is only one of many implementations of digital access.

Digital resources introduce a challenging new landscape for librarians to navigate, and place new responsibilities onto librarians' shoulders to be aware of the legal ramifications of the collection, access, and use of their materials.

Then even as questions of storage and access are being addressed, the question that immediately follows is "for how long?" And once again, both physical and digital realms share challenges, this time with preservation.

Preservation

This preservation question is two-fold: 1) For how long should we keep the materials in question? And, especially relevant to digital materials, 2) for how long can we keep the materials in question?

For physical materials, the question of preservation is on one level closely tied to that of storage. Since the first clay tablets, of which some remain but certainly not all, physical materials have been at risk from the "Ten Agents of Deterioration": dissociation, theft, physical forces, fire, water, incorrect temperature, incorrect humidity, exposure to light, pests, and pollutants (Canadian Conservation Institute, 2017). Especially if the goal is preservation, storage facilities need to be designed to address all ten of these factors, which contributes to the cost of storage, not to mention ongoing maintenance and care by professionals. But with proper care, physical materials have proven to be long lasting, with known parameters for preservation. That said, the costs and investment required are also well known.

In contrast, the question of digital preservation again takes on an added level of complexity impacted not only by traditional deterioration issues, but also by issues of technology and business models. One basic challenge is the notably short lifespans of digital media and technologies, especially in contrast to traditional physical ones, as highlighted in Figure 1 below.
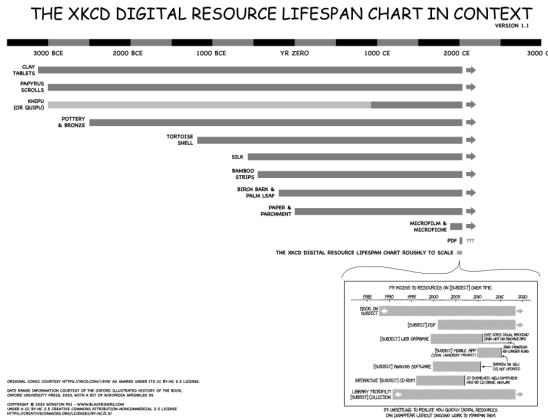

Figure 1: The XKCD Digital Resource Lifespan Chart in Context. A long description can be found in Appendix A.

As mentioned previously, digital infrastructure still lives on physical infrastructure and that infrastructure remains vulnerable to flood and fire, physical forces, theft/vandalism, temperature, and the like, albeit in different ways. But then other uniquely digital challenges also come into play. Already there are materials that are no longer usable because of the obsolescence of the mediating technology layer, such as materials stored on Zip disks, in an expired file format, or the expiry of the original hosting website. In their introduction to Government Information in Canada, Wakaruk and Li (2019) outline numerous examples of this kind of issue within the Government of Canada, from a collection of research reports and transcripts submitted to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples being available only through a now obsolete software application and operating system, to whole websites and web content removed without official documentation, for policy reasons that fail to take into account the importance of preservation. And returning to their article outlining perpetual access to digital materials, Polchow makes clear the complexity of digital preservation of e-resources, including "navigating intellectual property, social contracts, and technology access issues, and finding methods to handle an increase in the number of Open Access resources" (2021, p.107). They continue by outlining issues with link rot, content retrieval issues with open access materials, and the continuing expansion of e-resource formats. In their Digital Preservation Handbook, the Digital Preservation Coalition also outlines several other threats to digital materials, including the phenomenon known as 'bit rot' where "streams of bits need to be captured and retained over time, without loss or damage, to ensure the survival of digital materials… bits [that] may be ignored, abandoned, accidentally deleted or maliciously destroyed" (2022).

This added complexity and contrast in lifespan and history is perhaps the biggest differentiator when comparing physical with digital resources.

In short, the major issues of collection management, such as storage, access, and preservation, have not been "solved" by the

development of digital alternatives. Both physical and digital materials provide unique benefits that serve differing needs for patrons and librarians alike, but the challenges remain, and if anything have been made more complex by the introduction of new technological options. And unlike the underlying code of our digital options, the answer is not binary.

Ultimately, it is simply that most basic of librarianship questions – what do we keep?

Responses

In responding to these challenges, a handful of approaches stand out as important considerations for future collection development and management: collective collections, "rightsizing" and conscious selection, and appropriate tools for access and assessment.

Collective Collections

The idea of collective collections speaks to a more holistic approach to collection management. In effect it is an extension of the 'E' in the MUSTIE methodology for collection maintenance and weeding, where materials might be removed based on being (M)isleading, (U)gly, (S)uperseded, (T)rivial, (I)rrelevant, or available (E)lsewhere (American Library Association, 2018). As Miller and Ward rightly warn, if libraries all weed their collections individually and with little or no coordination, what will remain will be an uncoordinated, piecemeal collection of what is left (2022). The idea of the collective collection then is to work together in order to make more efficient use of space and resources, and applies to both physical and digital collections.

In regards to physical materials, collective collections or "shared

print programs" are initiatives largely borne in the academic library sphere that see libraries "collaborating to retain, develop, and provide access to their physical collections" (Miller & Ward, 2022, p.42). Various sources also cite examples and promote collaboration at institutional or organizational, regional, or national levels that involves coordinating preservation and storage efforts, and by extension de-duplication and withdrawal activities (Showers, 2015; Schmidt, 2016).

These approaches can save money and space, both physical and digital, for many libraries. Linares & Ferrer explain that currently many libraries already share storage facilities, albeit with little collaborative management between collections (2016). They go on to say that "cooperative storage is seen as the most practical and effective solution to the efficient supply of low-use print materials which also solves the problems of limited space in libraries" (Linares & Ferrer, 2016, p.171). By coordinating their storage activities, all parties could benefit. While all of Schmidt's mentioned examples of collective collection efforts did report savings on capital expenditures by not having to build new local storage facilities and in reduced maintenance costs enabled by economies of scale (2016), it is important to remember that these benefits come with their share of potential challenges. Shared vision, agreements on service models and ownership of materials, coordination of different databases and library systems, development of shared principles and practices, especially in approaches to metadata, and determination of appropriate collection arrangements can all become potential obstacles in efforts to build and maintain collective collections (Schmidt, 2016).

Collaborative collection management in the digital context is often implemented in closer relation to the selection process, as opposed to a greater focus on retention, deselection, and withdrawal in regards to print materials. In order to address current challenges such as financial constraints and widely varying user needs and preferences, it is suggested that "a collaborative digital collection should be the direction of libraries" (Xie & Matusiak, 2016,

p.41). Collective collection development can reduce costs and lead to increased access. Partnership between institutions can bring access to resources that would be otherwise unaffordable individually, and institutional coalitions can lead to increased bargaining power during vendor negotiations, enabling libraries to advocate for more favourable terms of use for the digital resources in question (Xie & Matusiak, 2016). These aspects of terms and licensing can also create potential challenges in a cooperative context, however, for example fair allocation of access between consortial group member institutions of different sizes in situations where licensing is based upon a certain number of uses. Beyond complex issues of licensing and terms of use, as with shared print collections, collaborative digital collections also come with their own list of other caveats. They can lead to reduction of local autonomy and collection diversity, create issues when it comes to trying to keep institutional user data separate, and limit member libraries' ability to build collections to satisfy their unique needs (Xie & Matusiak, 2016).

A closely related branch of collective digital collections is the concept of ebook interlibrary loans (ILL), a phenomenon closely researched by Zhu in 2018. Zhu describes two main views on ebook ILL among library scholars: 1) the pessimistic perspective that licensing issues have "deadlocked [ebook] usage through ILL" (Zhu, 2018, p.344) and that it would require an unrealistic amount of work to try and change these existing practices and structures, and 2) a more optimistic perspective that sees space for ILL librarians to work to reduce restrictions and obstacles through local license negotiations to facilitate increased resource sharing and ebook ILL. Zhu's study found that although the majority of libraries rejected ILL requests for complete ebooks, they were slightly more likely to fill chapter requests. Zhu also notes that it is not uncommon for libraries to simply have policies that they do not practice ebook ILL as a matter of convenience in order to avoid messy licensing and legal concerns. This comes at the potential cost of "opportunities to maintain and advocate for a sharing culture and tradition" (Zhu,

2018, p.349). Zhu draws from their findings that "[t]he future of [ebook] ILL may depend on the evolution of larger issues, such as open access, scholarly communication methods, adoption of new purchasing/access models, and the continuing negotiation between libraries and the publishers/vendors regarding the use rights of electronic resources" (Zhu, 2018, p.350), and appears to align more closely with the optimistic viewpoint, promoting library advocacy towards greater opportunities for sharing digital resources.

"Rightsizing" and Conscious Selection

As discussed throughout this chapter, there are many reasons why libraries may not want to focus solely on either physical or digital collections, and from the evidence presented, in general a best practice would appear to be finding a balance between print and electronic materials. One example of an approach to this issue is the practice of "rightsizing," which is an "ongoing process that maintains a collection's optimal physical size" (Miller & Ward, 2022, p.42). While "rightsizing" is the specific and named approach largely developed by Ward, the literature does lend further support to the underlying concepts, with others such as Rose-Wiles et al. similarly promoting balanced collections and "working from the premise that print books still have value in an academic library, [suggesting] that a better solution will be to improve the content, design and promotion of print collections in ways that complement rather than compete with electronic resources and physical workspaces" (2020, p.10). As mentioned earlier, some subject areas are characterized by low preference for and availability of electronic resources, making a complete shift to digital collections unrealistic. Disciplines like the social sciences and liberal arts have shown greater preference for print materials (McCombs & Moran, 2016), while in subject areas like visual arts it is unclear whether low penetration of electronic

resources is due to preference or low availability of digital materials (Yao, 2014). In any case, authors such as Boice et al. echo sentiments like that of Rose-Wiles et al., agreeing that both effective management of physical collections as well as incorporation of alternative formats are important (Boice et al., 2017).

While these approaches often do favour electronic over print materials where possible, they do so with an eye to sustainability, stressing both the importance of stability in electronic access, and the retention and preservation of important and unique print resources, drawing on practices of collective collections and shared print programs to optimize the efficiency of these activities (Ward & Miller, 2022).

Emerging practices such as controlled digital lending can also be potential solutions to concerns about preserving physical materials safely in the context of the legal complexities surrounding digitization. Conscious attention in selection efforts can also play a big role in optimizing balance and efficacy of collections. Joint suggests that issues that arise in digital collection preservation can in some cases be mitigated by choosing appropriate collections to acquire in the digital form. For example, resources such as exam guides or practice tests that are quickly outdated and not retained for long periods of time would not necessitate the same attention to worrying about being lost or inaccessible years down the road in the case of system or software updates (Joint, 2006). Beyond content of the collections, different selection models and practices can also assist in maximizing balance and usefulness of collections. Methods like data- or patron-driven acquisitions and selective title purchasing over mass electronic package deals can often lead to higher use, closer alignment with user needs and preferences, and lower costs (Haugh, 2016), although these approaches come with their own pitfalls of potentially limiting diversity and the long-term research value of academic collections (Blume, 2019).

Accurate assessment of usage and need

As with almost every other dimension of collection management, the fundamental issues facing both physical and digital collection assessment and evaluation are again similar between formats. In both cases it is essential to reflect on whether our assessment and evaluation tools are giving an accurate picture of the ways and amounts that resources are being used in order to determine if collections are effectively serving users and worth the money and resources libraries expend to acquire and maintain them. White raises an important point in their claim that "the term 'use' as utilised by library scientists, is often vague, general, and can mean any interaction involving a library" (White, 2021, p.110). While the basic goal – an accurate depiction of use – is the same, once again the considerations and approaches taken to print and digital materials need to be slightly different.

Increasingly important as justification for retention of print materials and browsable in-house stack space, especially in the face of increasingly digital collections and increasingly diverse physical library spaces, a large focus of print collection assessment is on assessing use beyond just circulation statistics or check-outs, which can be deceptively misrepresentational of actual use of materials. Rose-Wiles et al. describe methods to attempt to measure in-house use, including counts for re-shelving and methods like monitoring papers that would be disturbed when an item was taken off the shelf or moved. They also note that surveys assessing user re-shelving of materials suggest that even these methods most likely significantly underestimate actual in house usage levels (Rose-Wiles et al., 2020). But even accounting for the level of estimation, these methods can give libraries a more quantitative argument for retaining print materials in the physical library.

Similarly, the most obvious measurements for digital materials, such as ebook circulations and views, can also give incomplete insight into the usage and value of electronic resources. Citations,

downloads, and altmetrics are suggested as supplementary assessment dimensions to give a more holistic picture. Citations are seen as a more telling measure of impact for scholarly work, while downloads can suggest use for less scholarly or academic purposes. Alternative metrics, or altmetrics, is a "type of crowd-sourced peer-review or practice" and can help identify use in less conventional spheres and applications (White, 2021, p.110). Turnaway rates, or the number of times users try to view a single use ebook that is already currently being used, are yet another metric that can be helpful for libraries in making selection decisions and for justifying certain access terms or models for electronic resources (Haugh, 2016).

In a slightly different but related way, holdings data has also traditionally been used to measure impact of materials, and can factor into collection development decisions. Maleki has done considerable work in holdings and impact assessment, and suggests that print holdings "indicate a more stable distribution pattern" (Maleki, 2021a, p.1017), while differences in acquisition methods (most notably package purchasing/licensing of e-resources) can lead to deceptive appearances in digital and ebook holdings (Maleki, 2021b). Thus it is recommended to use total holdings data more carefully, and further speaks to the importance of having a close and critical eye to the methodology and analysis involved in evaluation of collections.

Multiple methods of access

Yet another aspect factoring into the use and efficacy of collections is usability and ways in which resources can be accessed. Print materials obviously benefit from being kept in prominent physical locations where they can be easily seen and browsed, however presentation must be considered in regards to digital collections, too. Some illustrations of this are Perrin's examples of a yearbook digitization project at Texas Tech University, and digitization of

materials in the Lubbock City Planning Project. The yearbook project was an incredibly time and effort intensive project that spent two years producing metadata for digitized objects in order to deliver features that in the end were not particularly valued or important to the user base, while the Lubbock City Planning Project is a cautionary tale of incomplete planning and lack of communication in a multi-phased digitization of the City Planning Department's documents, with differences in document types and related metadata capabilities between phases resulting in a rather dysfunctional overall collection. Unfortunately, often the presentation of digital collections is based more on "what the project team thinks would be good than what patrons actually need" (Perrin, 2016, p.241) and leads to a lot of wasted time and effort. Libraries are encouraged to learn from these mistakes and put conscious effort into the display and accessibility of collections.

In regards to access and use of collections, there have also been some innovative and interesting approaches that attempt to reduce the differences between physical and digital materials. Enis (2014) describes instances of physical libraries endeavouring to match the convenient anytime- and anywhere-accessible nature inherent in digital resources with their physical collections. Although they have reportedly had varying levels of success and have come with their own challenges, ideas like library vending machines – automated units with small collections that can facilitate checkouts, returns, membership registrations, and holds pickups – and smartlockers that make hold pickups available across a wider range of times and locations (Enis, 2014) are a few examples of libraries bringing physical collections further outside their doors and making them more conveniently accessible in ways that could potentially put them on closer footing with digital resources.

In the other direction, there have also been efforts to make using electronic materials more similar to the experience of reading a physical book. Many of the more anecdotal pieces arguing for retention of print books mention the feeling of holding a book, turning the pages, the smell of an old volume, or on a slightly

more 'scientific' level, the value of using physical elements to aid in memory or information retrieval (Brand, 2016). Display platforms have addressed these preferences by allowing readers options to use page turning graphics and sounds, by retaining original pagination or layouts in digital formats (Brand, 2016), or in one case by offering scratch and sniff stickers that can be placed on the hardware used to access digital materials to emulate the musty smell of old books (Sweeney, 2009).

Approaches such as these attest to the value of being in tune with user needs and preferences. Through close attention and awareness of what users actually want, and with a little bit of effort and innovation, libraries can make significant strides to offset both the objective and the more subjective disadvantages of both print and digital collections. At the end of the day, it is unlikely that everyone will be 100% satisfied all the time no matter what libraries do, but there are certainly many realistic solutions to many of the challenges of delivering balanced and useful overall collections to users.

Conclusion

The balancing of collections between physical and digital materials arguably underpins and complicates all other aspects of collection management in contemporary librarianship. And yet the solutions remain as fundamental as the challenges. The major themes in response – collective collections, "rightsizing" and conscious selection, accurate assessment of usage and need, multiple methods of access – would apply even if digital materials were not at issue and the profession of librarianship had only to adjust to the growth in volume in print materials. Although there may be unprecedented complexity and pace of change associated with digital materials, the process and rationale for that change will simply be a continuation

of the work librarians have been doing since the inception of the profession.

That said, we can conclude one thing: our ultimate response will be physical AND digital, not one or the other, just as librarians have adapted our methods and approaches to the change from clay to papyrus and fabric, to paper and parchment, to microfiche and tape, taking full advantage of the unique qualities of each new medium. Provided we continue to keep our ultimate purpose and goals in mind even as we focus and specialize on particular aspects of librarianship, the issues of media and format will continue to resolve themselves in their time.

Sources for Further Reading

Brand, C. (2016). In defense of the printed book. *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, & Cultural Heritage, 17*(1), 44–46. https://doi.org/10.5860/rbm.17.1.457

> Recommended as a reminder that there is more to the experience of reading than simply information-seeking, such as Brand's description of "the pinch," that moment when a reader knows they are near the end of the book because there are so few pages left between the fingers of one hand, "the physical manifestation of the emotion a reader experiences near the end of a good book" (p. 45).

Darnton, R. (2010). The case for books: Past, present, and future. *Public Affairs.*

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Written by former Director of the Harvard University Library
and a pioneer in the history of the book, The Case for Books
is a collection of essays, lectures, and other writings by
Robert Darnton discussing the place of physical books in the
digital world. Of particular interest would be the chapter
titled "The Future of Libraries" in which Darnton concludes
with a call to "[d]igitize and democratize" (p. 58).

Goodwin, C. (2014). The e-Duke scholarly
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An interesting case study of the Kimbel Library at Coastal
Carolina University comparing print and e-book use
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specific case study, it is relatively rare for studies to compare
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A guide of best practices from the National Information

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A relatively recent resource presenting the findings of an extensive survey on ebook usage in U.S. public libraries. Interesting quantitative and more generalizable data on ebook usage in the public library context.

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A useful analysis of the "complex relationship between publishing and the digital sphere" comparing ebooks and traditional publishing. Explores issues including the differing business models between Apple and Amazon for ebooks, digital rights management, privacy and consumer data, and the enduring appeal of print books.

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> Gives a detailed guide to 'rightsizing' or optimizing of physical collections to best serve users, with a focus on academic libraries specifically. The book aims to help librarians approach evaluation and deselection, and to offer practical advice.

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Appendix A: Long Description of *Figure 1 – The XKCD Digital Resource Lifespan Chart in Context*

This figure consists of a horizontal bar-style chart showing a comparative timeline of different book technologies.

Under the title of *The XKCD Digital Resource Lifespan Chart in Context, version 1.1*, there is an alternating bar of black and grey rectangles representing a 6000-year scale of time in 500-year increments, labelled every 1000 years from 3000 BCE to 3000 CE.

Below the timescale are twelve bars representing different book technologies, with the bars 1 to 4 spanning most of the width of the figure, bars 5 to 9 spanning approximately half the width, and bars 10 to 12, which represent technologies that require additional equipment in order to read the book, spanning less than 1/100th of the width:

1. Clay Tablets – a dark grey bar from approximately 3200 BCE to 2000 CE, with an arrow indicating a continuation into the future
2. Papyrus Scrolls – a dark grey bar from approximately 3000 BCE to 2000 CE, with an arrow indicating a continuation into the future
3. Khibu (or Quipu) – a light grey from approximately 3000 BCE to 900 CE, then a dark grey bar from 900 CE to 2000 CE, with an arrow indicating a continuation into the future
4. Pottery & Bronze – a dark grey bar from approximately 2500 BCE to 2000 CE, with an arrow indicating a continuation into the future
5. Tortoise Shell – a dark grey bar from approximately 1200 BCE to 2000 CE, with an arrow indicating a continuation into the future
6. Silk – a dark grey bar from approximately 600 BCE to 2000 CE, with an arrow indicating a continuation into the future
7. Bamboo Strips – a dark grey bar from approximately 400 BCE to 2000 CE, with an arrow indicating a continuation into the future
8. Birch Bark & Palm Leaf – a dark grey bar from approximately 200 BCE to 2000 CE, with an arrow indicating a continuation into the future
9. Paper & Parchment – a dark grey bar from approximately Year 0 to 2000 CE, with an arrow indicating a continuation into the future
10. Microfilm & Microfiche – a short dark grey bar from approximately 1800 CE to 2000 CE, with an arrow indicating a continuation into the future
11. PDF – a tiny narrow grey bar spanning approximately 20 years, from 2000 to 2020, with three question marks after indicating an uncertain future
12. The XKCD Digital Resource Lifespan Chart Roughly to Scale – a tiny light grey rectangle spanning approximately 40 years, from 1980 to 2020

In the bottom right hand quadrant of the chart, the original XKCD comic, titled *My Access to Resources on [Subject] Over Time*, is reproduced as a zoomed in detail of the grey rectangle in row 12 above. It shows a time scale in five-year increments from 1985 to 2020, with seven bars below it:

1. Book on Subject – full width grey bar with arrows on both ends indicating extension beyond the timescale
2. [Subject].pdf – a grey bar running from 2003 to the left edge, with an arrow on the right indicating extension beyond the timescale
3. [Subject] Web Database – a grey bar running from approximately 1999, with part of the bar ending at 2011 with the label "Site goes down, backend data not on Archive.org" and the rest ending at 2017 with the label "Java frontend no longer runs"
4. [Subject] Mobile App (Local University Project) – a grey bar running from 2010 to 2015, ending with the label "Broken on new OS, not updated" pointing to it with an arrow
5. [Subject] Analysis Software – a grey bar running from 2000 to 2010, ending with an arrow pointing to it from the same label as above, "Broken on new OS, not updated"
6. Interactive [Subject] CD-ROM – a grey bar running from approximately 1995 to 2007, ending with the label "CD scratched, new computer has no CD drive anyway."
7. Library Microfilm [Subject] Collection – full width grey bar with arrows on both ends indicating extension beyond the timescale

Below the image is a caption that reads "It's unsettling to realize how quickly digital resources can disappear without ongoing work to maintain them."

In the bottom left quadrant of the figure, the small print reads "Original comic courtesy https://xkcd.com/1909/ as shared under its CC BY-NC 2.5 license. Date range information courtesy of the

Oxford Illustrated History of the Book, Oxford University Press, 2020, with a bit of wikipedia sprinkled in. Copyright © 2022 Winston Pei – www.blackriders.com – under a CC BY-NC 2.5 Attribution-NonCommercial 2.5 license https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.5/

2. As Seen on BookTok: Exploring Interactions Between TikTok and Public Library Collection Development

CHELSEA CHIOVELLI AND KELSEY CAMERON

Introduction

Humans are social creatures. We derive pleasure from sharing moments of our lives with one another and creating community. Thanks to social media, we have been able to transcend physical boundaries when pursuing community. Today, there are many different social media platforms and each has different strengths that benefit their users. Twitter, for example, allows users to create short Tweets (280 characters) and is most popular with 25-34 year olds (Dixon, 2022). Instagram, most popular with both 18-24 and 25-34 year olds (Aslam, 2022), is more focused on visual content in the form of curated photos with captions that can hold up to 2200 characters whereas YouTube focuses on videos that can range in length from five seconds to a few hours (Lo, 2020). Users create communities on these social media platforms, and one that has translated particularly well to each of these platforms is the reading community. While many platforms have become homes for bibliophiles across the world, one of the biggest communities of readers has emerged on the app TikTok and is referred to as 'BookTok'. This chapter introduces the concept of BookTok and

explores how BookTok can influence the management of public library collections. We begin with an overview of the different forms of book-related social media, introducing TikTok as the newest and arguably most influential platform. BookTok, a sub-community on TikTok, has an impressive influence on book popularity and book sales. Due to this, books made popular via BookTok are highly sought after at public libraries, leading to increased circulation, more holds, and longer wait times for those titles. This can have a myriad of effects on how a public library develops its collection. We also explore the challenges and associated responses related to the BookTok phenomenon as well as provide sources for further reading.

Background and Current Content

Books and Social Media

Although reading can be thought of as a solitary activity in which one sits and peruses a book on their own (De Léon, 2018; Collins, 2010), there are many social aspects that have long been associated with reading and book culture (Birke, 2021; Thomas, 2020; Rehberg Sedo, 2011). Examples include discussing thoughts about a new novel with a friend, participating in a book club, and sharing book recommendations. Social media platforms give readers another place to engage in bookishness with a massive global community. They can share their reactions to works they have recently finished, find recommendations from others with similar book preferences, and even interact with authors and publishers in novel ways. The creation of social media networks such as YouTube, Tumblr, Twitter, and Instagram has enabled users to translate and expand upon the existing social culture surrounding reading by cultivating virtual

communities revolving around their shared love of all things books and reading. As Dorothee Birke (2021) writes, being 'bookish' means "being a person who regards reading, not only but often particularly reading printed books, as an integral part of life" (p.150). Bookish sub-communities on these platforms rose to popularity with literary lovers, resulting in BookTube (YouTube), Bookstagram (Instagram), Book Twitter, and Booklr (Tumblr). As of December 2022, over 83 million posts on Instagram were associated with #bookstagram while one of the original Booktube channels, polandbananasBooks, has almost 430,000 subscribers. #booklr on Tumblr has over a million followers while the Book Twitter community has thousands of members and has spawned numerous influential hashtag-based movements, such as #ownvoices and #WeNeedDiverseBooks (Lo, 2020). These expansive bookish communities spread across each different platform, with varying levels of influence, meaning that book publishers had new marketing avenues to explore.

Trade publishers have benefited greatly from the arrival of book-specific social media communities in many ways. Due to the demographic and content differences between platforms, each offers access to a different niche that can be targeted with specific marketing. Publishers can do so by interacting with existing and potential audiences directly through their own accounts and sharing news about book releases, sales, or events (ErinNickCarlyBridie, 2017; Hyrkin, 2015). Creating and sustaining relationships with readers on the various platforms helps those readers feel "engaged" (Crisswell & Canty, 2014, p. 353) and encourages them to share their thoughts, generating buzz for new releases and backlisted titles alike. Additionally, publishers can also enlist the compensated or uncompensated assistance of content creators on the various platforms (Lo, 2020). Many publishers receive largely free promotion of their titles from the labour of content creators, something initially thought to help level the marketing playing field between big publishers and independents although this has not necessarily been the case (Nolan and Dane,

2018). With different platforms falling in and out of fashion as social media and the culture surrounding it evolves, publishers and authors also have to keep up with user trends to maintain relevance. In 2023, that means creating a TikTok account.

A Short Introduction to TikTok and BookTok

In 2017, one of the newest social media platforms, TikTok, burst onto the international market (Fannin, 2019). TikTok focuses on short form videos that generally run between 15 and 60 seconds (Fannin, 2019). Users of the platform can post their own content as well as share, like, and leave comments on the videos of other users. With over three billion downloads worldwide, TikTok has quickly become one of the most popular social media platforms in the world and as of 2021, the app boasted one billion active users (Shepherd, 2022). Of TikTok's active user base from the United States in 2021, nearly 50% are between the ages of 10 and 29 while 61% of active users identify as female (Shepherd, 2022). Approximately 25% of TikTok users reported "purchas[ing] or research[ing] a product after watching TikTok" (*Time Well Spent: Users on TikTok stay longer, engage often & feel happier*, 2021), indicating that the app is a powerful marketing tool that many businesses have taken advantage of in a multitude of ways (Fannin, 2019). Businesses can pay for ads to be shown on the app, create their own accounts to post materials and interact with potential customers, or hire existing creators to advertise their products (Fannin, 2019).

One thing that creates a distinction between TikTok and other social media platforms is the algorithm used to suggest new content to users. On TikTok, every user has a personalized feed filled with videos entirely tailored to their preferences by an AI-powered algorithm that ranks videos based on variably weighted indicators (*How TikTok Recommends Videos #For You*, 2020; Fannin, 2019). This differs from Facebook or Twitter which simply suggest posts on

top of what users subscribe to (*How TikTok Recommends Videos #For You*, 2020; Fannin, 2019). Additionally, TikToks are much less polished in nature than a perfected Instagram photo or a fully edited YouTube video. The "unfiltered" (Lamont, 2020) nature of TikToks lends itself to the community building aspect of the app.

Akin to other platforms like YouTube or Instagram, a bookish subculture has also emerged on TikTok known as BookTok. Mainly young and female (Wolfe, 2022), BookTok creators focus on short book reviews, sharing their reactions to recently finished books as well as lists of favourite titles and works that fall within specific literary niches such as dark academia or what is affectionately referred to as 'smut'. As of January 2022, BookTok content racked up almost 36 billion views (Kaplan, 2022). Due to the nature of the TikTok algorithm and the massive amount of users, the demand for books that go viral on BookTok is astounding. Book retailers have taken to setting up 'As Seen on BookTok' tables while publishers see a sustained increase in sales for viral titles (Harris, 2021; O'Sullivan, 2022). British publisher Bloomsbury saw a 220% increase in profits which the owner partially attributed to BookTok ("Word of mouth; Books and social media", 2021). Meanwhile, the U.S. print book market sold 825 million copies in 2021, 125 million copies more than what was sold in 2019, also thanks in part to BookTok (Kaplan, 2022). Even backlisted books, such as Madeline Miller's 2011 novel *The Song of Achilles*, have been making the rounds on BookTok just as newer, highly anticipated books have, such as Xiran Jay Zhao's *The Iron Widow* (O'Sullivan, 2022).

Social Media and Libraries

Traditionally, the studied relationship between public libraries and social media has been unidirectional, with libraries using social media as a tool for marketing their collections and services as well as engaging with their users (Maturure & Rakemane, 2020; Petit,

2011). There are instances of users "talking back to the library" (Petit, 2011, p. 253) through Facebook and Twitter to initiate requests for specific materials. However, there is a gap in the literature addressing how book-centered social media affects collection development in libraries. Book-centered content on platforms such as YouTube and Instagram have likely influenced the circulation and collection of titles at the library.

It is worth noting that libraries have dealt with surges in the popularity of books due to external forces for years before the evolution of social media through platforms such as Oprah's Book Club. The phrase "The Oprah Effect" was coined in response to the sheer amount of influence wielded by Oprah Winfrey when endorsing products (Rosenfeld, 2021). The Oprah Effect also occurred for books chosen for the Oprah Book Club. Author Toni Morrison's 1970 work, *The Bluest Eye*, sold 800, 000 copies after it was selected for Oprah's Book Club in 2000. As a result, libraries faced huge surges in demand for titles vetted by Oprah.

However, the phenomenon that is BookTok transcends the impacts of its predecessors. The skyrocketing popularity of certain books and authors on TikTok means that libraries have to contend with an exponential influx of demand for those titles. As a result, holds and associated wait times for viral titles increase drastically. For example, TikTok sensation *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid has over 500 holds on 58 ebook copies at the Edmonton Public Library (EPL) at the time of writing. EPL is a multi-branch library located in a major Canadian city and it is one of the top five public libraries in Canada.

Not only do BookTok trends influence the circulation of certain titles, but they can also influence the collection as a whole (Bogan, 2021). Many public libraries allow patrons to suggest titles for acquisition. As long as those titles meet the selection criteria and budget constraints, patron recommended materials are usually purchased (Fulton, 2014). When books go viral on BookTok, patrons are likely to request those titles. Actively purchasing materials that patrons request has an array of benefits which include cost savings,

increased circulation, and the identification of titles that may be missed by other methods of selection (Fulton, 2014). The longevity of BookTok's influence on library collections remains to be seen as there are multiple countries exploring options to ban the app due to privacy and security concerns, with India having banned it in 2020 (Maheshwari & Holpuch, 2023). In Canada, TikTok is banned from use on government devices as of February 2023 (Wendling, 2023) while the United States government is considering federal legislation that would ban TikTok nationwide as of March 2023 (Maheshwari & Holpuch, 2023; Espada & Popli, 2023). Despite the possible lack of longevity, challenges associated with BookTok and public libraries have already arisen. These challenges will be explored in the following section.

Challenges to Collection Development

This section explores two main challenges that BookTok causes for the collection development of libraries, using examples of books that have become popular on BookTok and affected library collections. These challenges include the struggle of maintaining diversity in the library collection due to the abundance of white heteronormative themes in many popular BookTok books and what can happen to a library's collection when a book gets suddenly popular but later loses traction.

Maintaining Diversity in the Collection

Quite often, a consequence of having a collection curated by patron suggestions can result in a certain type of book dominating the library's collection, which can then cause an imbalance in the collection (Costello, 2017). In the case of BookTok specifically, books

that become very popular often fit a white heteronormative narrative due to the users and themes that are promoted by the app (Wolfe, 2022). This can cause library collections to be less diverse, since books featuring people of colour or members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community are not promoted on the app as often. One example of this is the author Sarah J. Maas, who is a very popular author on BookTok (Stevens, 2022). Maas' novel, A *Court of Thorns and Roses*, became extremely popular on BookTok, reaching the height of its popularity in the summer of 2021, despite being published in 2015 (Stevens, 2022). Maas has since been criticised for her failure to represent people of colour and members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community with her characters (Ames, 2022). When authors with these kinds of criticisms get popular on BookTok and their books start being in such high demand in library collections, it can make it difficult to maintain a diverse library collection.

Unfortunately, this is not a new issue. The lack of representation for historically excluded groups goes far beyond BookTok and other forms of social media, as it is also very prevalent in the publishing industry (Price, 2022). An analysis done in 2020 by the New York Times indicates that the publishing industry is biased toward white authors and against authors of colour (So & Wezerek, 2020). Their study looked at English language books between 1950 and 2018 that had been widely read and published by one of the major publishing houses. During the study, they were able to determine the race of the authors of 7,124 books out of the 8,004 they had initially selected. Out of these 7,124 books, 95% of the authors were white. Even in the most recent year of the study, only 11% of the books were written by people of colour (So & Wezerek, 2020). This bias in favour of white authors being a systemic issue makes this an even bigger challenge, as it is not necessarily up to BookTok creators or library collections employees to fix, but rather the entire publishing industry. However, libraries are often the places where this kind of change can begin to grow as librarians can be strong advocates for changes in the publishing industry (Price, 2022).

Due to the popularity of controversial authors such as Sarah J.

Maas and the bias within the publishing industry, it can be very difficult for books with more diverse perspectives to get their well-deserved time in the spotlight. Non-representative authors and the reality of the publishing industry cause diverse books to become overshadowed and not get the attention they deserve. Another possible reason diverse books and books by diverse authors may become overshadowed by those with less diverse themes and characters is the demographics of BookTok users. The individuals creating content on BookTok are largely teenage girls and young women, with the majority of them being white (Wolfe, 2022) and those who do not fit that criteria are not being promoted by the TikTok algorithm at the same rate. The app itself seems to promote more white voices and many users are criticising it for the lack of promotion of BIPOC and 2SLGBTQ+ creators (Wolfe, 2022), who are more likely to promote books with authentic BIPOC and 2SLGBTQ+ themes and characters. This is not new in the world of social media, as the same thing happened to BookTubers when YouTube was the more dominant social media site for users to share book reviews. It is very difficult to find Black BookTubers, as they lack the exposure and promotion received by their white peers (Doggett, 2019). Along with a lack of promotion, the TikTok algorithm has also faced criticism for removing or demonetizing the videos of BIPOC and 2SLGBTQ+ users with the claim that they violate community guidelines (Bacchi, 2020; Gassam Asare, 2020). If the main voice on BookTok is one of white-centeredness and heteronormativity, it only supports the already present issues in the publishing industry and will further contribute to a lack of diversity within library collections. Maintaining diversity in library collections is an ongoing challenge in collection development that precedes the advent of TikTok, with the social media platform exacerbating this issue. Another challenge that is caused by the introduction and use of this platform in the library community is the phenomenon of books having sudden, colossal surges in popularity which may require additional copies to be purchased, which can also create collection gaps. While surges in popularity are not a brand new occurrence, as

stated previously, TikTok has significantly increased the frequency and intensity of these surges.

Sudden Increase and Decline in Popularity

Due to BookTok, many books are suddenly seeing a surge in popularity despite already being out for years. One example of this phenomenon is *It Ends With Us* by Colleen Hoover, which was first released in 2016 but became more popular after it was featured on BookTok in 2021 (Stewart, 2021). For example, at the time of writing, *It Ends With Us* had 280 holds on 76 print copies and 560 holds on 52 electronic copies at EPL. When this sudden increase in popularity occurred, public libraries such as EPL likely did not have enough copies to accommodate the number of hold requests they were receiving. This sudden increase in hold requests requires the libraries to purchase more copies to be able to keep up with the demand for these viral books (Jensen, 2022). It is not a completely new phenomenon to have a popular book with many holds, but usually these are new releases by already famous authors or in currently trending genres. This gives time for libraries to anticipate the want for these books and prepare accordingly. One highly anticipated new release in 2020 was *A Promised Land*, the memoir by Barack Obama (Obama, 2020). The excitement surrounding this book's initial release allowed The New York Public Library (NYPL) to properly prepare for the number of people who would want to check it out. They ordered over 1,000 copies in various formats in preparation for release (Gross, 2021). When a book starts trending on TikTok, it happens more suddenly than a highly anticipated new release. Librarians have to know how to react to these trends and prepare for the oncoming rush and order enough copies to fit this need, and then sustain steady circulation for anywhere from a few months to over a year (Jensen, 2022). While it has been shown that many books that gain their fame through BookTok have a lot of

staying power (Stewart, 2021) and can maintain their popularity for well over a year in some cases (Jensen, 2022), interest in these titles will eventually decrease. When this happens to a book, libraries will likely have an abundance of copies that are not circulating due to the drop in popularity of the book. Going back to the example of *A Promised Land*, the majority of the copies at NYPL are not in use at the time of writing as the book has lost its popularity two years after its publication (New York Public Library, n.d.).

Books that are not circulating take up space in the library and create an imbalance in the collection. If the library is full of the requests of TikTok users, the collection becomes skewed in favour of a specific group of people, causing the library to be less able to support the entire community which is a requirement of public libraries (Blume, 2019; Costello, 2017). While initially the library is doing what it is meant to do in providing patrons with what they want to read, eventually these books are no longer being circulated and therefore no longer fit the needs of the patrons. Due to this, a deselection process for these books is absolutely necessary. Many libraries may already have a deselection policy that considers this as surges in the popularity of books is not new. With the newness of TikTok, however, it is likely more data will need to be collected to develop policies that can respond to the immense scale of this phenomenon caused by BookTok. This creates a challenge when considering what librarian responses to this issue would be, however, there have been a few articles that provide helpful suggestions on ways to combat the challenges that TikTok presents and use it to the advantage of the library.

Responses of Librarians

In this section, we take the challenges previously discussed and provide possible responses to them. Managing diversity requires attention to the collection and possible gaps and to any diverse

books trending on BookTok. To deal with shifts in the popularity of books, librarians can keep an eye on BookTok trends, and have well-developed deselection practices for when books lose popularity.

Maintaining Diversity in the Collection

Librarians have a responsibility to maintain a diverse collection and advocate for the authenticity of diverse literature (Davis, 2021) as is explicitly stated by both the CFLA and ALA in official statements and policies made by both organizations (Canadian Federation of Library Associations, 2008; American Library Association, 2022). Therefore, it is important to combat the white heteronormative books that are prevalent on BookTok and support diverse books and authors. This task is difficult, as a main cause of a lack of collection diversity is the lack of diversity in publishing and in the profession itself (Price, 2022; Mortensen 2019). Despite this issue being more system-wide than solely confined to social media, BookTok is an area where libraries can begin making progress in promoting more diverse materials by finding those that break through the bias. While it is very common that non-diverse books are often the ones that become the most popular on BookTok, resulting in a lack of diversity in the collection, it has also been seen that diverse titles can break through and become immensely popular. For example, *Iron Widow* by Xiran Jay Zhao is a sci-fi novel with a Chinese-coded cast of characters that also features a polyamorous homosexual relationship (Zhao, 2021). *Iron Widow* was advertised before its release on TikTok and through this advertising, the number of presales for the book skyrocketed (Singer, 2021). This book example shows that diverse books are also able to become popular on BookTok and therefore become highly requested books from a library collection. While it occurs less often, the evidence that diverse books can become very popular as well indicates that libraries may not have a hard time maintaining a diverse collection

when maintaining the demand from BookTok, but it is an area where attention is necessary.

While it is possible for diverse titles to break through and become more popular on BookTok, as we have seen before, these titles tend to face more struggles. This caused specific hashtags to be created for minority groups to promote their books and authors (Wolfe, 2022). Using social media as a means to find diverse literature is a good strategy for developing a more diverse collection (Davis, 2021), and using these hashtags is one way in which librarians can use BookTok for this purpose. Librarians can use these hashtags to find books for the creation of displays in their libraries. "As Seen on BookTok" has become a popular idea for book displays in both bookstores and libraries as a way to bring in younger readers who recognize these books from videos they have seen on TikTok (Jensen, 2022). These displays can be altered and used in a way to promote diverse authors, characters, and themes in books by promoting the more diverse sections of BookTok. They can use the hashtags created for diverse communities to be able to create displays for books by Indigenous authors, books featuring transgender characters, or those describing the struggles faced by people of colour.

Decline in Popularity

Librarians will be facing high demand for certain books due to their popularity on BookTok and they are going to need to know how to react to this demand. It will be beneficial for librarians to be able to prepare for incoming demand for specific books to not face many issues of people waiting while more copies of a book are being ordered. To have this level of preparation, the library should ensure that they are keeping on top of BookTok recommendations by having a staff member keep an eye on articles, social media posts, and videos about what is becoming popular on the app. Another

method would be to include patrons in the research process, by asking them where they heard about a book they are checking out. If the patron replies with "TikTok," the librarian would likely want to stock up on a couple more copies to keep up with a likely surge in demand (Jensen, 2022). Once the book is losing its popularity, librarians need to develop strategies for deselection of these items which will require some further data that is not yet available due to the newness of TikTok. Deselection processes often call for the weeding of books that have been unused for the last three to five years (Larson, 2012), but with TikTok causing these surges for books that have been out for years, there are some important questions to ask during deselection. Mainly, how likely is it that in a few years, a book will become popular once again and repeat the same process? If this is to happen and libraries have removed the excess books from their collection, they will need to be purchased again. A possible solution to this issue is the purchase of non-perpetual ebook licenses, as was done by the NYPL with the release of *A Promised Land*, the memoir of Barack Obama (Gross, 2021). Due to the anticipated popularity of this book, the NYPL purchased physical copies, audiobooks, and both perpetual and non-perpetual ebooks. There was an understanding that eventually the excitement for this book will die down and some of these copies will no longer be necessary so there was a benefit to purchasing non-perpetual ebook licenses that would be removed after a specified amount of time. The possibility of purchasing ebook licenses to account for surges in popularity would depend on the specific library and its budget, as ebook licenses can be expensive. The benefits and drawbacks of various ebook pricing models are discussed in the chapter "The Ebook Pricing War".

Librarians will also need to develop some strategies for when every copy of a popular book is checked out and people are asking for it. These strategies could include using the reference interview process to determine what about the book is making it popular and using that to suggest similar books that have not been receiving as much attention (Jensen, 2022). This could also be done by creating

displays of books that are similar to popular BookTok books. These strategies for recommending similar books are also a good way to promote more diverse books that have similar themes to the popular BookTok books.

Lastly, librarians will need to know how to keep the collection properly balanced when a significant number of similar books are being purchased due to BookTok. Blume (2019) suggests three strategies to ensure library collections are balanced when patron suggestions are used to develop the collection. These strategies can be modified somewhat to adjust for TikTok-specific acquisitions. First, the number of copies of BookTok famous books can be limited to ensure they are not overpowering the rest of the collection. Next, since this kind of acquisition is likely to create gaps in a library's collection, data should be collected to regularly address these gaps and purchase books to fill them. To avoid the creation of these gaps in the first place, librarians can purchase diverse and inclusive books at the same time they order BookTok-famous books which they can then promote and recommend to users who are waiting in a long line of holds.

Conclusion

Social media, and TikTok especially, can cause massive sudden surges in the popularity of books. This can then cause libraries to be unprepared and end up with a large amount of holds on an item of which they own only two copies. There are a few ways in which libraries can combat this phenomenon, such as anticipating surges, ordering more books when they notice a spike in popularity, or redirecting interest to similar books that are not as popular. Currently, research on TikTok as a catalyst for book popularity is scarce. Once there is more data that libraries can use, they can better react to these surges.

Sources for Further Reading

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> "BookTok 101" was published in the Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy in 2021. In this article, Sarah Jerasa and Trevor Boffone give an introduction to TikTok and, more specifically, BookTok. This background is then used to explain how the app and community shape the literacy practices of teenagers and provides readers with "agency, community, and digital literacies" (Jerasa and Boffone, 2021).

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Birke, D. (2021). Social reading? On the rise of a "Bookish" reading culture online. *Poetics Today, 42*(2), 149–172. https://doi.org/10.1215/03335372-8883178

> Birke gives an excellent overview of book culture and its migration to social media by exploring BookTube. More specifically, she looks to subvert the generally binary thinking around social media and the way it lends itself to more of the social aspects of reading. This article provides important context for understanding why social media users create "bookish" communities on social media platforms, including TikTok.

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> This article discusses how BookTok has the ability to build communities for people with similar interests or who are in similar situations. Specifically, it brought 2SLGBTQ+ teens together when their communities were historically erased in institutional spaces. The article uses this information to promote queer-inclusive classrooms, which can also be applied to libraries.

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This installation of Kelsey Bogan's blog series, "Librarians on TikTok", delves into the ins and outs of BookTok and its effects on the publishing industry as well as how librarians can utilize BookTok for collection development and readers advisories.

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3. Challenges to 2SLGBTQ+ Collections: A Guide for Libraries

MARTY GRANDE-SHERBERT; NICOLE POPE; AND ANDREW IP

Introduction

2SLGBTQ+ (2-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, "plus")[1] people are a vulnerable population in a library's community. They are subject to discrimination and experience particular health and safety concerns; due to social isolation, they often also have limited access to authoritative sources that meet their information needs. It is increasingly important to understand this population in our current sociopolitical climate, one in which book bans and challenges disproportionately target 2SLGBTQ+ content. 2SLGBTQ+ materials are disproportionately censored or challenged within libraries; the most challenged books of 2021 place Maia's Kobabe's *Gender Queer* at most challenged, and the rest of this challenged list

1. In this chapter, the acronym 2SLGBTQ+ is mainly used to describe the demographic at the chapter's center. Other common acronyms used in the literature and by community organizations include: LGBT(+) or LGBTQ(*); LGBTQIA(+); and GLBT(+) (in historical contexts). The terms "Q/queer" and "sexual and gender minorities" are also commonly used to refer to the same community. The particular context of "2SLGBTQ+" is further outlined in the "Note on Terminology" below.

includes at least four other works with the same themes (American Library Association [ALA], 2021).

The ALA reported 729 attempts to censor library resources in 2021, targeting 1,597 books; this is a crisis (2022c). Additionally, around 70% of these challenges targeted multiple titles (ALA, 2022c), which was not commonplace before 2021. This trend continued the following year with the ALA reporting 1,269 attempts to censor in 2022, targeting 2,571 books (2023). There has not been a higher number of attempted book bans since ALA began compiling these lists more than 20 years ago. Also, the percentage of challenges targeting multiple titles increased from 70% to 90% (ALA, 2023). The sharp increase in challenges has been identified by the ALA as having a concentrated focus on suppressing certain types of information, namely that which concerns the lives and rights of marginalized people. ALA President, Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada, said of these trends: "The unprecedented number of challenges we're seeing already [in 2022] reflects coordinated, national efforts to silence marginalized or historically underrepresented voices and deprive all of us – young people, in particular – of the chance to explore a world beyond the confines of personal experience" (ALA, 2022c).

In 2005, the ALA adopted policy B.2.12, "Threats to Library Materials Related to Sex, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation," to respond to concerns about the targeting of 2SLGBTQ+ materials. The policy reads as follows:

> ALA encourages all ALA chapters to take active stands against all legislative or other government attempts to proscribe materials related to sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression; and encourages all libraries to acquire and make available materials representative of all the people in our society (ALA, 2010).

In other words, librarians are encouraged by the ALA to be advocates for 2SLGBTQ+ materials. When libraries take up the call to defend these materials against challenges and calls for

censorship, however, library workers and administrators may face public protests, defunding, and even threats to staff and patrons. Librarians are thus caught between the duty to provide free and unbiased information access and the need to keep their libraries safe and open for the public.

In this chapter, we therefore hope to respond to the conflict libraries face by providing librarians with:

- context and information about historic 2SLGBTQ+ censorship that will help in understanding these challenges;
- arguments for defending 2SLGBTQ+ materials based on population needs;
- examples of patterns that occur among 2SLGBTQ+ material challenges, both in rhetoric and response;
- potential outcomes and examples of how to respond to challenges, with an understanding of how they may affect public relations.

After briefly addressing the terminologies and scope used, this guide will first address the historical background of 2SLGBTQ+ challenges, including the two main themes identified in association with these materials, obscenity and politicization. These themes are connected to our current context, where 2SLGBTQ+ people face the legacy of this history and as a result struggle with public inclusion and particular health needs. Next, the challenges of supporting 2SLGBTQ+ collections will be outlined, such as the public discourse involved in advocacy and potential threats that may result from it. Lastly, the guide will suggest several response strategies libraries can adopt to manage this issue, including resisting censorship, complying with censorship, and implementing supportive programming.

Note on Terminology

The particular configuration of the phrase "2SLGBTQ+" places at the forefront the inclusion of "Two-Spirit (2S)"[2]—a culturally exclusive[3] term used by many Indigenous people[4]—in what is often simply known as "LGBT" history. Much of what is called LGBT history took place on Indigenous lands, where Indigenous people and cultures had expressions of gender and sexuality that fell outside Western cultural norms; "LGBT" does not always adequately or accurately describe these expressions. The same colonial hetero- and cisnormativity that harmed/harms LGBTQ+ settlers was and is harmful to Two-Spirit people, whose own cultures which affirmed their expressions were denied through cultural genocide.[5] As settlers writing this guide in amiskwaciy-wâskahikan on Treaty 6 territory, we use the term 2SLGBTQ+ in continued witness of Two-Spirit identity. This is one way we and other settlers who write about 2SLGBTQ+ histories can truthfully acknowledge their colonial context.

In every local 2SLGBTQ+ community, there is inevitably some level of discussion about which term or acronym is best to use; some words and terms may carry positive or negative connotations depending on a library's public. Additionally, this chapter will sometimes use the terms "queer" or "LGBT" to be more historically

2. "Two-Spirit (2S)" as a way to interchangeably write this term is attributed to Joshua Whitehead (drewsattack, 2022).
3. Coined by Elder Myra Laramee in 1990, from the Anishinaabemowin *niizh manidoowag* (two spirits) (Thurston, 2022).
4. See *Being Two-Spirit and trans in Canada: How colonization shaped the way we view gender diversity* (Tran, 2022).
5. For more on the decolonization of gender and sexuality and on Two-Spirit identity, see *Reclaiming Two-Spirits* (Smithers, 2022). Also see Edmonton Public Library's list of works by Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer authors (drewsattack, 2022) for more perspectives.

or specifically descriptive. Descriptive terms, historical events, and aspects of 2SLGBTQ+ experience are incredibly expansive and cannot all be fully explained in this chapter; librarians (and allies as a whole) should familiarize themselves with queer terminologies and their histories at a local level. Library resources should also be used to make these terms and identities more known to the public; see the "Sources for Further Reading" section at the conclusion of the guide for some places to begin this work.

Note on Scope

It should be clarified that this chapter is not meant to instruct librarians on how to create a 2SLGBTQ+ collection, but rather on how to manage the challenges and discourse that surround defense of those collection materials. It should also be noted that this chapter:

- Focuses on the geographical-political context of Canada and the United States, and is based in Canada;
- Emphasizes mostly public libraries, with some mention of school libraries, and;
- Is not "neutral" on this issue; it is written out of a commitment to 2SLGBTQ+ inclusion and advocacy, and an opposition to anti-2SLGBTQ+ discrimination and hate-based attacks.

Background

The public challenge and censorship of materials related to 2SLGBTQ+ experience has a long history, both inside and outside of the library. These materials have always been censored by governments in the United States and Canada (Cossman 2013, p.45),

but were under particularly harsh scrutiny in the 1970s and 80s. This time period bore witness to the Stonewall Riots (1969), the HIV/AIDS epidemic (1981 onwards), and the responsive Gay Liberation movement (p.45).[6] These historical events all had a common theme of state and public institutions repressing 2SLGBTQ+ people: at the Stonewall Inn, gender nonconformity was criminalized,[7] and HIV/AIDS' label as a "gay disease" made its public health response rife with shame and neglect.[8]

Crucially, amidst this cultural environment opposed to the sight or acknowledgment of 2SLGBTQ+ people, there was also a public objection to *printed* depictions of homosexuality and gender nonconformity. Publications and artistic works were met with police and public violence, running parallel to the hate crimes operating on a larger scale. By taking the time to learn this history, librarians can better understand the anti-2SLGBTQ+ rhetoric operating behind many challenges, and why it is so important to address such challenges firmly and thoughtfully. We hope to demonstrate that challenges to 2SLGBTQ+ materials come out of a

6. For a more extensive history and examination of this movement and its events, The *Stonewall Reader* (Baumann, J., & New York Public Library (Eds.), 2019) is one useful reference.
7. Police famously raided the Stonewall Inn, as they had on other occasions, because of laws against "crossdressing" that targeted many of its patrons. The raids included violent and sexually aggressive behaviour from police, and the frustration with this treatment eventually led to what were called the Stonewall Riots in protest (Rau, 2021).
8. The HIV/AIDS crisis continues today, but much of the public health response and intervention owes itself to the activist efforts of 2SLGBTQ+ people who were "left to die." For more reading on the history of this activism, the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP!), see *How To Survive a Plague* (2017).

history of both legal discrimination and hate-based violence, and are part of a struggle for human rights.

Legal Censorship: The Issue of "Obscenity"

On a government level, the Canadian history of 2SLGBTQ+ material censorship is largely centered on obscenity, and the obscenity laws through which materials were censored. This terminology itself bears examination—the idea that same-gender relationships and gender nonconformity are in themselves "obscene," while heterosexuality and normative gender expression are "natural," has been a point of protest for much of the "gay rights" movement as it is historically called. The first Canadian obscenity law in 1892 defined illegally explicit materials only as "obscene and disgusting," and this was left up to the courts to interpret and prescribe (Cossman, 2013, p.50). When such a judgment is made, then, it is because of the personal, emotional, and often culturally-informed values of legal institutions operating behind the decision.

But where does this definition of "obscene" or "inappropriate" come from? In the essay "When Obscenity Discriminates," Elizabeth M. Glazer (2008) demonstrates a precedent in the American context: obscenity in literature is connected by case law to historical laws against the loaded construction of "sodomy," rooted in Christian cultural hegemony.[9] Glazer (2008) shows that, despite

9. "Sodomy" (or "buggery" as it is called in Canadian law) comes to both the United States and Canada from its British history. Its definitions includes forms of sexual violence, but also crucially includes sexual acts that are deemed to be "immoral" or "unnatural" (Department of Justice, 2021).

Deriving its name from the Biblical city of Sodom, the

the decision in the *Lawrence v. Texas* case invalidating criminalization of sodomy in the United States, there was nonetheless another case, *United States v. Extreme Associates*, where "obscene" material depicting sodomy was prohibited (p.1381). In other words, despite the fact that the United States deemed criminalizing sodomy unconstitutional, those acts which we call "sodomy" can still mark a material as being "obscene." Glazer (2008) notes that "the *Lawrence* decision has much to offer the obscenity doctrine" (p. 1383), but courts fail to acknowledge the contradiction and their application of moral values in each case.

Glazer's observations about the United States resonate in the Canadian context of obscenity legislation as well. Cossman (2013) summarizes that prohibition of obscene materials in Canada can either be "customs" or "criminal" (p.47); materials are either seized at the border for obscenity or criminalized when in the possession of Canadians. Both types of prohibition have targeted 2SLGBTQ+ publications historically, and both led to activist calls against discrimination. At the border, "depictions or descriptions" of acts like anal penetration (p.49) were explicitly prohibited from entering Canada, notably informed by sexual morality laws.

construction of "unnatural" sodomy as a crime implies a worldview where "natural" sexual relations take place between a husband and wife. This worldview was imposed by Christian authority on a state level; punishment for sodomy was carried out by the British clergy until it was signed into law by the Church of England's Henry VIII in 1533 (Dryden, n.d.).

One function of sodomy law was to prevent any sexual relations that were not for procreation, or in other words, that were not sanctioned by the church (American Civil Liberties Union, n.d.). While Christianity is not the only faith that adopts Biblically-based views on sex and marriage, it is important to note that Christians write these laws, which through hegemony are imposed on the whole of the population regardless of religiosity.

Censorship led to a long struggle with the Little Sisters bookstore in Vancouver, beginning with the border seizure of the gay magazine *The Advocate* in 1987. Little Sisters filed a lawsuit for discrimination in 1997, another in 1990 (which went to the Supreme Court), and a third in 2002 which they ultimately abandoned due to legal fees (p.57). Ultimately, while there was acknowledgment that Customs Canada discriminated against gays and lesbians (p.56), there was no recourse for Little Sisters and they were still told to "just trust Canada Customs" or file yet another suit (p.57). This legal expectation of "trust" ignores a precedent of legal discrimination: thirty years earlier, inside the border, a queer publication called *The Body Politic* (TBP)[10] was raided by police on a charge of obscenity (p.52). All officers of *TPB* were acquitted of charges, only to experience another raid in 1982 that put the entire *TBP* collective on trial. Largely because of a public uproar, coinciding with the parallel raids on gay bath houses and bars at the time, *TBP* was again acquitted (p.53).

Cossman rightly mentions the connection here between the censorship of publications like *TBP* and *The Advocate* and the raiding and policing of bars (p.54)—both are matters of repression, and both are rooted in ideas about sexual morality which are inherited from the British 1500s. Even when laws rooted in sexual morality are no longer enforced, these values are inherited and applied to obscenity, and even when the government no longer censors "obscene" materials, these values can still exist in the minds of the publics which libraries serve. Obscenity therefore must still be studied, as in the library context it can become a socially enforced value judgment even when it ceases to also be a legal one.

10. *The Body Politic* is described as "Canada's gay newspaper" of the time (Cossman, 2013, p.52).

Censorship and Its Resistance in Library Contexts

In addition to the broader history of the Gay Liberation movement, there is a history of 2SLGBTQ+ advocacy specific to library contexts, one that namely resisted the *social* imposition of particular sexual values. Much of inclusivity in libraries today was won by the still-existing ALA Rainbow Round Table (ALA, 2022b), founded originally as the ALA Task Force on Gay Liberation (RRT, n.d.). As its name suggests, the Task Force was connected to the liberation movement of the time, and worked to embrace the presence of gays and lesbians in libraries at a time when they were not welcome. Historical member Anne Moore attests that being a lesbian librarian in the 70s "wasn't welcoming at all...it was like your life didn't have meaning" (Ford, 2020). Projects like the 1971 "Hug-A-Homosexual Booth" at the ALA Annual Conference attempted to lessen the stigma of homosexuality as a part of public life (Ford, 2020); information was shared among librarians about how to successfully be out at work.

Challenges to 2SLGBTQ+ materials, from the public and even fellow librarians, were always a part of this library history. In 1990, the children's book *Daddy's Roommate* featuring a gay couple was explosive for the Round Table's mission of gay visibility in literature. The feeling was that having a gay couple in such a resource would do wonders for diversity, directing hatred away from individual 2SLGBTQ+ librarians and normalizing gay life—"this is how we're gonna do it," as one member said (Ford, 2020). However, the mere existence of the Task Force/Round Table in itself still upset many people in the world of librarianship. In 1992, the cover of *American Libraries* featured a photo of the Task Force in the San Francisco Pride Parade, which attracted many hateful letters: *American Libraries* was accused of "glorifying homosexuality" (Ford, 2020). The argument by one such letter that "the gay and lesbian issue...has nothing whatsoever to do with the library profession" is emblematic

of the way 2SLGBTQ+ presence in libraries is automatically presumed to be subversive; it is politicized (Ford, 2020). The heritage of this politicization—the assumption that any material including 2SLGBTQ+ experience is a "statement" or controversial issue—continues today, and is at the root of many challenges to materials. Once informed of the legal history of 2SLGBTQ+ discrimination, we might consider whether this politicization has to do with a view of 2SLGBTQ+ people as oppositional to social order—the value-based "phobia" in homophobia.

Current Context

Gay Representation and Anti-Transgender Fervor

Much has changed for 2SLGBTQ+ people since the 1970s and 80s, although the legacy of historical discrimination remains. Same-gender marriage legalization defined the beginning of the 21st century,[11] and representation of sexuality and gender diversity steadily increased in media, particularly on television.[12] The legal

11. Same-gender marriages were legally recognized on a national level by the United States in 2015 (Human Rights Campaign, n.d.) and in Canada in 2005 (CBC News, 2015).
12. Pivotal examples of representation of 2SLGBTQ+ people on television included *Ellen* (1994-1998 and onwards), *Will and Grace* (1998-2006), *Queer as Folk* (2000-2005), *Queer Eye* (2003-2007 and again in 2018-Present), *Glee* (2009-2015) and the current success of *RuPaul's Drag Race* (2009-Present) and *Pose* (2018-2021). Media like

discrimination of 2SLGBTQ+ people became more widely understood, and in 2017, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau issued a public apology to 2SLGBTQ+ Canadians for "Canada's role in the systemic oppression, criminalization, and violence against the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and two-spirit communities" (Trudeau, 2017).[13] As the Rainbow Round Table says, however, these positive steps forward have not eliminated anti-2SLGBTQ+ bias in society: "maybe five years ago we might've been able to envision [the Round Table's mission] becoming redundant...[but] homophobia is creeping up in all kinds of ways" (Ford, 2020). In the contemporary climate, it is primarily social and not legal forces that are at play, and new language is often used; however, obscenity and politicization are still very much concerns.

Concerns about 2SLGBTQ+ materials being obscene, in the contemporary context, often come in the form of public concerns about "children's exposure" to 2SLGBTQ+ people. Echoing the rhetoric of valuing "natural" over "immoral" sexualities, the words "pornographic" and "explicit" may be used to describe material that contains little to no sexual content but that depicts same-gender relationships. These words are, crucially, not as often used to describe materials that depict heterosexuality or normative gender expression—they instead emphasize that it is shocking or inappropriate for a child to be aware of 2SLGBTQ+ people. Librarians should pay particular attention to the way 2SLGBTQ+ content for children is challenged because of its supposed "inappropriateness," and also to the way challengers may defend their bias against 2SLGBTQ+ materials by saying it is the "explicit

this brought the lives and experiences of 2SLGBTQ+ people into mainstream public consciousness (Rosa, 2022).
13. In the United States in 2017, John Kerry also apologized on behalf of the State Department for the "Lavender Scare" where 2SLGBTQ+ people were surveilled and discriminated against by the government (Daley, 2017).

nature" of the content they disagree with, not the sexual or gender identity portrayed.[14]

Contemporary politicization of 2SLGBTQ+ materials further compounds the emotional nature of challenges, and is today most prominently reflected in the "gender critical" discourse which frames transgender people as political objects. Accusations of "glorifying homosexuality," like that of *American Libraries* in 1992, are no longer so much the "hot issue" of today; while objections to homosexuality on a religious or political basis still exist, legal victories for same-gender couples have, as Cossman (2013) said, made homosexuality "legitimate speech" (p.52). Trans identity and the processes of medical transition, however, are still rife with legal and legislative issues, and this has resulted in a saturation of public debate on the "legitimacy" of being transgender. The existence of gender diversity, or the presence of any trans person in a public space, is often labelled with "the trans debate" or "trans ideology"—trans people are framed as a political force in opposition to the rights of women, to the family, or to an essentialized "biology."[15] It is crucial, then, in the current political climate, for librarians not to neglect materials related to transgender people in

14. Challenges to *Gender Queer* (Kobabe, 2019), which notably is a memoir of Kobabe's own childhood, have frequently involved these accusations of "explicit content" (Alter, 2022).
15. Examples of this "trans debate" discourse and are innumerous, but an emblematic one is political figure Matt Walsh's *What is a Woman?* (Folk, 2022). Walsh made this film in an attempt to stump "gender ideologues"—in other words, transgender people and anyone who affirms their existence. In an interview about the documentary, he describes people who have received gender-affirming surgery as "maimed and disfigured," calls being trans a "social contagion," and advocates for gender diversity to be "[treated] the way that it was largely treated...until a few decades ago" (Wolfsohn, 2022).

their collections. Particularly in light of the Rainbow Round Table's history, where Gay Liberation was waved away as a "political issue" not affecting libraries, this generation of librarians must know better than to say as much for its trans staff and public.[16]

2SLGBTQ+ Collections' Impact on Information Needs and Access

Librarians can be empowered, in their dealing with 2SLGBTQ+ material challenges, with an understanding of why these materials matter and how a 2SLGBTQ+ positive library is good for their public. Firstly, the ALA explicitly encourages librarians to act in its policy of "Diverse Collections"—B.2.12 attests that "library collections must represent the diversity of people and ideas in our society" (ALA, 2010). This policy statement alone can justify collecting and defending as many depictions as possible of 2SLGBTQ+ life, history, and experience. But there are even greater impacts than reflecting diversity: the ALA also argues that diverse library collections is one way libraries can "serve" 2SLGBTQ+ people (ALA, 2019b). 2SLGBTQ+ populations, like all populations that make up a library's public, have certain special information needs and information access concerns. These needs and concerns are summarized as issues with public inclusion and issues with health education. When addressing a challenge to 2SLGBTQ+ materials, librarians might consider how removing or keeping the material would affect either concern.

Public inclusion of 2SLGBTQ+ people, specifically their inclusion in the physical shared space of the library, is impacted by collections management. The ALA's acknowledges that "access to libraries may

16. See *Transgender History* (Stryker, 2008) in the "Sources for Further Reading" section for more on transphobia, trans history and activism, and Trans Liberation.

be limited or prohibited by…collections which do not present [2SLGBTQ+] content or perspectives" (ALA, 2019b). It is easy to see why a potential user might stop using a library if that library does not offer any acknowledgment of the user's perspective. While multiple perspectives are valuable, a user who (for example) enjoyed reading romance novels might eventually feel isolated and alienated if only opposite-gender relationships were represented in the library's collection. A heterosexual user, for that matter, might also feel alienated if a collection only offered same-gender romances—but due to the nature of 2SLGBTQ+ exclusion, this is an implausible scenario. In nonfiction, social and political commentary that argues against homosexuality in a collection might by various justifications be retained, but those materials are especially harmful to gay users who can only find such commentary, without any offer of a gay-positive or liberationist perspective.

The impact of "actions by staff or other patrons" is also mentioned by the ALA (ALA, 2019b); this is relevant because the way staff and other users react to challenges can either welcome and empower or intimidate and threaten 2SLGBTQ+ users. If *Gender Queer* (Kobabe, 2019) is challenged on the basis that (according to a user) transgender people are threatening to society, a transgender user will understandably feel unwelcome—especially if this sentiment receives little to no pushback. If a library does not affirm that 2SLGBTQ+ people are free to exist in the collection as fictional or hypothetical subjects, then real and living 2SLGBTQ+ people might gather that they are not free to exist in the physical library or at its events. On the other hand, if a challenge to *Gender Queer* is managed with a firm, public statement that transgender experiences are a valued and normal part of human diversity, a transgender user can be reassured they are a valued part of the library's public. This can make the difference between keeping or losing a person as a library user, which in turn decides whether that person can satisfy their information needs. The assumption that there is a passive, "neutral" response to a challenge (Ferretti, 2018),

where librarians say nothing about such rhetoric, often only serves to enable hateful rhetoric while letting it go unchallenged.

It is particularly important for 2SLGBTQ+ people to feel welcome in libraries, and to have access to information, because they are a population with significant health education needs. Information about gender and sexuality can help 2SLGBTQ+ users discover, understand, and navigate their own identities; the "coming-out" process where one's own gender and sexuality are identified is particularly important for the health of youth (National LGBT Health Education Center, 2016). Additionally, general health information which includes 2SLGBTQ+ people makes public health accessible to this population. This is crucial, as there may be neglect and discrimination present elsewhere.

In a feature for *Public Libraries*, Youth Service Librarian Meagan Albright (2006) argues that libraries have a role in creating a "safe haven" for 2SLGBTQ+ youth, "providing both a tolerant atmosphere and access to information" (p.55). If collections do not reflect 2SLGBTQ+ experience, and if an environment is unwelcoming, it can create isolation. One gay man expressed such an isolating childhood experience in *Hearing Us Out*,[17] saying: "I simply knew nobody who was gay...I truly felt that I was the only gay person" (Sutton 1997, qtd. Albright 2006, p.68). Transgender people have similar and often more significant lack of access to relatable experiences; one study found that while trans youth often seek information about their own gender identity, they frequently do not know where to begin their search for information due to common misunderstandings about transgender people (Huttunen et al., 2020). Like sexually diverse youth, they "may feel like being 'the only one'" (p.712); this belief that

17. *Hearing Us Out: Voices from the Gay and Lesbian Community* (Sutton, 1997) is a compilation of interviews and photographs about gay and lesbian experience in the area of Chicago.

one has a unique, unsolvable problem with themselves can stop one from seeking social, mental, and physical health services.[18]

Health issues that have been identified for 2SLGBTQ+ people include:

- Higher rates of STIs, particularly HIV/AIDS;

- Higher rates of depression and anxiety, and suicide;

- Greater likelihood to smoke, abuse substances, or experience domestic violence;

- A lower rate of medical tests such as cancer screenings and Pap smears, and;

- Higher rates of unhealthy weight control and eating disorders (National LGBT Health Education Center, 2016, p.4).

If materials that involve research and depictions of 2SLGBTQ+ health issues are part of collections, users can inform themselves about their symptoms, conditions, and safe sex practices. If such materials are removed because of challenges or oversight, however, 2SLGBTQ+ users lose the library as a source of reliable and safe health information and the discrepancies in their health outcomes

18. 2SLGBTQ+ people have disparities in their physical, mental and sexual health, owing in part to a historical anti-2SLGBTQ+ bias in health-care. Homosexuality was considered an illness until 1973, as was transgender identity until 2013. Today, people still require a diagnosis of gender dysphoria to access transition, which can be a humiliating and invasive process. The pathologizing of 2SLGBTQ+ identity has meant that doctors still disbelieve, neglect, or humiliate their 2SLGBTQ+ patients (National LGBT Health Education Center, 2016).

will continue to intensify. Lastly, libraries are crucial resources for health information because of their confidentiality and privacy—the risk of anti-queer violence both in the home and in medical settings for "out" (openly queer) people means that often, the safest way to access 2SLGBTQ+ information is secretly.

Challenges

Collection Challenges as Public Discourse

Challenges in collections that involve 2SLGBTQ+ issues, like the complex historical challenges discussed in the Background section, are unlikely to be isolated. Rather, they are connected to larger societal and ideological discourses which present 2SLGBTQ+ people as a "social other." Because of this complexity, librarians should be familiar not only with their collections but with the wider social discourse that circulates about and around them. Data from the ALA shows an increasingly concerted effort to ban entire categories of books rather than select titles in challenges. This data suggests that many material challenges may be a political move rather than a singular concern about one book—the claim of "protecting" children and the public may also be a claim to detract from the political aims of the challenge (ALA, 2022c). Political challenges regularly coincide with, or are followed by: boycotts; campaigns against libraries or members of their public; and physical-space protests and demonstrations. In response, the ALA has released multiple statements in opposition to the censorship of materials, standing by its commitment to intellectual freedom, urging libraries to uphold this commitment, and asking individuals and communities to get involved and actively support intellectual freedom in libraries (ALA, 2021). Intellectual freedom is one defence that may be used to

protect 2SLGBTQ+ materials in collections, and it is a robust one as it is a core value of librarianship (ALA, 2019a).[19]

School libraries, in particular, are frequently the targets of political groups, which seek censorship of 2SLGBTQ+ titles by labelling them as "age-inappropriate" for students—an echo of obscenity discourse. Martha Hickson, a school librarian and one of the 2020 recipients of the American Association of School Librarians' Intellectual Freedom Award, shared her experience in battling book bans in a New Jersey high school. In what Hickson observed and described as a "nationwide," "coordinated, conservative censorship campaign," several titles were targeted by conservative lawmakers and their place on the school library bookshelves was challenged (Hickson, 2022).

Individual challenges like this tend to stoke and then catch fire. In a public letter to the state's Superintendent of Education, South Carolina Governor, Henry McMaster, referred to 2SLGBTQ+-themed books as "obscene and pornographic materials" and demanded a comprehensive investigation into said materials in public schools (Levesque, 2021). In a subsequent tweet, he even characterized them as "sexually explicit materials" (Levesque, 2021).

19. The issue of intellectual freedom is one that reappears in multiple discourses in librarianship, and the complexities of all these discourses are not in the scope of this guide. However, when it comes to 2SLGBTQ+ collections and issues, librarians should also remember that intellectual freedom defends the right for *all* viewpoints to be disseminated, and therefore also defends the right to homophobic and transphobic hate speech in libraries. Librarians should consider this perspective—and its interaction with the core value of social responsibility in librarianship—before determining the way they will use intellectual freedom in their advocacy work for 2SLGBTQ+ people. For more on this discourse, see Knox's (2020) Intellectual Freedom and Social Justice: Tensions Between Core Values in American Librarianship.

Similarly, a statement issued by Texas lawmaker, Jeff Cason, described 2SLGBTQ+-related books as "pornography" (Paget & Chavez, 2021); Kobabe's *Gender Queer* was among the titles targeted, receiving a mention in both statements (Paget & Chavez, 2021). To clarify, pornography is defined by the Cambridge Dictionary as "books, magazines, films, etc. with no artistic value that describe or show sexual acts or naked people in a way that is intended to be sexually exciting" (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). It is questionable how a memoir of an adolescent discovering their own gender identity could be seen as intentionally sexually exciting or explicit and of no artistic value, and also worth examining that it suddenly became a target more than two years after it was first published. This case is a clear reverberation of obscenity discourse, but as Kobabe pointed out in an interview, libraries should resist these calls—libraries must continue to serve as "a safe space for someone trying to find out about themselves, especially if it's a topic they don't feel comfortable about" (Levesque, 2021).

Challenges from the "Other Side": *Irreversible Damage*, Public Damage

Adding 2SLGBTQ+ materials to a collection, and defending them to keep them there, is a vital gesture. Unfortunately, this is not the end of the work; the struggle for Queer Liberation is fought on two fronts, for visibility and pride but against repression and violence. 2SLGBTQ+ people must certainly be visible in the collection, but even this can fail to be supportive if the collection also emphasizes resources that spread misinformation or hateful rhetoric. Librarians must develop strategies for addressing challenges to this "other side" of the battle, for instances when 2SLGBTQ+ members of the public object to resources or the way they are promoted by the library. To be clear, this guide does not encourage or advocate for ideological censorship of resources, as this undermines the free

exchange of information. It is, in fact, often important for members of the public to be able to access examples of homophobic, transphobic literature, especially historically, in order to understand how these systems of oppression operate. However, some materials in collections are embroiled in a great deal of public discourse, and they may in fact be collected for this very reason. When that discourse, then, spills over into the library itself, librarians must take care to remember the history and forces of power at play in their response. Abigail Shrier's *Irreversible Damage* is a prime example of how materials about 2SLGBTQ+ people can also have an enormous impact, and how collection challenges from 2SLGBTQ+ people must at the very least not be ignored.

Irreversible Damage (hereafter *ID*),[20] simply by its inclusion in library collections, has caused multiple schisms in libraries across Canada.[21] In Halifax most significantly, a collections challenge in the form of a change.org online petition called to remove the book, garnering 2,500 signatures (Mullin, 2021). When Halifax Public

20. In summary, *Irreversible Damage* presents female-to-male gender transition as a damaging social fad and encourages parents to intervene in their transmasculine children seeking gender-affirming care. From the inside jacket, via Edmonton Public Library's (EPL's) bibliographic description: "A generation of girls is at risk. Abigail Shrier's essential book will help you understand what the trans craze is and how you can inoculate your child against it - or how to retrieve her from this dangerous path" (EPL, 2020).

21. The extent of this response was significant enough to produce a statement from the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA-FCAB) about the resource specifically, where the value of intellectual freedom was supplied as a primary reason the resource was kept. The statement also noted that "the issues faced supporting intellectual freedom are challenging" (CFLA-FCAB, 2021).

Libraries (HPL) declined to do so, Halifax Pride responded by cutting ties with the library entirely, while 2SLGBTQ+ members of the public declared they would not be participating in library events and services (Mullin, 2021). HPL certainly behaved as librarians are regularly expected to do in this instance: the item was kept in the collection in the interest of information access and freedom, and in the interest of neutral collections that do not privilege one viewpoint over another even if that view is controversial. CEO Åsa Kachan of HPL also cited public demand and interest as a reason to collect *ID* (Mullin, 2021). However, in the context of librarians as advocates for 2SLGBTQ+ members of their public, a crucial consideration is the degree to which the library can be trusted as an institution. Both HPL's response and the subsequent response of the Canadian Federation of Library Associations ([CFLA-FCAB], 2021) did not adequately address, ironically, the damage done to the 2SLGBTQ+ public with circulation of this book. The mere presence of the book in the library alone is not the whole of the damage; it combines with the discourse surrounding it and the history of similar transphobia in public spaces to create a deeply uncomfortable environment for 2SLGBTQ+ users. "Intellectual freedom" and a "neutral" standpoint is an incomplete explanation for a community that is used to harm at the hands of institutions.

While *ID* is one of the most difficult cases of collections management in the contemporary context, a hopeful way forward is possible if librarians begin to consider building trust with their 2SLGBTQ+ public. A library does not necessarily need to censor or remove books like *ID* to be clear that its brand of transphobia is not acceptable in library spaces. Library workers could, for example, moderate the comments on their websites; the Edmonton Public Library's (EPL's) online catalogue record for *ID* includes a whopping 134 comments from users (EPL 2020), many of them transphobic in nature.[22]

22. Even though "offensive content" has been apparently hidden from

If a commitment to 2SLGBTQ+ people is otherwise demonstrated by the library and its collections, *ID*'s impact in the "battle" can be lessened. This, however, does require a great deal of courage from librarians in our political landscape.

Potential Threats in a Commitment to Diversity

In many instances, libraries who have committed to diversity in their collections and programming become themselves targets of hate speech, threats, and protests. Not all library workers are prepared or adequately compensated for managing this backlash. One public library in Montreal received spam calls and threats from conservative groups when a local drag performer was invited for a "Drag Story Hour" event.[23] The library staff faced personal attacks, accusations of "assisting pedophiles," and had their personal information exposed on the internet (Montpetit, 2022). The situation escalated to a point where the Montreal police opened investigations into the threats and patrolled the area to ensure safety. Two months later, due to a similar event hosted by the

these comments, still visible are comments that, for example, call transgender men "unwell young women" (EPL 2020). Adding "likes" to these comments adds another layer where hateful comments can be "boosted." Moreover, the same "offensive content" filters often filter out comments which outwardly name or condemn transphobia.

23. "Drag Story Hours" are children's programs where Drag performers (who explore alternative and playful forms of gender expression through clothing, makeup and personae) read to children and speak to them about topics like the value of differences, self-acceptance and self-confidence. They do not include sexual or sexuality-related material.

Edmonton Public Library, protesters with signs that read "Freedom" and "Shame on the library" gathered around. The protesters briefly entered the Stanley A. Milner Library, accusing the library of "'grooming' and 'sexualizing' children" (Lachacz, 2022). The protest was then met with a larger group of counter-protesters in support of the library and the event (Lachacz, 2022), creating a chaotic scene for users and staff. The backlash and threats of violence toward some libraries and library workers have become so intense that, in some circumstances, workers have chosen to leave their jobs (Harris & Alter, 2022). In 2022, the ALA released a statement condemning the threats of violence against libraries and librarians, where these threats were directly related to librarians refusing to censor materials about marginalized communities. Librarians who are themselves part of marginalized groups have also received threats on this basis (ALA, 2022a).

Although some disputes over libraries' 2SLGBTQ+ positivity were ultimately resolved, in other cases libraries faced dire consequences. In their defense of 2SLGBTQ+ titles including Kobabe's *Gender Queer*, two directors of the town library in Jamestown, Michigan were forced to resign after being harassed and accused of "indoctrinating kids" (Cantor, 2022). Moreover, the directors' resignation did not stop the group—the Jamestown Conservatives instead further escalated the issue. They distributed flyers in the neighbourhood which criticized *Gender Queer* for containing "extremely graphic sexual illustrations of two people of the same gender," and which shamed the library for failing to be "a safe and neutral place" with censorship of the memoir (Cantor, 2022). The Jamestown library compromised by taking Kobabe's book from the shelves and putting copies behind the counter instead. The controversy continued, however, and eventually culminated when Jamestown residents voted against the measure through which the library was funded, meaning the library is now facing closure (Cantor, 2022). When facing potential threats such as the ones discussed above, it would be prudent for libraries to plan their

potential response in advance, though as this example shows it often seems like no response will be received with satisfaction.

Responses

When facing such intense pressure to censor, advocating to include 2SLGBTQ+ materials in collections can seem daunting and sometimes impossible. This issue has been so politicized, it seems, that libraries can expect backlash no matter what their responses are. The subsequent sections discuss different approaches libraries have taken in responding to book challenges and the pressure to censor materials in their collection. If libraries completely resist challenges to their collections, they can face public backlash—calls for external reviews, funding cuts, and harassment and threats of violence towards libraries and their workers. If they instead choose to censor some challenged materials, in an attempt to remain neutral or appease both sides of the censorship argument, it often results in dissatisfaction from both sides. People from both sides in a library's "neutral" stance can argue that not enough is being done to address the issue. It can also be argued that in trying to remain neutral, one is also making a political choice, one where those who are trying to censor and oppress 2SLGBTQ+ people are not challenged. Some other libraries may also choose to simply comply with censorship due to intense pressure from their community, in the hopes that this will keep their library open and their patrons happy. In doing so, however, they go against the long-held ideology that libraries should be places of intellectual freedom and free information access, as well as places which operate for social good. Compliance also crucially alienates libraries' 2SLGBTQ+ public. Librarians should, then, be careful when considering what is the best response to challenges to their collections, and also consider programming that can supplement their response.

Resisting Censorship

Resisting censorship within a library encompasses more than refusing to remove 2SLGBTQ+ materials that have been challenged. Resistance can take various shapes. For instance, libraries can center 2SLGBTQ+ issues while participating in Banned Books Week, an annual event in the United States and Canada shedding light on challenged or censored books and celebrating the freedom to read (Banned Books Week, 2022). A similar event is Freedom to Read Week, a Canadian-specific initiative that "encourages Canadians to think about and reaffirm their commitment to intellectual freedom, which is guaranteed them under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms" (Book and Periodical Council, 2022). These events can be easily celebrated in libraries through creative displays or programming, and offer an opportunity to highlight and defend those 2SLGBTQ+ materials which are so frequently challenged each year.

Another way libraries can take a more active role in supporting 2SLGBTQ+ members of their community, instead of reactively resisting censorship, is to create 2SLGBTQ+ specific collections or sections in their library. Western University in London, Ontario, for example, created the Pride Library in 1997 to support 2SLGBTQ+ research and the 2SLGBTQ+ community in Canada (Western University, n.d.). Public and school libraries may not have the resources to create something on the same scale as the Pride Library, but they can still create smaller collections of 2SLGBTQ+ materials that are tailored to their community. Toronto Public Library (TPL) has one such special 2SLGBTQ+ collection full of materials for community members of various ages and backgrounds (n.d.). TPL even created various 2SLGBTQ+ reading lists, tailored for different age, language, or interest groups.

Libraries and library staff do not need to combat censorship alone; community-led activism against censorship as a whole can also be helpful in pushing back against anti-2SLGBTQ+ challenges.

There is a variety of activism happening outside of the library on this subject. A number of non-profit organizations have been created to document and raise awareness about challenges in libraries, such as Unite Against Book Bans and the National Coalition Against Censorship (2022). Members of the public are also stepping up: a group of US-based mothers created Book Ban Busters (2022), a database that tracks book bans and helps educate people about what they can do to help. Other anti-censorship efforts are more grassroots or creative; the Uncensored Library, for example, is an excellent resource located within a Minecraft game server. This in-game library ingeniously uses Minecraft to provide access to a collection of materials censored or banned in many countries, as well as sharing information about why and how materials are censored around the world (Peet, 2022). Lastly, GLAAD[24] offers resources for those reporting on censorship and book challenges in an 2SLGBTQ+ advocacy context. Library workers can help provide information about this external activism to users, and make available these resources related to challenges and bans. Librarians might also be able to use these resources to guide patrons to materials not available at their library.

24. GLAAD was originally an acronym which stood for the Gay & Lesbian Association Against Defamation but the organization does not typically utilize this acronym anymore as it is exclusionary towards a portion of the 2SLGBTQ+ community. GLAAD describes itself as "the world's largest Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) media advocacy organization – increases media accountability and community engagement that ensures authentic LGBTQ stories are seen, heard, and actualized."(GLAAD, 2022b)

Complying with Censorship

Libraries that comply with politically pressured censorship and remove books from the shelves often face backlash, as they fail to provide equitable resources and service to all their community members. In one example, the Smithtown Library Board in Long Island, New York voted to remove all pride material displays from the children's section in their four branches, and to ban any 2SLGBTQ+ titles from the children's room. (Ebrahimji, 2022). In response, the New York Library Association (NYLA) issued a dissenting statement that reaffirmed its commitment to intellectual freedom (NYLA, 2021). In the statement, the NYLA condemns the Smithtown Library Board's decision, which they say "sets a dangerous precedent for libraries across the state" and fails to provide "the only safe, affirmative, and welcoming space" for 2SLGBTQ+ youth to discover themselves without the fear of judgment (NYLA, 2021). The Governor of New York also stepped in, iterating their support of the 2SLGBTQ+ community and that public spaces should be welcoming and accepting, not rejecting. A day later, the Smithtown Library Board decided to reverse their decision; the materials were back on display until July 15, 2022, as originally intended (Ebrahimji, 2022). In another example, the Lincoln Parish Library in Ruston, Louisiana removed a number of 2SLGBTQ+ themed materials from displays in the children's section following numerous complaints from the community. All written in similar language, these complaints criticized those titles for being inappropriate for children to view without their parents' consent; their view was that these titles did not align with the values of community members (Smith, 2020). The materials were only accessible upon request by adults for a few days, and the board then held an open meeting where they voted to reshelve them elsewhere. Vivian McCain, the library director, said the removal of materials "goes against every grain in [her] body as a public librarian" (Jensen, 2020).

Community Engagement and Programming

In light of what can go wrong for the library, tensions are high in responding to challenges. Additionally, with the *Irreversible Damage* conflict as a prime example, there is also an extreme pressure to manage and respond to the backlash of those challenges. Amidst these pressures, there may even be a temptation for library workers to "preempt a challenge by avoiding purchasing [2SLGBTQ+] materials," (Andrasik et al., n.d., p.6).[25] but this will simply lead to more censorship and bring the problem back to its origins. Instead, librarians might "regroup" in their strategy and remember that, because 2SLGBTQ+ issues are so politicized, some challenges may actually be based on a misunderstanding of the materials rather than the materials themselves. Libraries can actually take advantage of the connection between a library's collections and public discourse, by connecting with patrons directly through 2SLGBTQ+ supportive programming. While programming is not an official part of collections work, it is an underdiscussed part of librarianship which is certainly connected to collections. Programming might include workshops, book displays, speaker series, or guests—all things that call attention to what resources the library has available. By making use of programming strategies, librarians can work to both dispel hateful myths and to manage the public discourse that accompanies many collections challenges.

Libraries have a great deal of information at their disposal which can be used to create informational and research guides on 2SLGBTQ+ topics, and some places to begin finding these information may be found in the "Sources for Further Reading" section. Librarians might also host workshops, or invite lecturers

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25. This discussion is found in the GLBTRT "Open to All" toolkit pdf, accessible on the RRT Website linked in the "Sources for Further Reading" section.

that work to dispel harmful ideas; they might create prominent displays and booklists that highlight the 2SLGBTQ+ experience. On an even broader scale, librarians can use their knowledge of information literacy to help the public understand hate speech, and to identify some of the misinformation that anti-2SLGBTQ+ resources and groups deploy. While these programs and physical moves, with Drag Storytimes as a prime example, often themselves become targets, implementing them in the first place is a gesture that shows 2SLGBTQ+ people they have a place in libraries. As with the *Irreversible Damage* conflict, using programming lessens the pressure on librarians to demonstrate diversity entirely through collections alone. Even if a collection contains books like *Irreversible Damage* which contain anti-transgender rhetoric, a library that collects the book could still be welcoming to transgender users if it also, for example, offered informational pamphlets about transition and what it entails.

For ideas on programs that will uplift 2SLGBTQ+ people in the library environment, the Rainbow Round Table (then called the GLBTRT) released an Open To All Toolkit that can serve as inspiration in the "Sources for Further Reading" Section. Many libraries offer Pride programming—unfortunately, much of it is most visible because of the challenges it garners from anti-2SLGBTQ+ members of the public. Such negative attention and focus makes it only more important to normalize this programming's presence. Libraries must also not forget the importance of forging bonds with local 2SLGBTQ+ community groups such as Pride Centers, which themselves often have excellent examples of programming for public education.

Conclusion

Despite the weight of so many challenges, continuing to advocate for 2SLGBTQ+ materials and against hateful rhetoric is a powerful

choice librarians can make for their publics. Actress and trans rights activist Laverne Cox has said, "it is revolutionary for any trans person to choose to be seen...in a world that tells us we should not exist" (VERVE Team, 2018). To ally themselves with 2SLGBTQ+ people, libraries must have this same revolutionary courage, recognizing that the heritage of denying queer people existence must not follow us into the future.

Sources for Further Reading

American Library Association. (2022b, September 14). *Rainbow Round Table* (RRT). Rainbow. https://www.ala.org/rt/rrt.

> ALA's Rainbow Round Table, with its heritage as the Gay Liberation Task Force, offers resources that support the information needs of the 2SLGBTQ+ community and information professionals. Its Open to All toolkit (in the educational resources section of the website) provides practical tips for libraries to better understand and serve the information needs of the community. These tips cover several dimensions of librarianship, such as cataloguing, programming, and collection development.

Baumann, J., & New York Public Library (Eds.). (2019). *The Stonewall reader*. Penguin Publishing Group.

> This book gathers primary sources from the New York Public Library's archives (one excellent example of a 2SLGBTQ+ collection) about the Stonewall uprising. Stonewall is largely regarded as the most significant event in the Gay Liberation movement, providing an impetus for the contemporary LGBTQ movements in North America. Through the lens of critical activists, it chronicles the events prior and subsequent to the uprising. Studying this book may help librarians understand the sociopolitical roots of anti-2SLGBTQ+ speech and violence.

Scott, D. & Saunders, L.. (2021). Neutrality in public libraries: How are we defining one of our core values? *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 53(1), 153–166.

> This study is useful when considering the discourses of intellectual freedom, social justice, and the value of "neutrality," if librarians find it useful to employ them. Over 500 library workers of different positions in the U.S. were surveyed in this study about their views on neutrality. The majority of respondents (68%) agreed with the definition of neutrality as "being objective in providing information," while only a few defined neutrality as "not taking sides on an issue" (12%) and "not expressing opinions" (5%). The survey also found that library workers considered neutrality most often when developing collections (82%). The resource offers a

fresh perspective on neutrality and prompts criticism in how it affects the library's operations in practice.

Stryker, S. (2008). *Transgender history*. Seal Press.

Written by historian and University of Arizona professor Susan Stryker, who is also a trans woman, Transgender History covers the history of trans communities and trans activism from the mid-1900s to present. This is a good resource for those wanting to learn more about the key figures, movements, and ideological issues related to trans rights; readers can gain insight into a history of trans life that goes beyond the contemporary mainstream media discourse. Stryker herself has also written several other resources on 2SLGBTQ+ History for readers to continue their study.

Trans PULSE Canada. (2019, June 27). *Home.* Trans PULSE Canada. https://transpulsecanada.ca/

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> A link to the educational resources page of Qmunity, which describes itself as "BC's Queer, Trans, and Two-Spirited Resource Center" (Qmunity). There are many articles and graphic resources here which make it easy to share information about 2SLGBTQ+ experience and issues with the public, and for librarians to be further educated. The September 2013 pdf linked on this page, "Queer Glossary: A to Q Terminology," is particularly useful for anyone unfamiliar with the myriad of terms used throughout history to describe 2SLGBTQ+ identity.

Grande-Sherbert, M., Ip, A., Pope, N. (2023, April 21). Censorship of 2SLGBTQ+ materials: A call to action for LIS. *Politics of Libraries V: Intellectual Freedom and Democracy*. https://doi.org/10.7939/r3-q6ex-1r92

> Adapted from this chapter, this presentation was given at the Politics of Libraries Conference. In our presentation, we outlined some of the main points of the paper in the forthcoming Contemporary Issues in Collection Management, including the historical background necessary for understanding how 2SLGBTQ+ materials have been censored by authorities and the relationship between intellectual freedom discourse and hate speech. We also stressed the importance of challenging passive or neutral stances in libraries when it comes to homophobic and

transphobic violence, and what is at stake for a library's 2SLGBTQ+ populations when their needs are ignored.

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4. Locked In: EBook Loan Limitations and Licensing Agreements in Public Libraries

DANIELLE DESCHAMPS

Introduction

Licensing agreements on ebooks have altered the core of what libraries have done for hundreds of years: own books and lend them. Public libraries aim to adapt to what their communities need and with the rise of the Internet and the new digital landscape came a new way that library users began to read – through ebooks. While many may have hoped that ebooks would represent a new horizon for a book reading reality of unfettered, instantaneous, simultaneous access, that was not to be the case (Sang, 2017). Instead, the ecosystem surrounding ebooks has become increasingly rigid (Sang, 2017). A widespread culture of licensing rather than ownership of digital content has risen and in the case of ebooks, has resulted in agreements in which libraries are paying for limited licence agreements at unreasonable prices. While the challenges of ebook licensing agreements affect all types of libraries, this chapter will focus specifically on how this issue has affected public libraries in Canada and the United States, first by providing a background of the shift to licensing agreements over ownership for ebooks, followed by an overview of the current situation. This chapter will then offer an analysis of the challenges

ebook licensing agreements pose to library collection management, and finally, an exploration of potential responses for a way forward.

Background and Current Context

In order to understand the implications of the issue of loan licensing on ebooks, it is critical to understand the legal boundaries which have previously permitted libraries to own and lend physical books. Library lending and copyright holders' intellectual property rights have both historically been upheld through copyright law. In Canada, the first domestic *Copyright Act* came into force in 1924, and has been amended several times, most recently in 2022 (*Copyright Act*, 1985). The first copyright laws came into effect in the United States in 1790, and in 1909 the "first sale doctrine" was codified into United States law, via the *Bobbs-Merrill Co. v. Straus* case, which argued that publishers could not set re-sale prices (Geist, 2009). Effectively, the first sale doctrine granted permission to consumers to sell or lend their personally owned copy, as long as it was legally purchased (Geist, 2009; Katz, 2016). Included in the *Bobbs-Merrill Co. v. Straus* case was the assertion that the failure to "preserve the first sale doctrine would place a 'weapon' in the hands of publishers" with which publishers could gain the power to set any conditions, wielding undue control over consumers (Geist, 2009, p.67). Canada's comparable "doctrine of exhaustion" is contained in Canadian jurisprudence, and historically both doctrines have both prevented excessive publisher control and enabled libraries to purchase works, own them, and lend them, all within the bounds of copyright law (Geist, 2009; Katz, 2016). However, as this chapter will later explore, the doctrines of first sale and exhaustion only apply to the sale of books, and with licensing agreements rather than sales for ebooks, these doctrines can be circumvented. The previous balance between publishers' interests and libraries' interest worked well in part due to the physicality of books – friction existed in

library lending through the limitation of geographical constraints, meaning that borrowers had to physically go into libraries, only one book could be lent at one time, and any risks of illegal copying of the book was limited by the sheer difficulty of photocopying an entire book (Gasaway, 2000; Geist, 2009).

While both publishers and libraries contribute to the ecosystem of information, publishers and libraries essentially come from different places and thus have differing values, which, in the digital age, has exacerbated these differences (Gasaway, 2000). Libraries are interested in the free flow of information by providing free access for their library users, while commercial publishers are interested in not only the actual creation of information (i.e., books), but also making a profit to keep themselves and their authors/ creators afloat (Gasaway, 2000). That said, public libraries have evolved to put in place professional ethics which stipulate both respecting intellectual property rights and providing public information access (ALA, 2021). Despite libraries contributing billions of dollars by purchasing copyrighted works, publishers seem to think that libraries believe information should be completely free (ALA, 2021; ALA, n.d.-b; Gasaway, 2000). While untrue, the notion establishes a dichotomy with libraries and publishers at opposing sides (Gasaway, 2000).

With the rise of ebooks taking hold over the course of the early to mid-aughts, as Sony eReaders and Amazon Kindles hit the market, concerns specifically throughout the large, multinational, commercial publishing world arose around the risks of increased ease of pirating digital copies of books, and the potential therein to devastate the publishing industry (Pew Research Center, 2012; Geist, 2009). Facing this new issue, these commercial publishers altered their models from selling ebooks in perpetuity to selling licences, effectively leasing ebooks instead (Marwell, 2011; Geist, 2009). Licensing agreements are viewed by publishers as a way to add "friction" to accessing ebooks – an effort to add constraints that function similarly to the friction of borrowing physical books from libraries, as discussed above, making borrowing ebooks less

convenient than simply buying ebooks, as well as purportedly protecting ebooks and eaudiobooks from copyright infringement (Perzanowski & Schultz, 2018). In a 2011 letter to librarians, the multinational publishing company HarperCollins explained their new loan licensing agreement model, which permitted 26 loans before re-purchase would be necessary, citing concerns that selling ebooks would harm the budding ebook industry, contribute to pressure on bookstores, as well as harm sales and thus authors' livelihoods (Marwell, 2011). The number of 26 loans was determined based on an assumption that a comparable physical book would only circulate about 26 times before deteriorating to the point of necessitating repurchase (De Castell et al., 2022). The 2011 HarperCollins letter further promised that despite the new licensing terms, the subsequent purchases would have a reduced price – akin to the paperback prices that come after initial hardcover book sales, all with the mission to balance the needs of libraries with the needs of publishers in the digital era (Marwell, 2011).

While libraries and publishers are key players in ebook licensing agreements, corporations known as aggregators, vendors, or intermediaries, who host and offer the digital infrastructure through which library ebooks are read by library users, are also key players (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022; Pew Research Center, 2012). For the purposes of this chapter, they will be referred to as ebook providers. These corporations, such as Overdrive, Hoopla, Freading, and many others, have bourgeoned alongside the rise of digital econtent, offering digital infrastructure, for which libraries must make agreements and pay fees in order to loan books via their platforms (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022; Pew Research Center, 2012).

Publishers have also added additional friction by binding ebooks to the platform within which they are accessed, accomplished through proprietary Digital Rights Management (DRM), also known as digital locks, which are technological protections that prevent copying or downloading (Sang, 2017; University of Alberta, 2020). However, DRM has effectively created closed platforms within

which information can be commodified, controlled, and monitored (Sang, 2017). Ebooks have established a new set of power relations between libraries, publishers, and aggregators, which produces several challenges discussed in the next section.

Challenges

Libraries have a commitment to their communities, often pledged in their collection development policies, to provide public access to the information held in their collection, regardless of format (ALA, n.d.-a). However, current licensing agreements are causing many libraries to struggle to financially maintain access – a key element of collection management, due to a combination of loan limitations and licensing agreements, as well as price of econtent (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022; Blackwell et al., 2019; CFLA, 2019). Given the challenging loan licensing terms and steep prices, public libraries are prevented from establishing diverse, long-term ecollections and from serving library users via preservation of econtent (CULC, 2019; De Castell et al., 2022). Key issues have arisen due to libraries, publishers, and aggregators having not only differing goals, but also incomplete and unequal access to data regarding library ebook lending (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). In order to evaluate how exactly licensing models cause issue for libraries and library collections, the next section will first detail the terms of licensing agreements, followed by an analysis of the potential contributing factors behind publishers' concerns about library elending.

Terms of Licensing Agreements

Typical ebook licensing models vary along three central factors: (1)

how many users can have access at one time, (2) the number of times the book can be loaned/circulated, and (3) the time limit of the licence (Riaza & Celaya, 2015). Among these, the most common agreements tend to be one copy/one user (referred to as OC/OU) at a time, often paired with a combination of 26 or 52 loans or a set amount of time, often two years, whichever comes first (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022; Blackwell et al., 2019). These agreements also vary by publisher, by book, and by platform (Blackwell et al., 2019; Giblin et al., 2019a). Time-limited, or metered, licences are a challenging arrangement for libraries, as 79% of titles expire before they surpass the circulation limit (Potash, 2019). In fact, based on an Australian study of almost 3.5 million library ebooks, the median check-outs per title is only thirteen (Giblin et al., 2019b). With time-limited licence agreements, libraries face repetitive re-evaluation and re-purchasing of ebooks, some of which may never even come close to reaching a comparable number of circulations that would wear down a physical book (Blackwell et al., 2019).

Additionally, while certain promises, such as in HarperCollins' 2011 letter, have been made implying that prices would decrease after time had passed, neither ebook prices nor loan licence terms seem to change with less recent books, even when these books might no longer be on shelves in bookstores (Marwell, 2011; Giblin et al., 2019b; Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). Publishers have also set the prices of ebooks for libraries at costs ranging from close to the price of ebooks for consumers to rates ten times higher, which campaigns like the Canadian Urban Library Council's (CULC) #eContentForLibraries, have set about advocating against (CFLA, 2019; CULC, n.d.). As of 2019, Canadian public libraries were spending 20-30% of their collections budget on econtent, and these numbers will have increased significantly since the Covid-19 pandemic's widespread library closures wherein relying on library econtent became a necessity (CFLA, 2019; Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). Libraries also pay fees to each ebook provider they work with, which can range anywhere "from a few thousand per year to more than $80,000 (all figures inCAD) at the largest libraries." (CFLA,

2019, p.2). Additionally, it is not transparent how much of those fees end up supporting authors/creators (CFLA, 2019). Library collection budgets simply cannot stretch as far in the digital ecosystem with these unfair constraints (Blackwell et al., 2019).

Underlying all of these unreasonable licensing agreement terms and prices, is the fact that the market is unstable – there has been no settling of term agreements, but rather a changeable patchwork across platforms, titles, and companies that libraries are left to navigate repeatedly, trying to get the best value with their tax-payer dollars for the titles and formats their library users want the most (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). A key example of ebook market instability is the 2019 Macmillan embargo, which came into effect in July of that year and embargoed all new Macmillan titles in ebook format for libraries, restricting libraries' access to all but one copy, until eight weeks passed (Sargent, 2019). Macmillan then cancelled the embargo in March 2020, after less than one year, at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic (Sargent, 2020).

Overall, the changes of loan limitations and licensing agreements demonstrate the extent that these agreements have effectively circumvented the protections based in copyright law and jurisprudence of first sale and exhaustion doctrines for libraries and rendered library access to books in digital format altogether under the control of publishing companies. Libraries, by their very nature, do not have the financial means to negotiate for better agreements, leaving them in a vulnerable position (Cichocki, 2007/ 2008; Feldman, 2019; Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). Given the terms listed above, it can be difficult to understand the publisher's side, apart from monopolistic power and capitalistic insatiability; however, this chapter will next explore factors that may be contributing to publishers enforcing these arguably over-reaching contracts with elending.

Publishing Perceptions of Libraries and Lack of

Shared Data

Among the publishing world, the troubling sentiment has arisen that library lending of digital content is significantly detracting from publisher's sales with claims being made that Amazon is partially responsible for spreading this notion (Fowler, 2021; Giblin & Weatherall, 2022; Albanese, 2019; Emanuel, 2020). Amazon has become a major player in the publishing world, but for the past decade has maintained the policy of not selling (or rather, not leasing) any of their exclusive ebook and eaudiobook content to libraries (Fowler, 2021). Amazon owns not only certain devices through which their ebooks are read, but in many cases, they also own the publishing company and thus the copyright, as well as the platforms through which ebooks are read and sold (Fowler, 2021). They are effectively creating their own exclusive, private library, and many have argued that they stand to benefit the most from squeezing public libraries out of the ebook market, as they are likely to gain a large share of the sales that frustrated library users may make when they cannot access ebooks from their library (Fowler, 2021; Giblin & Weatherall, 2022; Albanese, 2019; Emanuel, 2020).

Indeed, the perception that libraries' access to ebooks, particularly new titles, is actively disadvantaging publishers and authors came to a head with the aforementioned Macmillan embargo. On July 25, 2019, Macmillan CEO, John Sargent, wrote a letter to Macmillan authors, agents, and illustrators describing the company's plan and reasoning for the embargo – namely that they had tested such an embargo with their Tor imprint, in order to address "growing fears that library lending was cannibalizing sales…" (para 1). Sargent goes on to state that in the US "45% of ebook reads … [were] being borrowed for free from libraries" (2019, para 2). Sargent's letter is inflammatory and concerning, but also rife with inaccuracy due to a lack of transparent shared data between ebook providers, publishers, and libraries (Potash, 2019; Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). Overdrive CEO, Steve Potash, responded

to Sargent's letter disqualifying Sargent's metric of "ebook reads" as "pure fallacy" (2019, para 6; 2019, para 1). Potash also asserts that the Tor ebooks only had a small selection available in library catalogs and thus, the conclusions Sargent drew did not have sufficient evidence and were therefore unsubstantiated (2019). Additionally, Sargent's letter implies that these "ebook reads" were free, effectively invisibilizing the fact that libraries pay significant amounts for digital access, and in cases where ebooks expire before they reach their circulation limit, each "read" is costing the library far more than Sargent's imagined estimation of "free" (Potash, 2019; Sargent, 2019). However, with the current arrangement between libraries, ebook providers, and publishers, the publishers do not have access to checkout/circulation data of digital materials, as the ebook providers only give aggregate information about how many licences were sold (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). While there are likely both public privacy and proprietary interests at play, the limited data provided to publishers – data on the sale of licences only – also means that publishers are left imagining that ebooks are being read by hundreds or thousands of people for one sole library-paid fee (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). From that perspective, it could follow that the only thing sustaining ebook sales would be the licensing agreements; however, this is likely not the case, as previously mentioned, most ebooks circulate a median of thirteen times before the time limit is up (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). Whether library access negatively influences sales in a harmful way was also a concern raised with print books; overall, an improved system to share data between the three parties is necessary, as well as real data and research to determine how much, if at all, library ebook access influences ebook sales (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022).

On the opposite side, there are many proponents of the notion that libraries actually contribute to publishers' sales, by aiding in discoverability, which is essentially free marketing and promotion, not to mention the fact that readers who use the library also purchase books and are thus the publisher's customers (Pew Research Center, 2012; Albanese, 2018; Burleigh, 2017). Yet, without

proper data, neither claim can be fully substantiated, and as Potash remarked, it is certainly not wise to base business decisions on fictions (2019). The challenge of licensing agreements for library ebooks is reinforced by a larger structural move away from digital ownership, which the next section will consider.

Commodification of Information

The era of ebook licensing agreements coincides with a wider cultural shift towards streaming, licensing, and leasing, rather than ownership (Perzanowski & Schultz, 2018). It is not only libraries whose access to ebooks is limited under licensing agreements, but consumers as well, yet many people may be unaware that when they purchase an ebook, they are only purchasing a licence (Perzanowski & Schultz, 2018). The consequence of this arrangement is that that the copyright owners – publishing companies or their parent corporations – can effectively make any changes to what users believe they own, at any time. For example, ebooks that are licensed on Amazon's Kindle, are subject to any change as the company sees fit – in one instance, they remotely removed the ebook 1984 by George Orwell from all individuals' devices, due to a publishing dispute (Perzanowski & Schultz, 2018; Sang, 2017). Ultimately, with licensing, users have reading access to a work until any such time as the corporation changes their mind for any reason, which could easily allow for private censorship (Perzanowski & Schultz, 2018; Sang, 2017).

Additionally, the aforementioned DRMs, or proprietary digital locks, also known as Technological Protection Measures (TPMs), further constrain individuals' ability to utilize licensed works as they constrain fair use/fair dealing rights (United States rights/ Canadian rights, respectively). Fair dealing is an exception within Canadian copyright law that allows for copy and use of a work under specific circumstances, which include "research, private study,

education, parody, satire, criticism or review and news reporting"
and are subject to consideration of several fair dealing factors
(*Copyright Act*, 1985; De Castell et al., 2022, p.12). The United States'
Copyright Act codifies fair use for similar purposes as the Canadian
equivalent, but the major difference is that the United States fair
use rights list is illustrative, while the Canadian fair dealing list
is exhaustive, meaning that fair dealing in Canada is limited in
application to only the situations listed above (De Castell et al.,
2022). Further, TPMs are included in the Canadian *Copyright Act*,
which declares that it is illegal to bypass any TPM, with only a few
narrow exceptions, resulting in the risk of copyright violation even
if an individual's usage is protected under fair dealing (University of
Alberta, 2020). Thus, DRMs/TPMs that intend to protect copyright
infringement can also end up prohibiting fair dealing access in
Canada, further reinforcing the shift towards commodifying
information.

Many arguments for the importance of libraries maintaining their
ability to provide free access to information cite democracy as the
strongest reason to advocate for libraries (Geist, 2009; Sang, 2017;
Laughlin, 2010; De Castell et al, 2022; Gasaway, 2000). Indeed,
Gasaway writes that, "the commodification of information is a
threat to the public's access to information," and it is easy to see,
with the Kindle and 1984 example above, exactly how this has
already manifested; further, it is easy to imagine the extent to which
it could go (2000, p.133). In this way, licensing agreements have the
potential to erode unfettered, uncensored access to information,
which is arguably fundamental for democracy (Geist, 2009;
Gasaway, 2000). Additionally, licensing agreements ultimately
prioritize those with the sufficient means, whether financial or
otherwise, to access them. Even in the information age, the power
of information flows most easily to those with privileged access
politically, economically, socially, and culturally (Gasaway, 2000).
Libraries interrupt this flow, by aiming to offer free access of
information to all, regardless of their situation or level of privilege.
In this way, libraries – and both their print and digital collections –

maintain the potential to act as an equalizing force in a society that is becoming increasingly unequal. Yet, while libraries continue to be a strong element of the public sphere, their necessary participation in the market threatens to further erode and commodify access to information (Trosow, 2015). The next section will explore what potential responses libraries can take to protect and improve the public's digital information access through libraries.

Responses

Librarians have made suggestions as to what they see as reasonable compromises and solutions to the issue of unfair licensing agreements, such as more reasonable prices and having a wider variety of licensing options available (Blackwell et al., 2019; Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). However, there are also ideas that aim to remove or circumvent licensing situations altogether. Broadly, these include (1) reform through legislation; (2) controlled digital lending; and (3) library controlled elending platforms (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). While each are separate approaches, utilizing several or all of these in conjunction may aid in changing the culture around econtent (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). For example, the CFLA has presented their recommendations to the Canadian government, which include ideas such as offering a tax incentive to corporations that provide fair pricing and licensing agreements, encouraging publishers to offer agreements for libraries that are more comparable to what they offer individuals, as well as authorizing controlled digital lending (hereafter CDL) for out of market content (2019). The next sections will take an in-depth look into each of the three options listed above.

Legislation and Legal Reform

One way that libraries can advocate for more reasonable licensing or digital sales is to take the issue to the courts, as occurred with the *Bobbs-Merrill Co. v. Straus* case over one hundred years ago (Geist, 2009). This option directly targets the unfair prices and licensing models and requires libraries to lobby for legislative or legal methods to ameliorate the situation (Geist, 2009; Giblin & Weatherall, 2022; ALA, 2022b). Since legislative reform has historically worked there is hope that it could do so once again (Geist, 2009). There have been two recent cases that have had mixed results with this method – in 2021 both Maryland and New York State passed laws that would require publishers to license ebooks to libraries "on reasonable terms" (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022, p.367; ALA, 2022b). However, both laws were later struck down, with courts citing that these laws would be in conflict with federal copyright law (Brittain, 2022; ALA, 2022a). A major drawback is thus illustrated: attempted legislative reform has the potential to end in a win for the publishers instead. Another drawback to this method is that the potential laws, if they do successfully pass, may not be specific enough and may leave too much space for interpretation (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). For example, the ambiguity of "reasonable terms" may be interpreted very differently to libraries versus publishers (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). Additionally, pursuing legislative reform could involve the risk that if terms of sale are legislated, publishers could simply choose not to make ebooks available for sale for libraries at all.

Controlled Digital Lending

Controlled digital lending represents another way forward that involves making a digital lending system that aims to mimic the

physical environment as much as possible, thus staying within current legal standards for library lending (De Castell et al., 2022). There have been some excellent United States and Canadian pieces that provide thorough discussions detailing how and why CDL can work for libraries (please see Suggested Further Reading below). CDL involves the library legally purchasing copies of a work, digitizing one, and offering it as an option for checkout to library users, with DRM technology in place to prevent copying or redistribution (De Castell et al., 2022; Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). CDL must have an "owned to loaned" ratio, meaning that they only loan what they have legally purchased and have ownership over, as per the doctrine of exhaustion/first sale doctrine or equivalent (De Castell et al., 2022, p.2). Additionally, the digital copy is loaned in place of a physical copy, so when it is checked out, it's physical copy "parent" is also unavailable (De Castell et al., 2022). In a Canadian public library context, this option is arguably backed by Canadian copyright law and recent case laws, which recognize the principle of exhaustion, as well as technological neutrality – which asserts that copyright decisions must not be determined by format, and by fair dealing (De Castell et al., 2022).

While fair dealing may be of use for academic libraries pursuing CDL, for public libraries, a significant amount of the collection, particularly fiction, would not be protected under fair dealing (De Castell et al., 2022). However, public libraries could opt to use CDL only for works that are within the public domain, only for non-fiction works, or they could take actions such as adding geographic limitations – having CDL available for local residents only (De Castell et al., 2022). CDL is an option that would allow libraries to regain some control over their digital lending, enable preservation of works that they legally own, all the while keeping pace with technological changes and user expectations, within a relatively reasonable budget (De Castell et al., 2022). Nonetheless, it is recommended that any libraries attempting CDL seek prior legal counsel (De Castell et al., 2022).

Library Controlled ELending Platforms

Lastly, libraries could endeavor to create their own platforms from which to lend ebooks (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). For this method, libraries must work together to develop ebook hosting infrastructure that is library controlled (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). This option would ideally also offer libraries a way to generate key data about their ecollections, such as information on titles expiring versus hitting their checkout limit (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). The possibility of libraries creating and hosting their own ebook lending platforms has the potential to save money that libraries spend on their agreements with current ebook providers – money that could then be invested into more ebooks (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). There have been a few cases in which libraries have attempted to host their own elending platform, namely the Douglas County Model, and the current Digital Public Library of America model (DPLA). In 2012, Douglas County Public Library developed their own ebook platform using Adobe Content Server (ACS), which was also used by Overdrive at the time, and they used VuFind as their open-source front-end discovery layer (Hogan, n.d.). However, it appears that they no longer operate using this method, as their public ecollections are now hosted by Overdrive and Hoopla (DCL, n.d.). The Marmot Library Network also attempted the Douglas County Model, but after three years decided to move to Overdrive and abandon their ACS, citing issues of the time-consuming process of original cataloguing, issues between their Integrated Library System and the ACS, as well as an inability to acquire books in high demand by their community (Thomas & Noble, 2016). Operating an elending platform may be a challenging endeavor, particularly for individual libraries with already strained budgets; however, many of these challenges can be met by combining efforts with other libraries and library organizations, such as in the case of the DPLA.

The DPLA has recently created a new library-controlled elending platform, "Palace Marketplace," which uses the New York Public

Library's open-source elending app, "SimplyE," and functions much like OverDrive, lending new, in-demand titles of both ebooks and eaudiobooks, but with added benefits of maintaining user privacy and offering flexible licensing agreements to participating libraries (Breeding, 2021; Giblin & Weatherall, 2022; DPLA, n.d.). The strategy of libraries working together for econtent has had a recent success of entering into a deal with Amazon Publishing, in which the latter has agreed to license 10,000 of their ebooks to the DPLA (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022; Klar, 2021; Fowler, 2021). Library controlled elending platforms work best with multiple libraries joining forces and enough technologically savvy employees to develop and maintain the infrastructure (Hogan, n.d.; Thomas & Noble, 2016). With joint efforts such as DPLA, libraries have greater negotiating power for licences, can split the cost, and bring the breadth of ebook data back into the hands of libraries (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022).

Conclusion

Ebook licensing agreements have become the widespread norm for library ebook access. Yet, between libraries and publishers, these agreements, the terms of which are set by publishers, have devolved to an extent that libraries are struggling to maintain their access to ecollections. Publishers perceive libraries as harming their bottom lines and libraries are in a particularly vulnerable place, without much negotiating power. However, there are several optional ways for public libraries to move forward, in effort of balancing their financial capacity while maintaining their ethical principle of respecting intellectual property rights. Legal or legislative advocacy and action, utilizing controlled digital lending, as well as participating in joint library-controlled ebook platforms are current possible responses to the challenges libraries are facing (Giblin & Weatherall, 2022). An area for further research would be the

possibilities of public library publishing endeavours, which could align well with joint library elending platforms.

Sources for Further Reading:

American Library Association (ALA). (n.d.-b). *Copyright: An interpretation of the Code of Ethics.* Retrieved October 25, 2022, from: https://www.ala.org/tools/ethics/copyright

> This source provides integral information for understanding the library Code of Ethics regarding copyright. It explains how libraries balance their goal of providing access to information while respecting intellectual property rights.

Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA). (2019, January). *CFLA-FCAB Position Statement E-Books and Licensed Digital Content in Public Libraries.* http://cfla-fcab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/CFLA-FCAB_position_statement_ebooks.pdf

> The CFLA position statement is helpful for understanding details of the situation Canadian public libraries are facing with regards to accessing econtent. It is also a valuable example of one of the ways in which Canadian libraries advocate to the federal government.

De Castell, C., Dickison, J., Mau, T., Swartz, M., Tiessen, R., Wakaruk, A., & Winter, C. (2022, February 9). Controlled digital lending of library books in Canada. *Partnership, 17*(2). https://doi.org/10.21083/partnership.v17i2.7100

> This article outlines, in outstanding detail, legal considerations that may affect controlled digital lending in Canada. It offers practical advice and several options to help libraries embark towards implementing controlled digital lending, within the bounds of the current laws. It is also based, in part, on the earlier United States work.

Fowler, G. (2021, March 10). Want to borrow that e-book from the library? Sorry, Amazon won't let you. *The Washington Post.* Retrieved from: https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/03/10/amazon-library-ebook-monopoly/

> A relevant news article that provides an overview of Amazon's involvement in the publishing world. It also relates the history and current situation between Amazon and libraries.

Gasaway, L. N. (2000). Values conflict in the digital environment: librarians versus copyright holders. *Columbia-VLA Journal of Law & the Arts, 24*(1), 115-162. https://heinonline.org/HOL/

P?h=hein.journals/cjla24&i=125

> Through this work, Gasaway offers critical information for understanding the organizational values of both publishing and libraries, and how the conflict has led them two to become opposing sides on the issue of United States copyright. It covers elements that both separate and connect publishers and libraries, drawing the conclusion that both sides must avoid exaggerations in order to find a middle ground.

Geist, R.A. (2009). A "license to read": the effect of e-books on publishers, libraries, and the first sale doctrine. *IDEA: The Intellectual Property Review* 52(1), 63-100. https://heinonline.org/HOL/ P?h=hein.journals/idea52&i=67

> Geist provides a helpful legal perspective on the issue of ebook licensing agreements and libraries. It includes a discussion of the history surrounding United States copyright, the doctrine of first sale, as well as detailing how it previously protected library lending and outlining the consequences of not having a digital equivalent.

Giblin, R. & Weatherall, K. (2022). Taking control of the future: Towards workable elending. In J. Coates, V. Owen, & Reilly, S., (Eds.), *Navigating Copyright for Libraries* (pp. 351-377). Walter de Gruyter, Berlin/Boston. https://doi.org/10.1515/

9783110732009

This is a current, key piece that includes relevant research for understanding how libraries, publishers, and ebook providers relate in terms of unfair prices and licensing agreements, as well as a discussion of options for the future. This source is in a book that is also very relevant for further reading on the topic of copyright and libraries.

Perzanowski, A., & Shultz, J. (2018). *The End of Ownership: Personal Property in the Digital Economy.* MIT Press. https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/10524.001.0001

This book provides relevant background information for understanding ebook licensing agreements amidst wider cultural movements away from ownership. The authors make the case that consumers must be aware of the potential consequences, and it would overall be advised to re-introduce ownership into the digital milieu.

Pew Research Center. (2012, June 22). *Part 1: Libraries, patrons, and ebooks.* Pew Research Center https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2012/06/22/part-1-an-introduction-to-the-issues-surrounding-libraries-and-e-books/

This source provides an interesting and relevant background of research regarding the tense relationship between

libraries and publishers, as well as the influence of corporations, from the time just after publishing companies began to license rather than sell ebooks. However, many aspects have changed since then; nonetheless, it offers a clear picture of the situation at that time.

Sang, Y. (2017). The politics of ebooks. *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics, 13*(3), 211-228. https://doi.org/10.1386/macp.13.3.211_1

Sang provides an apt discussion of ebooks in the context of legal, sociocultural, political, and technological constraints. It outlines the issues associated with closed platforms, Digital Rights Management, as well as library elending.

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AMY NOWAKOWSKY AND KAT VOY

Introduction

Ebooks are an increasingly in-demand commodity in the digital age. Both public and academic libraries rely heavily on publishers to source their collections of ebooks and e-resources. Before the advent of digital materials, libraries were free to purchase and lend out print copies, as their rights allow. With the introduction of ebooks, publishers introduced new lending models that changed the market, leaving them with more control than libraries over how ebooks could be accessed and paid for. Through this new landscape of control, publishers and libraries have been increasingly at odds when it comes to ebook pricing in particular. Global events like the Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the need for digital lending in libraries, which was already on the rise pre-pandemic. Meanwhile, publishers have attempted to retain their grasp of market control through embargoes and steep prices that leave libraries unable to keep up in terms of budgets and funding.

An understanding of how ebook pricing affects libraries and their users is key to being able to advocate for libraries in these matters. In order to set the stage, the players must be introduced: publishers and both academic and public libraries. Within the context of this discussion, it is also important to understand the factors that

influence both publishers and libraries in the fight for their rights to collection control through digital licensing, copyright protections, and cost management. Exorbitant prices for ebooks have led to attempts at legislation and library-backed advocacy campaigns. Libraries have tried to stand their ground in a fight for new protections, while publishers aim to keep the legal allowances currently providing them control.

This chapter describes the main players in the pricing game, and summarizes what has been and can continue to be done to establish libraries in a position where they can continue their work in providing their communities free access to the information they seek. Libraries provide supplemental, not competitive access in the ebook market (Katz, 2017), and ever-increasing ebook prices are putting a strain on these services.

Background

An Overview of Publishers

Trade publishing, meaning those who provide books for retail booksellers (ODLIS, n.d), is controlled mainly by the 'Big Five', which are the five biggest trade publishers in the world: Penguin Random House, HarperCollins, Simon & Schuster, Hachette, and Macmillan (note that these are all private companies). Precise sales data is generally kept secret, but estimates put the Big Five sales at 60-70% or higher of all English language trade books sold (Crumm, 2022). Academic publishing is an even bigger amalgamation of wealth. Of the eight biggest publishers in the world by revenue, all are involved in academic publishing, with only two also being involved in trade publishing: Bertelsmann (who owns Penguin Random House) and Hachette Livre (who owns Hachette). These top eight biggest

publishers accumulate the majority of the wealth in publishing (Zandt, 2021). The other big academic publishers are RELX Group, Thomson Reuters, Pearson, Wolters Kluwer, Springer Nature, and Wiley (Zandt, 2021).

In 2020, Penguin Random House (Bertelsmann) made a deal to purchase Simon & Schuster for over $2 billion USD. The U.S. Justice Department filed a civil antitrust lawsuit to block this purchase (Crumm, 2022). In the initial complaint, the Justice Department stated that after the merger, Penguin Random House would have accounted for nearly half of the market for the most anticipated top-sellers, with the next largest competitor being less than half that amount. Together the merged company and the next largest competitor would have been two-thirds of the most anticipated top-sellers (*United States v. Bertelsmann*, 2021). In November 2022, a decision was reached and the merger was blocked by a U.S. Federal Judge, due to the potential for the mega-company to dominate the market and lessen competition (Italie, 2022). Though Penguin Random House was quick to disagree with the decision and would pursue an appeal, this ruling was seen as a success by those in support of authors and readers, in terms of promoting the sharing of information and ideas, as well as laying the groundwork for further anti-trust legislation (Albanese, 2022b). Regardless of appeals, Simon & Schuster will still be sold to another entity, especially considering it was previously bid for by other publishing companies including NewsCorp, which owns HarperCollins (Italie, 2022). With a select few large publishers controlling the market, and with their efforts to increase their hold on the industry through mergers, libraries' abilities to effectively share information, especially through ebooks, could be reduced.

Increasing Digital Demand in Libraries

Ebooks are becoming an increasingly popular service provided by

libraries. In between publishers and libraries there exists vendors who may bundle ebooks into packages for sale and may also provide technology to aid in material distribution (Library Distribution, n.d.); however, these vendors still are required to follow the licensing terms set by the publishers and must pass on those restrictions to libraries (Library Distribution, n.d.). These vendors keep a portion of the profits but due to confidential agreements, it is unclear how much of these profits actually then make their way through publishers to reach authors and creators (CFLA, 2019). Platforms such as Overdrive are primarily suited for public libraries, while other vendors like ProQuest may be better suited for academic libraries, both due to the type of material they host as well as the specific technology they use (ReadersFirst, 2014).

Overdrive tracks the number of books checked out by both libraries and schools that use their services. In 2019, 211 million ebooks were checked out by users, a 15% increase from 2018 (Overdrive, 2020). In 2020 this number rose to 289 million, a 40% increase from 2019. For 2020, around 2 million of those checkouts were through schools rather than libraries, though this number is not stated for 2019 (Overdrive, 2021). Keeping in mind, also in 2020, there was the Covid-19 pandemic, which presented a new landscape for digital service needs. As an example, the Edmonton Public Library (EPL), one of the largest public library systems in Canada, saw a 37% increase in ebook borrowing during the first year of the pandemic, from 1.3 million to nearly 1.8 million. This increase coincided with a 55% decrease in physical items (EPL, 2021). 2021 still saw an increase in ebook usage at EPL, but a significantly lower one at 1% to just over 1.8 million. Physical circulation increased by 30% but not to the same number seen prior to the pandemic (EPL, 2022). These all indicate that the desire for ebooks from the public library is still on the rise, despite a slowing rate of increase.

Academic libraries are also increasing their ebook collections. A study in 2020 found that 190 of 193 academic libraries surveyed currently had an ebook collection and that the majority had at least 500,000 ebooks available (Novak et al., 2020). As an example,

the University of Alberta, a top five research library in Canada, had more than 2.2 million ebooks according to their February 2021 figures; however, ebook circulation data was not provided (University of Alberta Library, 2021). The University of Alberta has been e-preferred since 2013, meaning unless it conflicts with collections guidelines they will purchase the ebooks over print. Unfortunately, their licensing priorities are not mentioned (University of Alberta Library, 2022).

For both academic and public libraries, it is clear that digital services are in demand and that libraries are also incorporating them into their services. As ebook prices increase, libraries will be increasingly limited in how much they can meet the demand.

Copyright Exhaustion and Digital Licensing

Two significant factors influencing how ebooks are able to be lent out by libraries are the application of copyright rules in regards to digital formats of books and licensing of digital books. In the United States, the Doctrine of First Sale is a law codified in the American *Copyright Act* ensuring libraries' rights to the free circulation of print copies they have legally acquired (American Library Association [ALA], 2022). Works are considered property of the purchaser that cannot be controlled by the creator once sold, and the purchaser cannot make or sell copies of the original intellectual work, as the copyright holder retains those rights (Jenkins, 2014). According to Turco (2020), the equivalent in Canada is the idea of copyright exhaustion, which in essence are laws restricting the distribution of copies made; you can resell a used book but reproducing it is still governed by copyright law. The idea of copyright exhaustion is not codified into law in Canada and instead relies on court jurisprudence (Katz, 2016, Lonsdale, 2011).

Copyright laws are what publishers lean on to enforce limitations on the quantity and availability of books, allowing publishers to set

supra-competitive prices (Katz, 2017). Legal rules such as copyright exhaustion are fundamental to libraries being able to provide services to the same level they have been in the past (Katz, 2017). With the advent of digital resources, the Doctrine of First Sale and copyright exhaustion have not been applied to ebooks in the same way they would with printed publications. Digital copies do not go through the same wear as physical copies, lasting indefinitely with proper digital preservation, which is one reason publishers have used to justify their enforcement of higher pricing and stricter licensing terms (Blackwell et al., 2019).

With ebooks, libraries are not able to outright own their copies, and must instead purchase licences that require renewal under contracts, as first sale rights are not applicable (Jenkins, 2014). With the increasing demand for ebooks, libraries have been faced with adapting to a new purchasing model as compared to traditional print books. Ebooks are more commonly licensed as opposed to sold outright to libraries. The reason libraries cannot purchase an ebook from a store and put it into circulation at the library as they would with a print book is because of this licensing. Digital Rights Management (DRM), a means of controlling access to digital materials through technological safeguards, must be implemented by libraries or their vendors to ensure licensing terms are met and digital titles are not being illegally shared or copied, protecting the rights of the copyright holder which are, in this case, publishers (Lemmer & Wale, 2016).

This sales model means that libraries are extremely limited in how they can circulate content due to strict licensing terms and a lack of power to negotiate those terms (DeCastell et al., 2022). These controls are especially problematic considering that smaller independent publishers often choose to not publish ebooks, forcing libraries to source their content from big publishing houses that predatorily use licensing agreements (DeCastell et al., 2022). Activities like interlibrary loans are not possible in the same way they would be with print books (Jenkins, 2014). Controlled Digital Lending, described by DeCastell et al. (2022) as where libraries can

"circulate a digitized title in place of a physical one in a controlled manner" (p. 2), is but one way libraries may be able to navigate around licensing limitations, and will be discussed further in the section titled *Applying Digital Exhaustion and Controlled Digital Lending* of this chapter.

In comparison to ebooks, print copies are not bound by licensing and instead get bought outright. Library print lending functions on a one-to-one basis, and though digital copies are lent in the same fashion, there are more limitations placed on them and they are paid for in a different fashion than print copies, i.e. licensing (Canadian Urban Libraries Council [CULC], n.d.). Publishers also argue that print copies will need to be weeded, and ebooks will not, due to the nature of the format; digital copies will likely not need to be repurchased, causing a theoretical loss of revenue that the publishers aim to recoup through licensing and enforcing rights management practices through contracts (Anderson, 2016).

Consumers being able to purchase an ebook copy does not always mean that libraries can do the same. In 2020, 1.5% of the year's bestsellers were unavailable for libraries in the ebook format. Some self-published authors will not license their titles to libraries, and if they self-publish through Amazon, are not even allowed to do so (Rothschild, 2020). According to the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, Amazon has increasingly become the exclusive publisher of best-selling authors while refusing to sell to libraries. This lack of access for libraries will only become more problematic as Amazon aggressively expands its market power (IFLA, 2021) There are many parts at play within the ebook market and it is important to understand that both copyright and licensing are used by publishers in the fight to control the pricing and access to materials they provide.

Challenges

Both publishers and libraries have attempted to deal with a growing lending landscape, albeit in differing ways. While publishers feel their rights are infringed on by library lending, libraries are being suffocated by terms and conditions enforced by publishers, leading to a tense relationship between the two. Libraries are increasingly challenged in how to keep providing their users with access in the way they traditionally have been able to. This section will look at the opposing relationship between publishers and libraries, and how ebook prices have been drastically increased, causing detrimental effects on libraries' abilities to build their collections. Furthering the issue are publisher embargoes which not only continue to strain relationships but also set unreasonable limitations on libraries attempting to incorporate new releases into their collection.

The Adversarial Relationship Between Publishers and Libraries

Growing tensions due to the constraints placed on ebooks have led to a number of disagreements between libraries and publishers. Hostility has increased between the two sides, which has not benefited negotiations or helped to allay fears of libraries being unable to continue providing adequate services.

Prior to 2011, ebook lending worked similarly to print lending. Libraries were sold perpetual ebooks with a one book/one user model, where each ebook is a single copy that can only be lent to one person at a time (Sisto, 2022). In 2011, HarperCollins changed their model, instead of selling ebooks they were going to license them. Ebooks still used the one book/one user model but could be only licenced for a maximum of 26 loans. Ebooks were available immediately upon publication and at close to the consumer cost.

There was disagreement in the library world about the changes. Some libraries believed it made ebooks too expensive, while others believed that it was generally positive (Sisto, 2022). In 2012, the lending model changed again with Random House increasing the price of perpetual ebooks by 100-200% (Sisto, 2022). The other big publishers began to sell ebooks to libraries with varying limits. Some, like Penguin, Hachette, and Macmillan, did not sell their full ebook lists, and others, like Simon & Schuster, required libraries to have a 'buy it now' option for patrons (Sisto, 2022). A 2014 article from the American Library Association stated that the publishers seemed to fear libraries would decimate their profits leading to difficulty for libraries in obtaining titles (American Library Association, 2014). Despite the apparent fear, statements from publishers at this time claimed libraries were an important part of the ecosystem. However, this was never echoed by Macmillan, the last and most reluctant publisher to begin e-lending. They began a pilot program in 2013 that involved both loan duration and number-of-loans limitations. Macmillan has continued throughout the years to make it clear how much they dislike e-lending (Sisto, 2022).

In a 2019 letter to Macmillan authors, illustrators, and agents, the company CEO states its concern that libraries were "cannibalizing sales" (Sargent, 2019, p. 1). He claimed that 45% of Macmillan's ebooks are borrowed from the library and that this number is only growing (Sargent, 2019). Sargent claims the reason so many of Macmillan's ebooks are borrowed from the library is that ebook lending is frictionless (Sargent, 2019). For physical books, users have to travel to the library to check out a book and they may have to wait until there are available copies. This provides friction in getting a book, making users more likely to simply buy the book instead of waiting for a library copy. In theory, ebooks are frictionless (Sisto, 2022). Ebooks can be quickly obtained from the comfort of a user's own home and can be easily transferred between devices (Sisto, 2022; Sargent, 2019). In a case where two items are frictionless to get, but one costs money and the other is free, people are more

likely to choose free. For publishers to be able to compete, they need to introduce friction to the free option.

Macmillan introduced friction to library borrowing through their licensing and pricing agreements. In their 2019 letter, they created new terms for library systems: one copy in perpetuity for half the current price. They claimed this pricing was in answer to libraries' wishes for lower prices and perpetual access (Sargent, 2019). Librarians have called out that 2019 letter from Macmillan, stating that library ebook lending is not frictionless. For some popular books wait times may be months, even a year after release when the number of holds is typically low for other books. The director of White Plains Public Library in New York, Brian Kenney, said he did not believe that Macmillan actually considered libraries when creating this pricing model, because these institutions generally do not want titles in perpetuity. Owning titles in perpetuity is more likely to be needed by collecting libraries such as the Library of Congress or the New York Public Library. Kenney felt that Macmillan was offering something they knew most public libraries would not want (Albanese, 2019).

2020-2021 saw librarians and vendors claim a 30-40% increase in digital lending that corresponds with a rise in trade sales (Albanese, 2022a, p. 2). Total publishing industry sales hit $29.33 billion USD, a 12.3% increase from $26.1 billion USD in 2020 (Milliot, 2022). Sales on all formats is currently still high from pre-pandemic years. An 11.6% increase in sales for all formats occurred from 2020 to 2021. Ebook sales saw a 5% decrease in 2021 from 2020 but still had a 7.4% increase over 2019 (Milliot, 2022).

Librarians have suggested that libraries actually act as a marketing and discoverability tool, thus increasing sales rather than cannibalizing (Albanese, 2022a). A 2011 study by Pew Research Center among 2,986 Americans found that ebook borrowers are also ebook purchasers. When asked about their most recent book, 41% of ebook borrowers said they had purchased it. 55% of ebook readers who had a library card preferred to purchase ebooks, while 36% preferred to borrow. Of ebook borrowers, 33% said they preferred

to purchase ebooks, while 57% preferred to borrow (Pew Research Center, 2012). A 2020 survey by Noorda & Berens found that, after first finding a book in the library, 35.9% of respondents still bought that book online and 31.1% of respondents bought that book in a bookstore. In addition, a larger percentage of library card holders surveyed bought more books, in every format, during Covid-19 than the general survey population (Noorda & Berens, 2021, p. 237). This suggests that not only does the library help with discoverability, but borrowing books from the library does not preclude people from also purchasing books.

West (2019) considers publisher actions to be alienating to libraries, despite the benefits that libraries can contribute by increasing readership and drawing more people into buying books from publishers. Despite the claims of publishers that libraries are stealing profits, or 'cannibalizing sales', libraries continue to not only purchase materials in high volumes but can contribute to growing publishers' purchaser base. Good relationships must be built between libraries and publishers to not only help in negotiating contracts that are financially beneficial to both, but also to maximize content exposure and, indirectly, purchases, through expanded library collections (Anderson, 2016).

The High Prices of Ebooks

The pricing of ebooks is a contentious matter causing additional strain to the relationship between publishers and libraries. Publishers use ebook pricing as a way to maintain their control over the market and revenue stream. These costs can be prohibitive to libraries. The CEO of the Brock Library in Ontario, Katie-Scarlett MacGillivray, uses Abandoned in Death by J.D. Robb to exemplify ebook costs. A hardcover physical copy is $23 CAD but the ebook version is $75 CAD coupled with licensing restrictions. She states that those licensing agreements mean that instead of about three to

four years on-shelf like physical books, the ebooks are two years or 52 uses, whichever happens first (Dillon, 2022). Another example of high ebook costs is from the American Library Associations' report on competition in digital markets. A consumer copy of The Codebreakers by David Kahn costs $59.99 USD, and consumers keep it forever. For libraries, the ebook costs $239.99 USD. However, rather than a lifetime copy, a library can only loan that ebook out for two years. For four years the cost is $479.98 USD (American Library Association, 2019).

Blackwell et al. (2019) found that ebook prices compared to print prices were almost three times higher in the U.S., while in Canada, ebook prices were double the print price. It is worth noting that Canadian print prices in general were also found to be almost double that of American copies (Blackwell et al. 2019). These pricing issues exist in both the public library sphere as well as in academic libraries.

One study examined the price differential in 462 titles in book order requests by faculty at an academic library for the fall 2012 semester. Only 264 titles had ebook copies but in order to determine the average print price they included all 462. The titles were then split by Library of Congress classification to attain a mean price differential. The mean price differential was $19.17 USD but the range was $2.76 USD to $50.05 USD (Novak et al., 2020). Another study of medical ebook and print book prices in 2018 found that the total cost for 753 book samples would be $144,420.83 USD in print but for ebooks it was around double at $322,034.73 USD, a ratio of 2.23 (Watson, 2021). The study also found that the price differential was affected by the publisher. Wolters Kluwer had the highest mean ratio of 4.27 whereas the lowest ratio was 1.01, meaning that generally, Wolters Kluwer ebooks were around 4 times more expensive than print. Wolters Kluwer also had the widest range in ratios: 1.99-15.60. It was the only publisher with ebooks that cost over ten times the print cost (Watson, 2021). Dooley (2011) suggests that, for libraries, a 10-15% premium for an ebook with multiple concurrent users is reasonable, but that a premium of that

much for single-user titles is harder to argue. Of the publishers with more than 10 titles in the Watson study, only two charged an average of 15% or less, and the majority of books in the study were for single simultaneous users only. (Watson, 2021). All of these statistics point to ebook pricing as being arbitrarily defined by the publishers, leaving libraries no choice but to pay them or risk being unable to provide adequate services to their communities.

Effects on Library Collections

Libraries bear the weight of having to pay high ebook prices, the results of which mean that library services can be heavily impacted. For libraries, high prices require larger portions of a budget leading to decreased purchasing power, especially when building collections (CULC, 2011). These budget limitations can then have an impact on the ability of libraries to properly service their communities. Libraries with smaller budgets, such as rural public libraries, may be less likely to be able to get the number of ebooks necessary to provide for their community (Dillon, 2022). Libraries are likely to be more willing to spend a premium on titles that allow multiple simultaneous users, but when they have to pay double the print price for single simultaneous users it begins to cause problems. High price differentials can lead libraries to reduce collection sizes or purchase print titles even when ebooks may be preferred (Watson, 2021). When libraries cannot get the books the community needs, especially when the community may not understand the context of the collections decisions, it can result in a negative perception and less user support (Rothchild, 2020). An advocacy statement from the Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC) states their concerns over ebook pricing: "barriers to borrowing reduce support for libraries, which leads to decreased funding and decreased purchasing power" (CULC, 2011, para. 5).

High prices force libraries to consider budgetary constraints

within their collection policies. A study of collection development in academic libraries found that the most important considerations in making purchasing decisions were appropriateness of content, price, and availability, in order of most to least importance (Novak et al., 2020). Of the 169 libraries that ranked these factors 10.06% said it was the most important consideration, 41.2% said it was second most, and 23.08% said it was third most (Novak et al., 2020). The University of Alberta Library, as one of the top five research libraries in Canada, has electronic format as the default preference for all monographs with some exceptions. One of those is where there is a prohibitive cost to purchasing in electronic format (University of Alberta Library, 2019).

In terms of availability, Blackwell et al. 's 2019 study of three ebook vendors, noted that in Canada, the titles analyzed were found to be less available in ebook format than in print: 84.2% vs 94.4%, respectively. Availability, however, has not been a limiting factor as much as pricing has been in terms of library access to titles because titles are generally highly available. Libraries would not have issues building rich collections if they were only needing to concern themselves with title availability (Blackwell et al., 2019).

Libraries can only do so much to work with the changing landscape of ebook pricing. While content and availability are less limiting factors in building a collection, pricing appears to be extremely and increasingly limiting, notwithstanding the other ways publishers have attempted to exert control, such as through embargoes, that have strained their relationships with libraries.

Embargoes on Ebook Purchasing and Availability

Embargoes, also known as windowing, are ways publishers have attempted to control the market by limiting access to ebooks during a certain period of time after works are published (West, 2019; Leslie J. Savage Library, 2019). The goal is to protect the profits collected

by the publisher (Leslie J. Savage Library, 2019). Some embargoes also aim to promote direct purchasing of their products by readers who otherwise might borrow these materials from the library (Enis, 2020).

In academic libraries, this can mean limited access to titles, and can also be directed toward certain institutions if publisher conditions are not met (Leslie J. Savage Library, 2019). For a lot of academics, it is imperative that they be aware of new developments in their field and that information be up-to-date; information may be promoted by publishers, but embargoes can limit when such information can be published in academic works, and allow the publishers to shape what information researchers can use through the choice of what is promoted (Lemke et al., 2022).

Embargoes also exist in the public library sphere, limiting the ability of libraries to purchase or even licence ebooks during select amounts of time, usually immediately after title release. In 2019, four out of the Big Five publishers had committed to not implementing embargoes for public libraries on newly released titles (Feldman, 2019). MacMillan, however, ran a trial embargo period of its TOR imprint books in the summer of 2018 (Albanese, 2018). The TOR trial resulted in increased profits for MacMillan as well as increased non-library sales, with a four-month embargo period (West, 2019). Libraries were noted to have purchased fewer titles after the embargo period was over (West, 2019). Due to what MacMillan perceived as a successful trial embargo, a permanent embargo was put into place in November 2019. It was announced through the 2019 letter discussed earlier (Feldman, 2019; Sargent, 2019). MacMillan's 2019 embargo meant that library systems, some serving millions of users, would only be able to have one copy, at half price, for the first eight weeks after publishing (Enis, 2020; West 2019). This would result in fewer library users having access to titles after they were released, all for the hopes of increasing retail purchases from those who do not rely on libraries. (Enis, 2020).

Feldman, (2019) was of the opinion that MacMillan did not listen to public library concerns after the trial embargo. They stated that:

High prices and limited term licences are severely impacting [libraries'] ability to build collections and serve [their] communities. [...] Managing these increasingly complex digital licences requires significant additional expense and time from library staff—resources that could be spent serving users or buying more books from more authors (Feldman, 2019, para. 7).

The MacMillan embargo was eventually lifted on March 17th, 2020, with the pandemic being cited as the publisher's reason for ending it (Enis, 2020). While the pandemic did indeed force many to rely on e-resources with the shuttering of physical spaces, Enis notes that Macmillan may also have alienated almost 55% of their reader base, because that percentage of readership is primarily gained through library access (2020). Libraries purchase a large number of ebooks and embargoes such as these do not aid in sustaining healthy relationships between them and publishers.

Responses

Despite the strained relationships between themselves and publishers, libraries have attempted to mitigate impacts on their services due to embargoes and rising ebook prices. Some of the ways libraries have pursued action involve efforts to establish legal parameters which can protect their rights to continue lending. While the results may not have always been in their favour, ongoing advocacy is used as a way to spread the work and influence outcomes. Joining consortia remains a path forward that can help libraries share the burden of increasing ebook prices, and while potentially risky, Controlled Digital Lending (CDL) is seeing an increase in popularity as a means of continuing to provide equitable access to e-resources. This section will go into depth on these responses and elaborate on potential outcomes for libraries.

Lawsuits and Legislation: Legal Wrangling from Publishers and Libraries

Both libraries and publishers have attempted to retain control of their ebook access through pushes for or against legislation regulating ebook pricing models. In response to such embargoes and aggressive pricing tactics, there are some jurisdictions that have tried to mitigate the effects of ebook pricing on libraries, or at least support libraries in some fashion. Legislation has been put forward in multiple jurisdictions within the United States, however, the laws have so far not been very successful.

In May of 2021, a law was ratified in Maryland, U.S., to protect libraries from excessive publisher practices in ebook pricing and licensing. The *Maryland Act* (House Bill 518/(SB432)) sought to protect libraries from publishers' predatory ebook pricing by requiring publishers to offer ebooks to libraries under 'reasonable terms' (Klosek, 2021). In testimony, it was made clear that the law would not directly regulate pricing, but would hopefully pave the way to licensing terms that were mutually beneficial to both publishers and libraries (Testimony in Support of House Bill 518, 2021).

Publisher groups such as the Association of American Publishers (AAP) have been outspoken in their desire for legislation to be kept from passing, and making calls to "protect the legal framework that has long incentivized the American private sector to invest in, publish, and distribute original works of authorship to the public, in service to society" (AAP CEO Maria Pallante, as cited by Albanese, 2021b, para. 5). In December of 2021, the publishers followed through with their desires to prevent legislation by filing a lawsuit to protest the Maryland law on the basis of it violating the U.S. *Copyright Act* (Klosek, 2021; Milliot, 2021). In the filing, the AAP argued that the law created "unauthorized, unprecedented, and unjustified encroachment by a state into federally protected intellectual property rights and the creative and financial

investments that such rights represent" (*Association of American Publishers, Inc. v. Frosh*, 2021). The suit claimed the law was unconstitutional, and, in July 2022, the court sided against the state, saying that the law disrupted publishers' control in distributing their products (Brittain, 2022).

New York had similar legislation that was proposed in the summer of 2021 as a means to regulate pricing directed toward libraries. The bill had even received enough support to pass in the state senate and assemblies, using similar verbiage to the Maryland law; it dictated that publishers present libraries with 'reasonable terms' in their pricing models (ALA Media Relations, 2022). The legislation was vetoed in December of 2021 by Kathy Hochul, New York's Governor at the time, with copyright protection and federal copyright pre-exemptions cited by Hochul as a reason for her veto (Kathy Hochul, as cited by Albanese, 2021b, para. 2).

The American Library Association (ALA) has called for further legislation in the same vein as the bills detailed above, saying that regulations are necessary for allowing libraries the continued ability to provide information access through e-resources to their communities, especially in light of aging populations and events like the Covid-19 pandemic (ALA, 2021). Massachusetts, Illinois, Tennessee, Missouri and Rhode Island are other states considering similar laws, though with the demise of the Maryland and New York legislation it remains to be seen whether these types of laws will have staying power once enacted (Brittain, 2022; Minow & Courtney, 2022). As previously mentioned, publishers have increasingly pushed back against proposed legislation with lawsuits. Jenkins noted in 2014 that, at the time, legal cases were favouring publishers, and in more recent years publishers have been winning legal suits and challenges, leaving libraries with no legal recourse to support themselves.

In Canada, CULC has proposed recommendations that the Government of Canada introduce legislation safeguarding libraries' access, with similar verbiage ('reasonable terms') to the legislation from the U.S. (CULC, 2022). With some unfortunate losses in terms

of passing legislation in the United States, many jurisdictions are aiming to change the verbiage that ultimately caused those bills' demise (Minot & Courtney, 2022). As libraries face the potential of legal challenges to their services, changes may become more favourable to them, especially when libraries join forces to push back against publisher harm (Library Futures, n.d.-c).

Applying Digital Exhaustion and Controlled Digital Lending

One way to deal with the failing legislation is by handling how copyright exhaustion and the doctrine of first sale work in the digital world. Katz (2017), argues that copyright exhaustion should apply to ebooks. Applying copyright exhaustion to the digital world does not mean publishers cannot implement restrictions, they just have to be 'reasonable'. In order to be reasonable, restrictions must be included in the contract to protect one of the parties from injury and they may not exceed what is necessary to achieve that goal. Katz's paper ultimately argues that there is precedence for allowing digital exhaustion and the law must consider the institutional design of libraries in working toward the public good (Katz, 2017). Digital exhaustion would allow libraries to purchase ebooks from resellers if they had lower prices, getting publishers to create new ways to encourage libraries to purchase from them instead or discourage consumers from selling their copies (Katz, 2017).

There are some practices, like Controlled Digital Lending (CDL), which aim to apply copyright exhaustion principles digitally (DeCastell et al., 2022). CDL would mean treating digital copies the same as a physical copy, using an "owned-to-loaned" model; however, this is not a practice codified into law (Ojala, 2021). CDL makes interlibrary loans much more accessible, and can be especially beneficial to those with disabilities as it allows works to be transferred to accessible formats, thus allowing libraries to offer

multiple formats as long as they are only lending one version per owned copy at a time (DeCastell et al., 2022). Using CDL, libraries would circulate a digital version of a book they own outright as a print copy while controlling the use so that only one version of the item is circulated at any given time (DeCastell et al, 2022). DeCastell et al. (2022) argue that format should not change the way copyright protection is applied and therefore, CDL can be used within the context of Canadian fair-dealing practice, according to six factors of fairness (For more information on CDL in an American context, see Hansen & Courtney, 2018).

At this point in time, the implementation of CDL can still prove to be risky for libraries; DeCastell et al. (2022) believe that these risks (likely of lawsuits) are worth taking due to the benefit CDL provides in furthering libraries' ability to provide widespread access to resources. Steps must be taken by libraries to mitigate the risks of not only being sued but losing those lawsuits and the resultant repercussions (DeCastell et al., 2022, p. 21). The Internet Archive was sued in 2020 by a group of major publishing houses (See *Hachette Book Group, Inc. v. Internet Archive*, 2020) for their lending of digital materials during the pandemic. Though the courts sided in favour of the publishers in March 2023 (Peters & Hollister, 2023), it must be noted that the Internet Archives' National Emergency Library had removed all controls on lending in response to the shutdown of physical library spaces in the face of Covid-19 quarantine orders, and therefore was not a true implementation of CDL as it lacked the controlled aspect (Robertson, 2023). The allowing of unlimited access to the ebooks in the collection was found as an infringement on copyright through the creation of derivative works on the part of the Internet Archive (Peters & Hollister, 2023). The results of this case reinforce the importance of retaining controls on how ebooks are lent out by libraries, and highlight how easily libraries can cross the boundary into copyright infringement with their digital lending practices. With the decision in this case, the future of CDL can still be considered uncertain; lawsuits like these not only create negative perceptions of what CDL is, but also deter libraries from

implementation. Carefully considering which materials CDL is applied to (such as materials already in the public domain, or materials you have received permission to circulate from the copyright holder) and using Digital Rights Management to ensure copies are circulated fairly are some of the main ways that libraries can control their risk levels (DeCastell et al., 2022).

Consortial Sharing

While advocacy and legislation may be an ongoing battle, one way that libraries have seen some concrete success in cutting costs is through the joining of consortia. (Murphy, 2019). A library consortium brings together groups of libraries to create shared collections and support members in their negotiations with vendors or publishers (Sweet & Clarage, 2020).

There are a few different ways that sharing models can work for a consortium. The first is a package model which allows consortial members to use ebooks from bundles. These bundles are often cheaper than what a single library would have bought them for (Murphy, 2019). A second model is called a demand-driven acquisition (DDA) model. It has three versions, which all involve only purchasing the book once a certain number of loans have occurred. Purchases may be made by individual libraries or from a communal amount of money (Murphy, 2019). A third, evidence-based selection model, provides libraries access to ebooks at no charge during a certain period of time if they spend a minimum amount of money when the time is over. Libraries can examine the usage data to make informed choices on which ebooks are best to purchase (Murphy, 2019). Yet another model is the access-to-own model which counts money spent on short-term loans towards a full purchase of the ebook (Murphy, 2019).

Consortial sharing models are being used in multiple academic libraries across North America. One example is NovaNet, a Nova

Scotia consortium with 25 academic libraries, which uses a DDA – limited access model. With this model, the consortium is given a number of yearly uses; if this number is reached then another ebook is purchased automatically (Murphy, 2019). An initial pilot program done in 2012 found that if libraries had purchased an ebook on its first use it would have cost them $250,000 CAD. Instead, they collectively spent $60,000 CAD. It was considered successful enough to become permanent (Murphy, 2019).

ConnectNY is a consortium located in New York with 18 academic libraries. Their first ebook-sharing project began in 2010, with each library giving 1% off their acquisition budget resulting in $248,000 USD per year for the two-year project (Harloe et al., 2015). Ten libraries had an equal or higher percentage of use than contribution and eight had a lower percentage of use than contribution. However, seven of those eight were within 3%. Only three libraries did not break even on their contribution versus the value of titles used by patrons. All libraries except one used more of the consortial books than they could have purchased on their own (Harloe et al., 2015). If the consortium purchased 12,166 titles for libraries it would cost $1,068,905 USD. If libraries had purchased them all on their own, accounting for the fact that titles are overlapped between libraries approximately 1.9 times, it would cost $2,030,919 USD (Harloe et al., 2015). The ebook-sharing program is still a success, providing perpetual access titles to consortial members (ConnectNY, n.d.).

Library consortia are not just for academic libraries, they can also involve other library types. NC Live is a consortium of 200 public and academic libraries throughout the state of North Carolina. Their Home Grown Ebook Collection is a collection of ebooks available to consortial members from North Carolina publishers. The initial year-long pilot in 2014 went well with 93% of libraries believing the collection was fair value and 72% believing it was a good or excellent value compared to the cost (Morris, 2015). The Home Grown Collection is still running and now consists of over 4,800 ebook and audiobook titles. All are unlimited simultaneous access in

perpetuity, providing users with immediate access to titles from publishers like Duke University Press and Workman (NC Live, n.d.).

In all these examples the consortium negotiates with publishers and vendors freeing individual libraries from having to do the arduous process themselves. NC Live negotiated with local publishers, creating lasting relationships. Publishers even suggested that they could help authors and libraries get in contact to host library events to promote ebooks (Morris, 2015). In Nova Scotia, the NovaNet consortium managed to get 60 publishers involved in their pilot program by reaching out (Murphy, 2019). Working more directly with publishers and taking the time to maintain relationships, something much harder for individual libraries to achieve, can help to ease tensions.

Despite the general success, consortial models may not be the best option for libraries. In CULC's statement on ebook pricing models, they state that while the consortial model works it may not be enough, especially for popular titles (CULC, 2011). Public libraries tend to need more popular titles, so for public libraries, other options could be explored.

Advocacy

Advocacy plays a large role in creating not only sympathetic perceptions of libraries' plights but also puts pressure on publishers to provide transparency and reasonable negotiations. Considering all of the challenges mentioned previously, some librarians have been able to retain control through advocacy campaigns against publishers' efforts to keep control of the ebook market. Librarians are not asking for free ebooks, merely wanting to collaborate with publishers to find a balance that still allows libraries the ability to provide to their communities. Besides backing legislation, libraries have been able to lead campaigns in efforts to quash attempts by publishers to control ebook access through pricing. CULC's

statement on ebook pricing models mentions how they have aimed to "build relationships with Canadian publishers, distributors and producers," with the goal of benefitting not only their patrons but also the publishing industry (2011, para. 2).

There have been campaigns such as #econtentforlibraries by CULC and #ebookSOS, aiming to spread awareness of these issues through trending tags on social media. #Econtentforlibraries is a call from CULC to pursue action, promoting the issues librarians face both over social media and directly to publishers (CULC, n.d.). This campaign targets the Big Five publishers and states that libraries are an essential part of the book industry not to be ignored (CULC, n.d.). #EbookSOS, run by three U.K. academic librarians, notes that ebook pricing affects all types of libraries (EbookSOS, n.d.; Anderson & McCauley, 2022). They have written open letters calling for investigations into what they consider predatory pricing practices and licensing that is too restrictive on academic libraries (EbookSOS, n.d.; Anderson & McCauley, 2022). They also were able to use librarians' experiences to build a dataset showcasing the extortionate pricing markups, with included notes on their difficulties sourcing from publishers. (Dataset: Softwood, n.d.).

Campaigns such as #econtentforlibraries and #ebookSOS in Canada and the U.K., respectively, are but some of the grassroots campaigns that have taken on the Big Five globally. In the U.S., the ALA has helped start #ebooksforall and letter-writing campaigns such as the ten thousand letters written in support of the New York ebook pricing legislation, to demonstrate that libraries remain a priority to members of communities (Inouye & Wagner, 2020). Library Futures is an American organization spearheading the movement toward digital rights for libraries (Library Futures, n.d.-a). Library Futures helps track the progress of legislation in various states, (As found at: 'Library Futures', n.d.), and provides resources to help spread awareness of the ways libraries can fight back, such as statements in favour of supporting CDL legislation, and shareable graphics (Library Futures, n.d.-b). According to Albanese (2021a), Library Futures has played an instrumental part in advocating for

inquiries regarding the ebook market. In Canada, the group Canadian Public Libraries for Fair Ebook Pricing, a coalition of public libraries, has helped to raise awareness on ebook publisher pricing issues, leading both the #econtentforlibraries campaign and the #fairebookprincing social media campaign (CLA, n.d.; EPL 2016).

These campaigns only are able to vocalize library concerns if there exist voices to share them. Increased awareness can only further benefit the libraries' position in the relationship between them and publishers.

Conclusion

Through the varied responses libraries have attempted as a result of rising ebook prices, there is no clear best way forward; however, this does not mean these actions are to no avail. Libraries vary in purpose and mission, and each must consider what the best course of action may be. Ultimately, unless both libraries and publishers can cooperate in negotiating fair pricing deals, both sides will lose, though libraries have a lot more at stake. Libraries, if not able to keep up with the pricing hikes, will lose their ability to support their communities effectively and their communities may lose support in them.

Laws aiming to give libraries more control have been fought by publishers, who wish to retain complete control themselves. At the same time, libraries carry out advocacy campaigns in response to increasing budgetary pressure evolving from increasing ebook pricing models. Consortia have been able to help libraries join forces to shoulder the weight of high ebook pricing by sharing resources and providing a united front in ongoing negotiations with publishers and vendors. While the scope of ebook pricing problems extends to both public and academic libraries in slightly varying ways, both types of institutions can play similar roles in advocating for stronger collaboration with publishers. Advocacy appears to be one path

librarians can take through the murky waters of publisher negotiations.

Regulation of ebook prices does not have to be extreme. With 'reasonable' measures and restrictions to allow libraries continued access to ebooks, both libraries and publishers can retain enough control over their collections and portfolios, respectively, letting communities continue to thrive and help the ebook market continue to flourish.

The "war" between libraries and those who set ebook prices is still ongoing and will require librarians to be vigilant about their support of 'reasonable' access to e-resources. Otherwise, libraries are at the mercy of the publishing powerhouses and may, as Katz states, "[...] not disappear altogether, but will slowly function less as libraries and more as archives." (2017, p. 83). Ebook pricing is part of an interconnected web of many market factors; altering one part affects change in another. One cannot have a complete understanding of the finer details of how these factors exacerbate the issues, creating a systemic problem that is hindering the cooperation of libraries and publishers. This discussion has articulated some of the ways in which these factors play a role in the struggle of ebook pricing, providing the basic groundwork for understanding.

Sources for Further Reading

(Note: this list has been alphabetized according to title)

Hao, L., & Fan, M. (2014). An analysis of pricing models in the electronic book market. *MIS Quarterly, 38*(4), 1017–1032. https://ssrn.com/

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Mathematical analysis of ebook pricing models explaining the two major types of pricing models. It is focused on the consumers rather than libraries but provides a thorough look at how pricing can work.

EbookSOS. (n.d.). *Campaign to investigate the library ebook market.* https://academicebookinvestigation.org/

A U.K. campaign by librarians to investigate the high prices of academic publications. Includes many resources for both advocates, librarians, and authors, as well as being a source of news about the problems with publishers in academic publishing.

DeCastell, C., Dickinson, J., Mau, T., Swartz, M., Tiessen, R., Wakaruk, A., & Winter, C. (2022). Controlled Digital Lending of library books in Canada. *Partnership: Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research, 17*(2). https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4031054

This piece argues for the use of Controlled Digital Lending as Fair Dealing in Canada. The authors provide a detailed analysis on CDL and how its use might be interpreted within the bounds of Canadian legislation. Suggestions for implementation and risk-mitigation are provided as well. For

information on CDL in an American context, see Hansen & Courtney, 2018.

Katz, A. (2017, August 22). Copyright, exhaustion, and the role of Libraries in the ecosystem of knowledge. *I/S: A Jounral of Law and Policy for the Information Society, 13*(1): 81-123. https://doi.org/ 10.31228/osf.io/dzmpc

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Minow, M., & Courtney, K. K. (2022, May 17). What does my library need to know about ebook laws? *American Libraries.* https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2022/05/17/what-does-my-library-need-to-know-about-ebook-laws/

> Librarian lawyer Mary Minow answers questions about library ebooks and some state-level efforts for fair licensing terms, including some future steps for librarians to take. The

authors provide a perspective that may be informative for librarians looking into the legislative aspect of ebook pricing.

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6. Issues in the Management of Accessible Collections in Public Libraries for People with Physical Disabilities

GRACE TURNBULL; REIS POULIOT; AND SADAF HAKIMIZADEH

Introduction

Under the American Library Association's standards for equity, diversity, and inclusion, accredited libraries are bound to advocate for "equitable access to library services for all" (American Library Association, 2022). While this does refer to the inclusion of individuals of all cultures, religions, genders, and sexualities, it also encompasses people of all physical abilities. A library must be accessible to all and accommodate a spectrum of disabilities. This includes creating and maintaining a collection with materials in formats that accommodate varying levels of physical ability. Library services, and by extension their collections, cannot be considered equitable if a particular group of people are denied inclusion.

The scope of this chapter is limited to the exploration of accommodations for physical disabilities within the context of public library collections. As such, we will only touch on mental, intellectual, cognitive, or learning disabilities that overlap with physical disabilities. For a discussion of cognitive disabilities and collections see the "What Little We Know about the Hidden Challenges for Library Users with Invisible Disabilities" chapter. This is because, while there are similar accommodation needs, there are also significant differences that warrant their consideration. As

of 2018, there were 6.2 million Canadians aged 15 or older who identified as having at least one disability (Statistics Canada, 2018). Alongside this, the Boomer generation (born approximately 1946-1964) is aging, and it is anticipated that by 2046, the senior population will be twice the current population (Statistics Canada, 2022). As these users retire, they may have more recreational time; however, because seniors generally have lower rates of technological literacy, they may be less inclined to use digital resources; as of 2017, only one-in-five seniors reported owning an e-reader, and one-third own a tablet (Anderson & Perrin, 2017). We can anticipate, then, that accessible physical collections will only become more in demand as time moves on and populations needing accommodations that are not reliant on digital technology continue to increase in number.

Moving forward, we will examine the challenges associated with creating an accessible public library collection for those with physical disabilities. This stretches from how physical spaces can be created or adapted in accessible ways, the formats and subsequent costs of accessible materials, and routes of staff hiring and training practices. Alongside this, we will provide a series of further reading materials pertaining to the application of accessibility policies, as well as readings from organisations working actively in creating and advocating for accessible collections.

Definitions

- Assistive Technology: Assistive technology (AT) is defined as "any item, piece of equipment, software program, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities." (Assistive Technology Industry Association, 2022)
- Disability: According to the *Accessible Canada Act* of 2019, disability is defined as "any impairment, including a physical,

mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment — or a functional limitation — whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation in society" (*Accessible Canada Act*, 2019).

- Physical Collections: Tangible materials that are housed in a library. This includes paperback or hardback books, audiobook players, CDs, DVDs, etc.
- Physical Disability: "A physical disability affects a person's mobility or dexterity. A person with a physical disability may need to use some sort of equipment for assistance with mobility. It also includes people who have lost limbs or who, because of the shape of their body, require slight adaptations to be made to enable them to participate fully in society" (National Educational Association of Disabled Students, n.d.).
- Universal Design: "the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability," Universal Design aims to create spaces that all users can access equitably without intervention (National Disability Authority, 2020).

Background and Context

The issue of the accessibility of libraries to those with physical disabilities ranging from print disabilities to mobility issues is not a new one, as discrimination against disabled people has historic roots. Particularly, in Canada, disabled individuals did not start to receive rights and protections through the government until the *Canadian Human Rights Act* of 1977. This act was preceded by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons in 1975 (Mason & Munn-Rivard, 2021). The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* did not pass until 1982. Despite this, the movement

for disability rights and, by extension, universal accessibility, started to gain popularity following the end of World War I as disabled veterans returned from overseas and attempted to reintegrate into Canadian society (Galer, 2015). By the 1970s, individuals were forming their advocacy groups, including the British Columbia Coalition of the Disabled, the Committee of Action Groups of the Disabled (Alberta), and the League for Equal Opportunities (Nova Scotia).

While most Canadian provinces and territories have their legal protections for disabled individuals through both human rights and accessibility legislation, Alberta is still missing the latter. Human rights legislation protects the individual from discrimination, meaning that disabled individuals cannot be denied work, housing, or education based on their ability. Accessibility legislation takes this a step further, by forcing (in federally regulated works and undertakings) both public and private sectors to remove barriers to accessibility in areas such as employment, transportation, the design and delivery of public services, the procurement of goods, services, and facilities, and the built environment (*Accessible Canada Act*, 2019). Alongside this, "barriers" may refer to "anything physical, architectural, technological, or attitudinal [...] that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with an impairment" (*Accessible Canada Act*, 2019). The variability of protections across Canada has created a need for community-led advocacy.

The previously mentioned activist and advocacy groups, and others, have led the charge for the accessibility of public spaces, including public libraries. By the mid-twentieth century, libraries were shifting from elitist spaces for research and the leisure of the middle class to equitable spaces for both social and scholarly purposes (Kevane & Sundstrom, 2014). From a collections standpoint, this means not only providing materials in alternative formats; but also adaptive technologies and accessible physical spaces for those with physical disabilities. Historically, public libraries have always focused on print materials, and the shift to digital content is relatively new. As such, the library as an institution

has been inherently inaccessible to those with print disabilities. A major influence in the movement to create equitable access was the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), which "argued that library service to Canadians with print disabilities should not be supported by charitable dollars – that services should be publicly funded and ideally made available through their public libraries" (Ciccone, 2018, p. 380). Since then, accessibility work in public libraries has largely been taken over by two organisations: the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) and the National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS). Both of these organisations produce accessible digital works for library collections; they also spearhead accessibility studies in LIS and provide staff training and workshops for both libraries and publishers. Policies about libraries and collection accessibility continue to shift at both the library and legislative levels. Accessibility has become a key aspect of collection policies, as the aim of the "[collection] policy should be to ensure a consistent approach to the maintenance and development of the library collections and access to resources" (Koontz, 2010, p. 67). Similarly, to ensure such access, libraries may provide individuals with disabilities with services such as extended loan periods, waived late fines, extended reserve periods, library cards for proxies, books by mail, reference services by fax or email, home delivery service, remote access to the OPAC, remote electronic access to library resources, volunteer readers in the library, volunteer technology assistants in the library, American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter or real-time captioning at library programs, and radio reading services (ALA, 2019).

As such, creating an accessible collection is not as simple as purchasing books in braille. Libraries must also ensure compliance with new and emerging governmental policies, such as the *Accessible Canada Act* (ACA), that notably only applies to federal libraries, and intends to create a "barrier-free Canada" by 2040. A key principle of the ACA is "Nothing Without Us," meaning that all policies and changes must be made in consultation with disabled

persons when they pertain to issues of accessibility. Notably, the ACA speaks directly to information and communication technologies, the design and delivery of programs and services, and procurement of goods, services, and facilities. All of these tenets speak directly to the library and the acquisition and storage of the collections. On a provincial level, while provinces like Ontario have set accessibility standards through legislation, this is not true on a national scale (*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005).

Challenges

While organisations like CELA and NNELS focus their advocacy on those with print disabilities, the range of physical accommodations extends to those with other physical disabilities as well. Public libraries must consider those with mobility impairments when designing the layout of the collections, the weight and shape of materials for those with dexterity impairments, or streams of communication for those with speech or hearing impairments when attempting to access assistance with navigating the collection. As previously mentioned, challenges for collection management are numerous. This section will demonstrate a few of the challenges that people with disabilities face and the challenges that are inherent in building an accessible collection. Accessibility is a pressing issue that requires libraries, public and academic, to modify their staffing, hiring, and collection management. We will focus on the formats, physical space, costs, and staffing challenges.

Formats

The format is one of the greatest challenges that public libraries face when building an accessible library collection. Building these

collections will help to increase the representation of people with disabilities in library discourse and materials. To facilitate library collection changes, the American Library Association (ALA) policy "Library Services for People with Disabilities" (2006) states that collections should have "materials with accurate and up-to-date information on the spectrum of disabilities, disability issues, and services for people with disabilities, their families, and other concerned persons." (See Collections, Para. 13)

Formatting is the primary way that libraries can work to change their collections to facilitate accessibility. It is commonly understood that there are two main types of formats: print and electronic books; however, that is a limited view of a collection. Accessible collections are a sum of the entire collection of materials and services that the library provides to its community. Some of the physical formats that are provided are DAISY players, large print, books in braille, study materials, and toolkits for home use. While these items are typical types of formats that are seen in libraries, other items that need to be considered should be video games and consoles, computer access, toys, games and puzzles, and even musical instruments (Koontz, 2010). Accessible options should not be limited to books produced for those with print disabilities. For example, improved computer accessibility for people with physical disabilities should include options that address visual impairments as well as mobility issues. By addressing the challenges of accessibility formatting, libraries will move closer to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all their patrons. (Lazar & Briggs, 2015).

Assistive technology is another type of format that libraries can work to integrate into their collections. According to the ALA's "Library Services for People with Disabilities" policy (2006), library collections need to include a range of services and materials that are accessible to people with disabilities, and that library staff need to be aware of the assistive technology and know how to assist all users of the library (see Assistive Technology, Para. 14). In the Canadian Federation of Library Association's (CFLA) policy (2016), libraries are

encouraged to provide assistive reading devices that support the use of alternative formats (see Assistive Devices and Technology).

These diverse needs of disabled individuals can be overwhelming but are necessary to maintain a welcoming and inclusive environment. Creating and maintaining accessible collections with a variety of formats allows for increased patron independence and privacy (CFLA, 2016). For a patron with a disability to have to overly rely on the library staff creates emotional labour for the patron and would potentially alienate the user and detract from their experience.

Cost

Acquiring differing format styles for library collections is important and is closely connected to cost. Everything that requires modification and acquisitions for library collections requires costs and budgeting considerations. For this challenge, libraries need to consider the cost and the ability in which their library can make these changes. In 2019, Sunderland (Mass.) Public Library (SPL) relied on a $7,000 grant to create a sensory toy collection. This example helps to place the cost into consideration, especially, as SPL was helped in their accessible collection development by a grant. When deciding to create accessible collections, libraries need to work to portray their accessibility needs to the vendors (Ontario Council of University Libraries, 2014). Notably, relying on vendors to provide accessibility materials can be difficult, so libraries must be aware of other procurement strategies to mitigate the cost of accessible items. One way is to use resource sharing, as in inter-library loaning, to help increase the accessibility of the library collection for library patrons (CFLA, 2016. See Budgeting and Procurement). According to Kami Funk (2022), there is an extensive price difference between a standard print book and a book printed in braille, as an edition of Harry Potter in braille had a difference

of sixty dollars (all figures in USD unless noted) from the standard print.

Libraries need to think about format types, the need for renovations, and any staff training requirements when budgeting for an accessible library and collection. Accessible formats, as previously mentioned, are various and can be expensive. These costly changes for libraries can be supplemented with interlibrary loaning and grants. The accessibility of the library's physical space and the accommodations made for physically disabled individuals can be costly, depending on the changes needed. The list of building requirements can be extensive, but overall; accessible libraries need to have wide doorways with automatic doors, low shelving and ample space between the shelves. Finally, any expenses related to workshops and training need to be considered. Training may include informing the staff of disabilities within the community and assistive technologies (ATs) through workshops, seminars, or other routes.

The Physical Space

Thus far, material formats and costs have been recognized as significant challenges to creating accessible libraries. Further adding to these challenges is the design of the physical space. A library may have an extensive collection of materials in accessible formats; however, they are rendered nearly useless if the patron cannot physically access them in the space where they are housed. Re-configuring or retrofitting the library space and the access to the collection allows individuals with disabilities to access the said collection without sacrificing independence.

Libraries working towards building appropriate spaces can use the strategies of Universal Design (UD) (CFLA, 2016). The seventh principle of the UD states that, for a collection to be considered equitable, we must ensure that "appropriate size and space is

provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility" (National Disability Authority, 2020). There are barriers to service that people with physical disabilities experience such as accessing the shelving and using computers and electronic catalogues without adaptations (Huntington, 2002, Lazar & Briggs, 2015). A physical space, in a library collection context, focuses on creating an equitable space that allows for accessibility for all patrons. Libraries can work to purchase accessible furniture and to plan the floor space of the library that allows for mobility aids and for individuals with physical disabilities to maneuver the library. According to Marrall (2020), the physical areas of the library that can be renovated are the entrances, the bathrooms, the pathways, ramps, elevators, water fountains, public phones, collection stacks, service points, and signage.

Staff Training

The library staff is paramount to library operations and any staff that are regularly in contact with the public should be trained and be aware of various accessibility needs. To address this challenge properly, library staff need to be provided with accessibility plans, guides, and training workshops. Providing training program access and maintaining that training will increase awareness and sensitivity (CFLA, 2016; ALA, 2006). Staff need to be aware of individuals with disabilities in the community and collaborate with them whenever possible. Additionally, staff should receive training that allows them to provide proper service (Nielson & Irval, 2005). Accessibility is connected to how the space makes an individual feel as well as how they then choose to approach the collection. For individuals with disabilities, entering a space that is accessible allows for an increased sense of independence where they may otherwise feel alienated. Staff training also includes knowledge about the assistive technology that is offered such as DAISY players, text-to-speech

technology, and downloadable software (Huntington, 2002). An inadequately trained staff member can be harmful to patrons. For example, staff should be trained on aspects of social awareness, such as appropriate eye contact. According to Preston (2016), prolonged eye contact may cause some patrons anxiety and detract from their experience; similarly, staff avoiding eye contact can be othering and estrange the patron from the library.

Responses

There are multiple ways through which libraries have and will continue to make their collections, spaces, programs, and services more accessible for individuals of all abilities. As outlined above, some of the main areas of focus include costs, content and format, staffing, policy, patrons, the physical space, and Universal Design. The following sections will discuss these responses to the challenges faced by public libraries in terms of accessibility.

Cost

One way for libraries to deflect costs associated with accessibility is to seek grants. The Libraries Transforming Communities project of the ALA is providing grants totalling over $7 million, made possible through partnerships with private and public donor organizations, to help small and rural libraries offer more accessible programs, services, and facilities to patrons with disabilities. The grant also covers professional development opportunities for staff, including accessibility training. Libraries need to conduct community assessments to identify accessibility needs and then apply for grants (ALA, 2022).

Another response is to share accessible formats among libraries.

Interlibrary loans have been used extensively by public and academic libraries to widen the range of resources available. Since accessible formats usually cost more and are used less frequently, this approach could be a cost-saving solution. The Parkland Regional Library System in Alberta, Canada, which is made up of 50 small to medium-sized libraries, has a rotation system for their large print books, a common style of accessible books that are used by individuals with vision loss or low vision as well as some senior patrons (Funk, 2022). In this system, items are kept at each library for two months and then they are rotated to another location. Such methods, which cost significantly less than purchasing accessible items, could be used more extensively, covering more formats and other locations, to meet the needs of patrons with disabilities.

Content and Format

An important aspect to consider in developing and maintaining an accessible library is the content of materials in the collection. One of the strategies provided by Huntington (2002) to overcome accessibility barriers is offering a diverse range of resources relevant to the lives of individuals with disabilities. Libraries need to ensure that these patrons see themselves represented in the materials both in children's and adults' collections. One way to accomplish this goal is to include content that raises awareness about disability, literacy materials for people with various disabilities and their families, such as teaching and learning sign language, or resources on emotional health for these groups. Challenges and success stories of individuals with disabilities, as well as works created by disabled authors, should also be included. Libraries have to ensure that they maintain up-to-date collections for and about individuals with special needs. To do so, items with outdated information about disabilities and those with offensive

ableist content could be removed and replaced with current accurate information (Huntington, 2002).

The content of the collection can and should aim to create an inclusive environment, but another equally important facet to consider is the format. Statistical data could be used to identify the range of disabilities among community members. Additionally, demographic information, such as the percentage of elderly people with special needs in the population, can be used to select the most appropriate formats. The Accessibility Information Toolkit for Libraries (Ontario Council of University Libraries, 2014) has useful suggestions that could be adopted by all types of libraries. The toolkit recommends that a checklist of accessibility requirements be prepared for products, which can be used when making purchase decisions. The accessibility needs and required formats can be communicated to vendors. Vendors may also provide libraries with Voluntary Product Accessibility Templates (VPATs), which inform purchasers of how their product conforms to accessibility standards; these templates would be of use for library purchases of on-site desktop software, for example. In cases where accessible formats are not available, partnering with other organizations, for example, CELA and NNELS, could help with developing and procuring them.

Furthermore, effective use of assistive and adaptive technologies could help public libraries improve accessibility for patrons with disabilities. Screen-reading programs, touch technology, text enlargement tools, speech synthesis, and alternative keyboards and mice, are some examples of ATs that help people with visual impairments or dyslexia (Nielson & Irval, 2005).

Staffing

Accessibility training for library professionals could improve their approaches to working with disabled individuals. It could also help

them gain a better understanding of the related challenges and come up with strategies to enhance accessibility. In addition, training will provide staff with tools that can be used to match patrons with disabilities with appropriate items or introduce them to potential options. According to Nielson & Irval (2005), a response for staff training is to prepare one staff member with special training and assign them the responsibility to provide services to patrons with special needs; however, all staff members must be made aware of patrons with disabilities that they serve and any considerations that need to be made. There are practical strategies that library workers could use to make their interactions with patrons with disabilities more respectful and effective. For example, Nielson & Irval (2005) suggest that staff communicate directly with the patron with a disability rather than the person accompanying them, which seems like a good rule of thumb, but only when appropriate, especially as there are individuals who might not be comfortable with direct eye contact from strangers (Preston, 2016).

Another point to consider is that if individuals with disabilities have more opportunities to work at libraries, they can provide invaluable insight into enhanced accessibility of collections and all aspects of library service. It is recommended in the Guidelines on Library and Information Services for People with Disabilities (CFLA, 2016) that libraries should actively seek to hire people with disabilities both as paid employees and volunteers and declare this interest in their job ads and interviews.

Policy

Inclusion of accessibility and the needs of individuals with disabilities in the collection development policy is an important step (Huntington, 2002). The policy should also include matters such as confidentiality, equal service and access (CFLA, 2016), and regular evaluation of and attempts to improve collections, as accessibility

is not a goal that can be reached within a limited time frame, but rather an ongoing process, dynamically informed by new trends, issues, formats, and technological advancements. Some public library systems, such as the Halifax Public Library (2022) and Toronto Public Library (n.d.), have taken an extra step and devised accessibility plans that cover all aspects of library service including collections. Making use of these documents could help other libraries meet accessibility standards.

Patrons and Community Outreach

One way to fill accessibility gaps in collections is to actively seek out the opinions of individuals with disabilities and their families through various methods, such as surveys, interviews, and focus groups. Giving individuals who experience any type of disadvantage the opportunity to express their needs, interests, and concerns will position them in the place of power (Hill, 2011), reducing their feelings of isolation from society (Mannion, 2022). Libraries need to have meaningful conversations with community members about accessibility issues to be able to resolve them. One way to achieve that is to include patrons with special needs and their families in the evaluation of the library collections. Furthermore, libraries could collaborate with community agencies and organizations that work with disabled individuals, such as nursing homes or residential facilities, to find the best ways to increase accessibility for those who require it. For example, Sunderland Public Library (SPL) carried out a survey of schools, community organizations, parents, and teachers who specialize in working with special-needs students, to identify resources that could help meet the requirements of neurodivergent children and their families. Having found that 5% of elementary school students in their district are on the autistic spectrum, SPL decided to create a collection specifically for this group (Mannion, 2022).

Individuals with disabilities and their families should also be targeted in marketing activities. The availability of accessible formats has to be indicated through promotional media. A respondent to the study done by Hill (2011) stated that individuals with disabilities who don't currently use libraries might start doing so once they become aware of the availability of alternative formats and appropriate equipment that meet their needs.

While all the above strategies are effective ways to enhance accessibility, libraries might still not be able to reach those who have trouble leaving their residence or do not have access to social media. This is where outreach comes into play. Providing accessible collection materials on-site at organizations that serve these people and offering to send items to patrons who cannot come to the library (Huntington, 2002) are possible solutions to this problem. Also, if libraries have staff dedicated to outreach activities, their input could inform collection development decisions, as some of them are in direct contact with individuals with disabilities and have experience with their needs.

Physical Space

Even with the most accessible collection that contains a vast range of formats and appropriate content, aligned with community members' needs, the availability of which is communicated through promotions, patrons cannot make effective use of the collections if materials are not provided in an accessible physical space. Numerous resources deal with and provide solutions for this aspect of accessibility. The main entrance to the building needs to be accessible to staff and patrons. The collection should be housed on shelving units that are spaced to allow users with mobility aids to move between them (Baker, 2011; Marrall, 2020; Nielson & Irval, 2005). The shelving should be brightly lit and the items on the shelves should be shelved so that heavy items are near the bottom of

the shelf. The items on the shelves and items not housed on shelves should be accessible to the public and finding aids made publicly available. One solution that allows for access to the collection without high cost is to implement a form on the catalogue; this form would allow patrons to indicate items they need to be retrieved from the shelves (Marrall, 2020). This solution demonstrates the local fixes that can be implemented without a high cost to the library budget. For example, Halifax Public Library's Accessibility Plan notes the importance of having an accessible public space that is easy to navigate in order to meet the needs of the community and has worked these changes into the budget (2022).

Universal Design

Stressing that any environment or service should be designed in a way that makes it accessible to people with various abilities, Universal Design is a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of all groups in society. Some Universal Design principles that could be applied to public library collections and services include:

- Maximizing legibility of information, for example, signs pointing to areas that hold large print books should use larger fonts and have adequate contrast;
- Minimizing physical effort required to use items and services, for example, accessible format collections could be placed on the main floor and on easy-to-reach shelves (neither too high nor too low);
- Providing appropriate size and space, for example, aisles should be wide enough to allow wheelchairs to easily pass through;
- Eliminating unnecessary complexity, for example, unless there is evidence or feedback indicating that accessible items can be placed in a new location that increases accessibility, it's better

to not move them frequently as this might create confusion for patrons (National Disability Authority, 2020).

Conclusion

With over 6.2 million Canadians having a disability, in order for a library to serve the public to the best of its ability, it must have collections that can be accessed without physical barriers (Statistics Canada, 2018). It is a step not only to ensure that disabled individuals have both independence and privacy but a step forward in making participating in society a more equitable experience. In an ideal situation, a patron should not need to disclose their disability or explain their needs to library staff; rather, the collection and the spaces in which it is housed should adhere to a policy that ensures the library is inherently accessible. Alongside this, public libraries should include accessibility in their collection policies. These policies should be reviewed periodically to reflect on trends in patron needs and new advances in technology. Library policymakers should set goals to continuously improve the accessibility of the collection.

The challenges still lie primarily in issues of cost as libraries transition to a focus on Universal Design. While new and innovative material formats are under constant development, they are not getting cheaper. Collections management must decide whether to spend their budget on one particular material in multiple formats, or whether to expand in other ways. Additionally, older buildings need to be retrofitted for mobility access, which adds another cost. Despite these barriers, libraries can take advantage of free resources offered through organizations such as CELA and NNELS and invest in staff training that informs library workers on ways to best serve patrons of all abilities.

Further Reading

Canadian Federation of Library Associations [CFLA]. (2016). *Guidelines on Library and information services for people with disabilities.* Canadian Federation of Library Associations. https://cfla-fcab.ca/en/ guidelines-and-position-papers/ guidelines-on-library-and-information-services-fo r-people-with-disabilities/

> A website document that provides a guideline for serving people with disabilities. The purpose of this document is to provide libraries with recommendations that will work to create accessible and inclusive spaces. It includes sections on policy and planning, public services, outreach, budgeting and acquisitions, training, collection management, resource sharing, assistive devices and technology, physical access, and advocacy.

Centre for Equitable Library Access [CELA]. (2020). *Public library service for Canadians with print disabilities.* https://celalibrary.ca/

> A website resource that highlights the items and services available for individuals with print disabilities. CELA provided immediate access to books, magazines, and newspapers in formats that people with print disabilities can read, such as audio, digital text, and braille.

Galer, D. (2015). *Disability rights movement in Canada.* The Canadian Encyclopedia. https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/disability-rights-movement

> A website resource that outlines the disability rights movement in Canada. This document outlines the movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the mid-20th century, the 1970s, the 1980s, the 1990s, and the 21st century. This chapter focuses on contemporary issues with accessibility in public libraries but disability rights have a long history.

Huntington, B., Swanson, C., & Wisconsin State Dept. of Public Instruction, M. (2002).*Adults with special needs.* A Resource and Planning Guide for Wisconsin's Public Libraries. ERIC. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED482241.pdf

> This resource is a guide for providing services to adults with disabilities. Twelve chapters focus on different disabilities such as vision and cognitive disabilities. In this chapter, we focused on mobility and physical disabilities.

Marrall, R. M. (2020). *Developing a library accessibility plan: A practical guide for librarians.* Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. https://doi.org/10.5195/jmla.2021.1318

For this chapter, we ended up using a specific chapter on 'physical accessibility' but the entire resource will be a good tool for building an accessible library. This contains chapters on creating accessibility plans, programming, outreach, community partnerships and more. There are even case studies of libraries that have attempted to improve their accessibility.

National Disability Authority. (2020). *7 Principles of Universal Design.* National Disability Authority. https://universaldesign.ie/What-is-Universal-Design/The-7-Principles/

A website resource from the National Disability Authority. The seven principles are equitable use, flexibility in use, simple and intuitive use, perceptible information, tolerance for error, low physical effort, and size and space for approach and use. Each of the principles has specific guidelines to use when creating an accessible library and services.

National Network of Equitable Library Service
[NNELS]. (N.d.). [NNELS hompeage.](#)
https://nnels.ca/

> A website resource and library service that is beneficial to creating and maintaining an accessible library. The National Network for Equitable Library Service is a repository of content owned and sustained by Canadian public libraries. This organization works to create copies of books in accessible digital formats.

Nielsen, G. S., & Irval, B. (2005). *Access to libraries for disabled persons checklist: A practical tool.* IFLA Conference Proceedings, 1–16.

> This resource is a checklist for library use. We primarily used the 'collection development' chapter; however, the other chapters will be a handy tool to have when reading into accessible libraries.

Ontario Council of University Libraries [OCUL]. (2014). *[Accessibility information toolkit for libraries.](#)* Ontario Council of University Libraries. https://ocul.on.ca/accessibility/sites/default/files/ OCUL%20Accessibility%20Toolkit%20-%20ENG%2 0-%20v2.0%20%28May%202014%29.pdf

> This is a toolkit for accessibility. While this resource is for

university libraries, it can still be referenced when implementing accessibility. The section for public services provided tips and tricks for in-person communication.

Preston, J. (2016). *Staring and why it matters.* https://jeffpreston.ca/2016/01/11/ staring-and-why-it-matters/

Educational commentary by a person with lived experience explains how to approach conversations about disability and avoid othering disabled people via social cues and body language.

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7. What Little We Know About the Hidden Challenges for Library Users with Invisible Disabilities

FAYE WILLAUER

Introduction

Librarians are no strangers to serving people from marginalized communities. Enshrined within the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Code of Ethics is the duty to serve all library users equitably and to provide the best possible access to all users (IFLA, 2012). Occasionally, this falls short, often as it relates to maintaining an accessible collection for library users with invisible disabilities.

When imagining someone with a disability, the usual thought is that of a blue and white sign of someone in a wheelchair. Visible disabilities, such as many mobility disabilities and visual disabilities, are easy to conceptualize because people with these disabilities often have tools or resources with them that assist their ability to do normal everyday tasks. Wheelchairs, canes, and walkers are all universal signs of someone with a disability. However, visible disabilities, discussed in the previous chapter, actually constitute only a part of the full spectrum of disability. The rest of these disabilities are referred to as invisible or hidden disabilities because they are not readily apparent to outside viewers. Some examples of invisible disabilities include the wide variety of psychiatric disabilities such as bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, chronic anxiety

or depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as well as other symptoms and disabilities such as chronic pain, chronic fatigue, epilepsy, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), and various learning disabilities (LD) (Disabled World, 2015).

Disabilities such as these inhibit individuals' ability to do normal everyday tasks. People with these disabilities often have difficulty remembering information, concentrating or making decisions, have difficulty doing errands and chores by themselves, or even have difficulty getting out of bed, dressing themselves, feeding themselves, or maintaining personal hygiene (CDC, 2022). Many of these difficulties inhibit the user's ability to access a library's collection. It can affect the types of resources they can use, the length, the language, the format of the work, or even where the user can browse resources in the first place. However, because of the varied and invisible nature of these disabilities, it is difficult to understand what solutions would best serve this group of library users.

In order to set the stage for the following discussion, it is important to discuss the lens in which this chapter explores the issue of users with invisible disabilities in libraries. Historically, disability has been looked at through the Medical Model of disability; that is to say, that disability is looked at and treated on an individual basis by attempting to treat the individual's symptoms (Berget & MacFarlane, 2020). This model has infringed on the rights and dignity of the disabled and has consistently been challenged since the 60s in the literature (O'Sullivan & Alexander, 2020). Since the 1980s, new lenses have been developed, including the Social Model of disability and the Gap Model. The Social Model understands disability as an unjust demand on an individual to do something they are not able to do and seeks to change societal structure to accommodate the individual's needs, whereas the Gap Model combines the two models and attempts to find a balance by acknowledging factors that disabled individuals can change themselves as well as acknowledging societal factors outside of the

individual's control (Berget & MacFarlane, 2020). For the purposes of this discussion about what library staff and administrators can do to provide better accessibility for library users, it is more useful to look at the situation through the lens of the Social Model of disability. The Social Model puts the onus of change on libraries and library staff. Because of the invisible and hidden nature of the issue in question, and the fact that library users have little control over collections practices, it is best to view the issue as a systemic issue rather than one that requires change from the disabled individual themselves.

There is also a discussion in the literature and in the disability community about whether or not person-first language (person with a disability) or identity-first language (disabled person) is more preferred to identify individuals in the disability community. For the purposes of this chapter, both will be used interchangeably, since disability is as varied as language itself, and the preferred language is not universal among all disabled communities.

This chapter will summarize the current state of research into library users with invisible disabilities, outline the challenges that these users face as it relates to management of the library collection, and provide a list of suggested responses to these challenges.

Background and Current Context

Research into the struggles of library users with invisible disabilities has been severely limited with some groups garnering more attention than others. Historically speaking, users with visual disabilities have been researched more than others (Muir, Thompson, & Qayyum, 2019) as well as those with more readily apparent physical impairments (Roberson, Barefield, & Griffith, 2022). Naturally, this is because the ability to see and read text is required in order to access most library resources. As such, it is

one of the more obvious communities for librarians to study and work towards making the library more accessible. However, despite their effects on the ability to read and learn, very little research has actually been conducted in studying cognitive disabilities and some print disabilities such as Aphasia, Autism, Down Syndrome, and Dyslexia until fairly recently (Berget & MacFarlane, 2020). Despite the growing interest in library users with these invisible disabilities, research in these areas is often plagued with small sample sizes, sampling errors, and a lack of generalizability. This is particularly true for Dyslexia (Berget & MacFarlane, 2020) and Autism Spectrum Disorder (Cox et al., 2020).

As it stands, there is a growing need for research on library users of all kinds with invisible disabilities. It is estimated that 10% of people in the U.S. have an invisible disability (Disabled World, 2022). For school and academic libraries, the number of disabled students, particularly post-secondary students, is also growing (O'Sullivan & Alexander, 2020, p. 11-12; Wicker, 2022, p. 18-19; Shea & Derry, 2019, p. 327). Library users with invisible disabilities are only going to get more common. Despite the lack of current research, certain challenges are known and there are a number of potential accessibility solutions that librarians can start experimenting with already.

Challenges

There are many challenges associated with providing equitable collections for users with invisible disabilities. The invisible and hidden nature of these disabilities means that they are often overlooked, underestimated, and misunderstood. Invisible disabilities are often under-diagnosed and may require the user to explicitly disclose their disability. Additionally, invisible disabilities create library-specific challenges that do not appear as a challenge related to disability. Lastly, potential solutions to make library

services more accessible for people with invisible disabilities sometimes puts different users' needs in conflict with each other.

The primary difficulty with accommodating library users with invisible disabilities is that, as the name suggests, they are not readily apparent to the outside observer and require the individual to explicitly disclose their condition or struggles. For example, a wheelchair user sitting at the bottom of a staircase with no ramp in sight may be a readily apparent clue of inaccessibility, whereas someone walking in, choosing a print book they are interested in only to find that it is in a font that is hard on their dyslexia, and putting it back, is a far less visible clue of inaccessibility. To an outside observer, it may just look like a lack of interest in the book. People with an invisible disability often pass as abled and are often forced to live without accommodations (Desjardins, 2010).

Although disclosure of disability might help the individual in the hypothetical scenario above, disclosure is generally a step that individuals with invisible disabilities actively avoid. It is difficult to estimate exactly how many people do not disclose their disability, since it would require the individual to disclose that they are disabled at all in the first place, thereby defeating the purpose of non-disclosure. However, the few hints that are out there are not encouraging. As it stands, current estimates are that around only 11-12% of people with disabilities, including visible disabilities, actually disclose their disability (Murphy, 2018; Moriña, 2022). In some settings this has been found to be as high as roughly a third (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). Regardless of which estimate is more accurate, these numbers suggest that the vast majority of disabled people are capable of hiding in plain sight. If between a tenth and a third of all disabled individuals operate under the radar, so to speak, it is easy to imagine the sheer scale of potential library users that the library fails to serve, unknowingly. Whatever the case, the vast majority of disabled individuals refuse to disclose their disability when asked, so it is clear that library workers cannot rely on users asking for help to know how to make

the library more accessible. The library needs to be the one driving for better accessibility.

There is a pretty clear reason for non-disclosure. Discrimination against individuals with invisible disabilities is rampant and often treated casually, usually being passed off as "policy" or "convention" (Desjardins, 2010, p. 107). When they do disclose their disability, they are often faced with denials of access, refusals of assistance, insults, runarounds (Desjardins, 2010), or invasive questioning (Muir, Thompson, & Qayyum, 2019). They also often discover that the organization is unprepared to assist them, even if they are willing (Muir, Thompson, & Qayyum, 2019). Library users with invisible disabilities are acutely aware of the discrimination they face, and it affects how they seek information. Users with depression often only use health resources that were shaped by the presence of a similar mental health condition as their own (Muir, Thompson, & Qayyum, 2019). For example, a user who struggles with depression will prefer food health advice written by someone who struggles with the same eating habits, or lack thereof, as the information seeker. Some individuals only use resources that they can print off because their disability makes it difficult to read from a screen (Muir, Thompson, & Qayyum, 2019), however, many vendors restrict the printing capabilities of their e-resources. Autistic users tend to be especially precise in the resources they want and may not select a different resource on the same topic (Muir, Thompson, & Qayyum, 2019). An inability to accommodate these various restrictions is a failure in the collections practices of the library, yet many users find their requests being treated as absurd. Because of issues such as these, users with invisible disabilities tend to avoid asking for assistance. In addition to the lack of disclosure, many individuals with invisible disabilities are undiagnosed or do not know that they are disabled, and therefore cannot disclose their disability, which only exacerbates the difficulty in identifying these issues (Roberson, Barefield, & Griffith, 2022).

Inaccessibility within collections generally becomes more clear when users attempt to access digital content. Digital content often

needs to be filtered through some sort of accessible technology, such as with screen readers, closed captions, or alternative navigation methods, for users with invisible disabilities. Libraries often rely on digital databases to provide online materials, such as articles, e-books, video, and audio sources. In these cases, accessibility is ensured and managed by vendors rather than the library. However, according to a study by Willis & O'Reilly (2020) where they created criteria and evaluated 227 databases, vendors often either do not have explicit accessibility guidelines, or apply their own guidelines inconsistently. Regardless of whether the vendor provided a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) or not, most databases either did not meet all criteria outlined by Willis & O'Reilly (2020) or failed altogether. Most of the accessibility problems revolved around poor implementation or a complete lack of skip navigation, and incomplete or total lack of alternative text for photos presented on the database or resources. In general, larger vendors tended to have better accessibility than smaller vendors, (p. 12), and smaller vendors often had spotty accessibility measures on an item-by-item basis. Regardless of size however, it is clear that vendors cannot be relied upon to make their sites or resources accessible. This can be particularly frustrating for users who rely on these accessibility measures because the issue is often one that the library staff cannot solve directly. In cases like these, users will often abandon otherwise desired sources because they prove too difficult or impossible to access themselves (Willis & O'Reilly, 2020).

Sometimes digital materials are rendered inaccessible for reasons other than navigation through vendor sites. In some cases, the content itself can be created inaccessible, even at the most basic level. For example, even simple documents are often created without encoded titles, headings, or subheadings, which can make documents difficult for screen readers to navigate (Arlitsch, 2018). Bold, italicized, and underlined text is often not detectable by machine readers. In other cases, content is missing alternative text for photos, is designed in a way that is difficult for color-blind readers to read, or does not include captions, subtitles, or

transcripts for audio-visual materials. While some of these obstacles are inherently present in some digital or physical content acquired by the library, it is imperative that resources created by the library itself, such as lib guides, programming guides, tutorials, and such, are created with accessibility in mind. Resources created by the library are as much part of the library's collection as the books, movies, or music that fill the shelves and online databases.

There are also a number of library-specific challenges that also come into play. Roberson, Barefield, and Griffith (2022) list many of these challenges. Overall, disabled library users report mixed feelings about the accessibility of libraries. Although the opinion of libraries themselves were generally positive, their stated challenges were often linked to their favorite part of the library (Roberson, Barefield, & Griffith, 2022). For example, many users who stated their favorite part was the books usually also listed difficulty carrying or retrieving said books from the shelves as their biggest challenge. Surveyed users also tended to state complaints that mirrored their disability, such as distractibility in the environment for users with ADHD, PTSD, Anxiety, and ASD, and the need to walk through the whole library to find an empty study room for those with sensory disabilities and chronic pain (Roberson, Barefield, & Griffith, 2022. These complaints mirrored ones given by abled library users, though disabled library users were affected more profoundly by such challenges (Roberson, Barefield, & Griffith, 2022). Because these challenges mirror typical complaints from abled library users, it can be difficult to ascertain whether the complaint is exactly what it appears to be on the surface or if there is a deeper issue at play.

Other commonly cited challenges were that the library catalogue was difficult to navigate due to the overwhelming amount of information presented at any one time, overcrowding in the library space, and feeling judged for using disability accommodations despite not appearing disabled (Roberson, Barefield, & Griffith, 2022). Naturally, users would avoid using resources located in areas where the atmosphere makes them uncomfortable. Accessible

space is as important to collections management accessibility as acquiring accessible materials. If the item needed by the disabled library user is in a place they cannot comfortably access, it defeats the point of acquiring that item in the first place. This is true for both online and physical spaces.

Finding and implementing solutions in and of themselves can be a challenge, as people have different needs and interpret situations differently. For example, some people find comfort in silence, as it is predictable and does not activate sensory issues. However, some find silence to be anxiety-inducing and causing tension because they become hypervigilant of their own actions and the environment around them (Muir, Thompson, & Qayyum, 2019). Solutions to issues such as these are not easy, require long-term investments in library research, and may take a lot of trial and error before something is found that can better serve all patrons.

Responses

Thankfully there are many potential responses already in place to ease the difficulties that people with invisible disabilities may face when using the library. These suggestions range from simple computer software to staff training to the arrangement of the physical library space as a whole.

Simple accessibility solutions include installing browser extensions onto library computers such ATbar, Spreed, Zap Reader, and NVDA to allow users to change font style & size on web pages, add colour overlays, break down text into smaller chunks, and provide Text-To-Speech (TTS) technology (Pittaway & Malomo, 2021). While they are not guaranteed to solve all issues that vendors may neglect to solve themselves, they may make otherwise inaccessible materials available for more users.

There are a number of browser extensions that library staff can use to ensure their websites and resources are accessible for library

patrons. For example, accessibility checkers that analyze web pages and measure them according to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), link checkers that check for broken links, and disability simulators such as Funkify that allow library staff to simulate what it is like to use the library website or resource as someone with a variety of disabilities (McCann & Peacock, 2019). These can be especially useful to check if e-resources, or even entire proprietary platforms, are accessible to people with various disabilities. This is important, as many Digital rights Management (DRM), anti-theft features, and proprietary software actually inhibit accessibility (Desjardins, 2010). As previously stated, while accessibility can sometimes be difficult to promote and implement on resources where library staff do not have direct control over the resource, we can at least ensure that library websites, search functions, and library-created resources are made with accessibility in mind.

For solutions that can be implemented in the library space, many solutions revolve around providing more information about the library space up-front and making the space more predictable. For example, meditation rooms can serve a dual purpose as a low-sensory space (Wicker, 2022). Study space availability can be tracked and displayed in an easily accessible central location, and some can even be guaranteed available for students with disabilities (Roberson, Barefield, & Griffith, 2022). Fluorescent lights have a tendency to buzz loudly and provide light that is far too strong for some users with sensory disabilities, and should be replaced with quieter lights that are not as harsh on the eyes. A comfortable space will encourage users to use resources located in the areas where they are comfortable.

Staff training can include a number of changes that vary in resource needs. Even something simple such as a "please interrupt me" sign can encourage library users with social anxiety to approach library staff (Desjardins, 2010). This is especially helpful if discreet avenues to contact library staff are also provided (Roberson, Barefield, & Griffith, 2022), or additional resources for

self-service are provided (Conley, Ferguson, & Kumbier, 2019). If a user wants a resource, but needs assistance acquiring it, allowing them access to that help in a way that is subtle, comfortable, and better yet, automatic, will grant access to more resources. Targeted libguides can be created to showcase tools for users with various disabilities, such as a guide on browser extensions or even videos modeling information-seeking behaviour (Roberson, Barefield, & Griffith, 2022). Extended loan periods can also be a huge help for disabled users, as it allows the user to spend the time they need on the resource, allowing them to select lengthier resources.

Conclusion

Invisible disabilities are varied, generally misunderstood, and difficult to detect. Potential avenues for providing greater accessibility to libraries for users with invisible disabilities are often vague and can conflict with the needs of other library users. While there are currently no definitive answers on how librarians can make their collections more accessible to these groups of users, many small, short-term aides exist that can be used right away. However, it is clear that institutional changes need to be further researched, developed, and implemented in order to make the library experience more comfortable for these often overlooked groups. In situations such as this where evidence of the issues exist, but are ill-defined, the first step is to include the affected users in discussions about library accessibility. The need to understand the issues these library users face and why is paramount to being able to truly provide a collection that everyone can use regardless of ability. Nothing about us without us.

Sources for Additional Reading

American Library Association [ALA]. (2022, November 28). *Accessibility | Advocacy, Legislation, and Issues.* https://www.ala.org/advocacy/diversity/accessibility

> The ALA has a good list of resources about disabled library users in general ranging from specific resources and products to more abstract theory on library accessibility. In particular, they have several resources on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), resources for blind and print disabilities, and web accessibility.

Autism Self-Advocacy Network [ASAN]. (2022, November 28). *Resource Library.* https://autisticadvocacy.org/resources/

> ASAN has a long list of resources available, particularly about how the use of language can be used to make spaces more or less accessible to autistic individuals. It has toolkits that can be used to assist users across the spectrum depending on the severity and types of needs necessary for the individual. Because ASD is a social and behavioural disability, understanding how autistic people use language is vital to being able to serve them where they are at.

CAST. (2022, November 28). *About CAST.*

https://www.cast.org/

> CAST is the organization currently championing Universal Design for Learning [UDL]. They believe that everyone has the right to high-quality education, and can excel in their learning if the educational methods are accessible to them. CAST has many resources, products, and services to help organizations make their spaces more accessible for all learners. They have online courses on accessibility, consultation services, and a plethora of online tools for librarians and educators to make their space and practice more accessible.

Educating All Learners. (2022, November 28). *Education Resource Library.* https://educatingalllearners.org/

> Educating All Learners stay on the cutting edge of disability research with up-to-date research, new case studies, and breaking news on disability. A highly recommended resources for librarians who want to keep up with current developments on research into educating disabled learners.

Hidden Disabilities. (2022, November 23). *Hidden Disabilities.* https://hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/us/

> The yellow sunflower on a green background has become a common sign for individuals with invisible disabilities to identify themselves with subtlety. Hidden Disabilities has a store for sunflower signage and services for paying

businesses to help them become more friendly to users with non-visible disabilities.

McCann, S. & Peacock, R. (2019). Be an ally for accessibility: Tips for all librarians. *College & Research Libraries News, 80*(5), 266–268. https://doi.org/10.5860/crln.80.5.266

> This short article, though cited in this chapter, is full of good suggestions for librarians who want to make their libraries more accessible. The authors concisely explain how browser extensions, accessibility checkers, and familiarity with captions and audio descriptions can help librarians create more accessible web experiences for their users.

Oslund, C. (2014). *Supporting college and university students with invisible disabilities: A guide for faculty and staff working with students with autism, AD/HD, language processing disorders, anxiety, and mental illness.* Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

> Although some of the terminology is dated, Christy Oslund does an excellent job dispelling common myths about all kinds of invisible disabilities such as ASD, ADHD, language disorders, anxiety, depression, and OCD. The book finishes off with chapters eight and nine exploring Universal Design in education, while chapter ten discusses the implementation of accessibility policy. Overall, it is an excellent starting point for anyone who does not really know where to start.

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8. "Just in Time" Collection Development: Background and Current Challenges

MELISSA RAMSEY

Introduction

Traditionally, collection development in libraries has followed a "just in case" model, with librarians carefully selecting and curating collections for their communities. While some suggest that interlibrary loans (ILL) represent an early form of "just in time" collecting (Walker & Arthur, 2018), in recent decades there has been a shift towards "just in time" collection development in the acquisition of e-resources for academic libraries, where materials are acquired as requested rather than "just in case" they are needed. With this method of acquisition, materials are discoverable to the library user despite the fact that the library does not own the material (Cramer, 2013). While the first few moments of use might be provided for free, continued use by the user (or by subsequent users) triggers either a short-term loan or a purchase, subject to the terms of the agreement between the vendor and the library (Cramer, 2013).

In a context of budget cuts and a reduction of physical collection space, academic libraries have pursued "just in time" acquisition as a method of alleviating concerns about the non-use of materials, which were bought speculatively using "just in case" collection development (Sung & Sung, 2020), while vendors have hoped to monetize the entirety of the process – from viewing, to rental, to purchase – and reduce a perceived loss of income due to the

practice of interlibrary loans (Machovec, 2015). "Just in time" acquisition is commonly known as demand-driven acquisition (DDA), yet the term DDA has also been used interchangeably with patron-driven acquisition (PDA). While it is recognized that PDA does not always occur through "just in time" acquisition, this chapter uses the term DDA to refer to both "just in time" and patron-driven acquisition, reflecting the literature's interchangeable use of these terms and the predominantly PDA-driven nature of DDA.

While this method of collection development has become more common, many concerns around its use remain. With libraries viewing this method as a way to save money and vendors viewing this as a way to increase profits, relationships between vendors and libraries have at times been strained as pricing models and agreement terms have changed. The practice of short-term loans has been particularly challenging as it comes with both significant costs and benefits and has perhaps been the portion of the vendor agreement most heavily modified over the last decade. "Just in time" collection development also raises concerns inherent to patron-driven acquisition, such as the quality and diversity of the resulting collection and the de-professionalization of librarianship, as well as concerns inherent to e-resources more broadly, such as controlled digital lending agreements or librarian control over collections. These concerns will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

This chapter provides an overview of the background and current context of non-serials DDA collection development within academic libraries, some current challenges and proposed responses, and highlights some resources for further reading. This chapter will focus on "just in time" acquisition as it applies to e-resources, but readers should note that "just in time" collection development has also been applied to print collections (England & Anderson, 2019; Walton et al., 2022) and in public libraries (Costello, 2017).

Background and Current Context

Demand-driven acquisition began in the early 2000s as academic libraries experimented with on-demand purchasing of ILL requests (Fischer et al, 2012). DDA then rose to prominence in the late 2000s, when a rise in ebook use and the reduction of physical library collection space coincided with budget cuts and the 2008 recession (Walker & Arthur, 2018; Machovec, 2015). While the advantages (and disadvantages) of ebooks are discussed elsewhere in this book, it should be noted that patrons of university libraries increasingly use – and expect to be available – e-resources, and academic libraries looking to manage physical space limitations can find this format advantageous (Cramer, 2013). Additionally, with the advent of instantaneous (or near-instantaneous) delivery systems, library patrons are increasingly expecting that this will also be their experience at the library (Price & Savova, 2015). It is within this context that DDA plans have been developed and offered, and given the technological advancements of the last few decades, it is likely that this development was a natural progression from vendor approval plans.

At its most basic level, "just in time" e-resource acquisition functions as an expansion of the library's catalogue to include records and metadata for materials that the library does not own, but which are available for immediate access through purchase or loan (Cramer, 2013; Costello, 2017). This distinction in ownership is indistinguishable to the library user, but is generally visible to library staff through identifying characteristics in the catalogue record's fields (Sung & Sung, 2020). When a user requests access to the material, it is at that point that a loan or purchase is triggered. For the user, this process is invisible, but administratively the process is much more complicated as vendor and library agreement terms are highly customizable. In addition to retaining control over the pool of DDA-available materials through the use of approval plans or inclusion and exclusion parameters, librarians can also

exert control over DDA purchases through negotiating the terms of loan agreements, purchase triggers and purchase ceilings (Costello, 2017).

While there is a need to recognize that circulation statistics do not adequately address in-house material use (Rose-Wiles & Irwin, 2016), research has indicated that around 30-40% of librarian-selected materials in academic libraries never circulate (England & Anderson, 2019; Rose-Wiles & Irwin, 2016). Additionally, research has indicated that a high proportion of circulation is accounted for by a small number of titles (Rose-Wiles & Irwin, 2016), with some suggesting that 80% of materials account for 20% of circulation (Trueswell, 1969). It is thought that by offering DDA, libraries can mitigate concerns about unused materials while simultaneously making available a wide breadth of resources at low cost, for the library will only pay for those materials which are actually used (Cramer, 2013). Additionally, short-term loans provide instantaneous access to library materials – unlike interlibrary loans which can have lengthy delays – while also having the potential to be less costly than participation in ILL programs, particularly as ILL programs try to reduce wait times for books through adjustments to programs such as the use of courier services (Price & Savova, 2015). For vendors, the advantage of offering DDA is the potential to further capitalize upon e-resources: the same resource can be rented (perhaps multiple times) as well as purchased, cannot be sent out to other institutions through ILL due to licensing restrictions, and, as with approval plans, the vendor can hope to shape library purchase behaviour through its DDA offerings and agreement terms.

In recent years, tensions between vendors and libraries over DDA plans have increased. There has been frustration over the ever-changing landscape as both libraries and vendors experience growing pains in the development of these plans and programs. Vendor and publisher profits did not materialize as expected (Machovec, 2015; Seger & Allen, 2015), resulting in significant changes to the structure of short-term loan pricing models and

rising costs for institutions, sometimes to unsustainable levels (Buck & Hills, 2017). Additionally, some vendors have reduced their short-term loan offerings (Machovec, 2015), removing some resources altogether and placing a post-publishing embargo on others (effectively rendering them DDA but under a straight-to-purchase agreement). Challenges in collection management such as concerns relating to patron-driven acquisition, e-resources, and the de-professionalization of librarianship are also inherent in DDA as "just in time" collection development encompasses these intersecting issues.

Despite these concerns, it is generally accepted that as Proquest (2018) says, "DDA is here to stay." The shape of agreements and options continues to evolve, including "access to own" (Proquest, 2018) options where the eventual purchase price can be offset by loan costs. Many academic libraries consider DDA to be one of a number of acquisition methods, balancing out its benefits and concerns with other strategies such as traditional "just in case" collecting, approval plans, and broader patron-driven requests. These next two sections will discuss in greater detail some of the challenges, and potential responses to these challenges, of using DDA as a collection development strategy.

Challenges

As previously described, many of the challenges inherent to other interrelated aspects of collection management are present within DDA. These challenges include collection quality and diversity, library-vendor relationships and agreement terms, and concerns around ongoing collection management. The section that follows discusses these challenges in more detail.

Collection Quality and Diversity

Concerns around the academic library's collection quality with "just in time" collection development are reflective of broader patron-driven acquisition concerns. Librarians have expressed concern that in their quest for immediate access to materials, users may create collections that are unbalanced across subject areas, may trigger loans or purchases of materials that will later go unused, are not reflective of the subject focus of the institution, or may simply reflect current trends or "hot topics" (Rogers, 2018; Tyler et al., 2014). Others have critiqued DDA for prioritizing speed and convenience over authority, resource evaluation, and collection longevity (Sens & Fonesca, 2013). In particular, academic libraries have a unique focus that requires consideration of the long-term research value of the collection, which may be unknown to current users or librarians. Given the recognized need in academic libraries to teach searching strategies and to provide reference services (Ingibergsson, 2019), there is also the concern that DDA relies on the user's ability to use the library's catalogue effectively (Costello, 2017). Significant concerns have also been raised about whether DDA contributes to the de-professionalization of librarianship or whether it is even an inappropriate strategy for academic libraries (Tyler et al., 2014), with some suggesting that if "your goal is to build a great collection, then [DDA] is clearly no way to go about it" (Rick Anderson in Tyler et al., 2014, p. 685).

Interestingly, research into the use of DDA within academic libraries appears to have alleviated many of these concerns (Tyler et al., 2014; Walker & Arthur, 2018). While some have criticized DDA-related research as being overly optimistic (Sens & Fonseca, 2013) and have urged caution, suggesting a need for a closer examination of vendor-researcher relationships and DDA in general, subsequent research (Tyler et al., 2019) has attempted to address this criticism by providing further evidence of the benefits and quality of patron-driven acquisition, with the comment made that "[g]iving the

patrons what they want today may very well be supplying the collection with what it needs for tomorrow" (p 551). In comparing the quality of DDA acquisitions to other collection development strategies as measured by citation counts, Tyler et al. (2019) found strong evidence to support the use of DDA in academic libraries across subject disciplines and user groups while also cautioning that other acquisition strategies can be equally or more effective in certain subject areas (such as the sciences) or among certain user groups (such as undergraduate students). Additionally, some have found that subject coverage and quality are similar to more traditional forms of acquisition (Walker & Arthur, 2018) and others have found an increase in the subject and interdisciplinary diversity (Costello, 2017). Resources purchased through DDA are, on average, used more than those selected by librarians through the "just in case" acquisition, and while DDA-purchased materials tend to have a higher cost per title, the average cost per use is lower due to the increase in use (Rogers, 2018; Walker & Arthur, 2018).

The debate over collection quality continues, with research in other areas of information management indicating that while there is a need to integrate user needs and requests into collection management, this must be balanced with the needs and priorities of the institution (Mills, 2015). Known issues of imbalance and underrepresentation in collections (Morales et al., 2014) are exacerbated by DDA collection development and its link to a lack of diversity in the publishing industry. This lack of diversity exists at all levels of the publishing industry as both supported authors and publishing staff are overwhelmingly white (Price, 2022), pointing to the difficulty of creating a diverse and inclusive collection through patron-driven acquisition based on vendor-supplied catalogue records. It is also known that librarians themselves suffer from a lack of diversity (Morales et al., 2014) and that building inclusive collections requires intentionality and careful thought (Price, 2022); therefore, if an institution is truly committed to diversity and inclusion, it must also be committed to collection development through multiple strategies.

DDA Terms and Vendor-Library Relationships

As previously mentioned, many of the specifics of the DDA terms of agreement are negotiable, or may vary between vendors. Vendors may limit DDA offerings by publication date or by popularity; likewise, libraries may limit DDA offerings through their control of the pool of available resources. Similarly, the degree to which short-term loan terms are negotiable may vary – such as the length of the loan, the number of uses before a loan triggers a purchase, and so on.

While a full review is outside the scope of this chapter, issues relating to the larger context of ebooks and pricing models are also present within DDA (for a discussion of ebook pricing, please see [Chapter 5:](#) *The Ebook Pricing War: The Fight for Control Between Libraries and Publishers*). These concerns include the issue of transparency to library users as the resource is presented as "owned" (or seemingly "free"), as well as concerns around the licensing of e-resources and digital rights management. For example, vendors may remove purchased or leased resources from their catalogue, or the agreement between the vendor and the library may change or be discontinued; in either case, the result is that previously purchased materials are no longer available, possibly to the detriment or frustration of the user (Burns, 2019). Additionally, terms and costing models have shifted and, in some cases, have become unsustainable for libraries (Buck & Hills, 2017).

Sens & Fonseca (2013, p. 360) have expressed concern about the "Amazonification of a library's online catalogue, turning the catalogue into a virtual book store" and question whether vendors could use access to the library's catalogue to further their own interests by manipulating search results and therefore nudging user purchase behaviour. One well-known example that demonstrates the distinction between publisher interests and the library's desire for collection quality is the inclusion of academic publisher Wiley's *Dummies* series of books in library DDA pools (Jabaily & Glazier,

2019); while some librarians may see this series as an accessible resource for users, others could justifiably feel that this series has no place within an academic library context and diminishes collection quality. To mitigate this concern over "Amazonification", Sens & Fonseca provide a strong argument for the necessity of librarian-mediated DDA through terms negotiation, purchase monitoring, and so on, and advocate for the role of the professional librarian.

In essence, many of these concerns reduce to the long-standing issues of who controls what and whose best interests are being served, in addition to ongoing conversations in the wider context of what "is" a library and whether collection quality or collection use should be considered the benchmark of an excellent library.

Ongoing Collection Management

The challenge of collection management is to "create collections that are used both broadly and deeply" (Costello, 2017, Ch. 1) while recognizing that different formats and acquisition strategies each have their own strengths. The varied user groups who access academic library materials also have different format preferences and needs (Costello, 2017, Ch. 8), with Costello noting that "[t]here is ample evidence that position in the university, discipline of study, access to mobile devices, comfort with technology, and the purpose for reading may all affect the desire to access ebooks and their usefulness in research." Additionally, ebook availability and pricing is inconsistent across subject areas; for example, fine arts publications are less commonly available as ebooks (England & Anderson, 2019), while STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) ebooks may be more expensive than books from other subject areas (Costello, 2017). Therefore, collection management is an already complex and challenging endeavour, and DDA systems have the potential to provide significant benefits as well as add another layer

of complexity. Both Cramer (2013) and Jurczyk et al. (2019) raise the issue of catalogue record weeding, with Cramer (2013) suggesting that while some vendors may ease the removal of records for materials no longer offered through DDA, monitoring and modifying the catalogue for other reasons – such as new editions – could be more difficult. Jurczyk et al. (2019) also comment that it may not always be possible to remove records to account for duplication with the library's print collection or e-resources licensed through other means, or for materials that may be out of scope for the institution. Pitcher et al. (2021) have commented on the complexity of DDA agreements and the need to mitigate duplication as well as the concern that titles may be removed from DDA offerings with or without consultation. Additionally, Pitcher et al. (2021) have remarked that catalogue records received from vendors for DDA-available materials may be of lower quality, which increases concerns around how the user's ability to use and search the library catalogue shapes a DDA collection.

Concerns with ongoing collection management are also reflected through ongoing budgetary concerns. While some of these budgetary concerns can be mitigated through the terms of the agreement with the vendor such as collection or per title price caps, accounting for differences in resource costs across different subject areas, or library usage patterns across different disciplines (Jurczyk et al., 2019), could be difficult. It should also be noted that these budget concerns, along with the other concerns raised in this section, suggest that while DDA currently reduces the cost per use of the material it does not reduce staffing needs or the need for professional librarian involvement in collection management, and instead has the potential to increase the importance of appropriate staffing levels to manage complex DDA agreements and the implications of using this strategy in practice. While negotiating appropriate terms of agreement and a consideration of staffing levels can mitigate some of the challenges raised throughout this section, the next section will discuss further potential mitigations in more depth.

Responses

Understanding that there are many challenges in the use of DDA, it should also be recognized that there is the potential to address these concerns through strategies such as a balanced approach to collection development, newer developments in the field such as the use of machine learning, and the role of advocacy in addressing some of the more systemic issues relating to DDA.

Balance in Collection Development Strategies

Many of the challenges described previously regarding the use of "just in time" collection management point to the need to balance the use of different collection development strategies, crafting a blend of "just in time" and "just in case" methodology (Blume, 2019). While DDA has shown, for now, that it can be useful in addressing budgetary concerns and physical space limitations, it does not alleviate concerns over staffing resources, nor does DDA address the need for diversity within collections. Day & Novak (2019) have suggested that this move toward DDA programs and macro-level purchasing programs highlights the need to reexamine the focus of subject librarians or to consider additional forms of collection development such as an "inside-out" model, where internal institutional resources – digitized resources, Open Educational Resources, and so on – are identified and made available to those outside the institution.

The suggestion has also been made that collection development requires careful monitoring of DDA programs as well as the use of intentional "just in case" acquisitions in order to increase diversity and inclusivity in collections (Blume, 2019). Using DDA as a sole collection development strategy, even with carefully crafted parameters, removes institutional control of the collection and

places it firmly in the hands of library patrons and select vendors who may have different goals from the library, despite the assertions of vendors that these goals are one and the same (Proquest, 2018); balancing this strategy with librarian-centred acquisition would work towards maintaining the library's control over the balance and breadth of library materials.

In any case, it is clear that the task of collection development is increasingly complex and can only be addressed through a balance of strategic initiatives, supported by professional librarians, who must navigate the complex array of (sometimes competing) goals and priorities of library users, library institutions, vendors, and publishers.

Data and Machine Learning

As discussed previously, a significant concern within any DDA-driven acquisition method has been that of collection quality, and a concern within DDA is the complexity of managing vendor agreements as well as the different needs and preferences of users across the academic spectrum. While these are both significant challenges, the use of a DDA collection management strategy also offers an opportunity through its generation of vast quantities of data, which librarians could use to mitigate these concerns.

Libraries have a long history of collecting information about their collections and its users to inform collection analysis (Litsey & Mauldin, 2018). Metrics such as circulation statistics, visitor statistics, collection catalogue data and so on can be used to support analysis of collection quality, user preferences, and more. In the context of ebooks, DDA is rich in real-time data and provides an opportunity for complex analysis of the collection and its use, and allows for the use of a wide variety of metrics (Walker & Jiang, 2019). In recognition of this abundance of data and its potential for improving collections, DDA agreements should be negotiated to

ensure that libraries have access to the data generated through this collection management strategy, while simultaneously working to mitigate concerns around data privacy, surveillance, and questions around how this data is used by vendors.

There is also a recognition that analyzing large amounts of data may only be useful at a macro-level, and widespread data analysis may be unsustainable in the long-term as the amount of data continues to increase (Litsey & Mauldin, 2018). Within this context, there is an opportunity for the development of effective machine learning techniques to both monitor collection quality and support collection development (Litsey & Mauldin, 2018; Walker & Jiang, 2019). For example, not only could data analytics be used to report on the impact of DDA purchases on collection balance, but machine learning could indicate a need for librarian intervention by predicting micro-level changes in user behaviour in real-time. As the use of machine learning in libraries is relatively new, this technological advancement requires significantly more research before widespread deployment in libraries, and philosophical and ethical questions remain such as bias in the data or algorithm or issues of data privacy (Lo Piano, 2020). For example, in the library context, the use of a faulty algorithm in collection development could magnify issues of imbalance or diversity within collections.

Advocacy

So far, neither of these responses has adequately addressed the need for inclusive and diverse collections, nor do they support recent moves by many academic institutions to implement Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) statements. An increase in the use of macro-level purchasing and limited collection budgets could be creating an already challenging environment in which to diversity collections, and the concerns previously described with patron-driven acquisition show that reliance on a DDA strategy

could be exacerbating this issue. Additionally, these responses do not address the significant challenges with DDA and e-resources such as short-term loans, pricing agreements, or licensing.

As the concerns raised here with DDA intersect with other areas of collection management as well as reflect broader concerns about a lack of diversity within librarianship (Morales et al., 2014; Price, 2022), so too must the response be more broadly defined; perhaps advocacy, with the goal of wider systemic change, would be appropriate. This need for advocacy and broader change has been reflected in the 2022-2025 strategic plan for the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) which states that CARL intends to be a leader in advocacy for concerns such as digital access, and suggests that principles of "inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility" will be a guiding principle of their work (CARL-ABRC., n.d.). While both CARL and the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA) have advocated in regard to issues of copyright and e-resource pricing, work toward addressing the imbalance and lack of diversity within the publishing industry have been less apparent but are no less necessary (Price, 2022). Additionally, this advocacy does not address the need to diversify those within the librarianship profession (Morales et al., 2014), though this conversation has been ongoing within the profession itself. In summary, while this advocacy is a good start, it is not enough; without diverse voices in all aspects of these interlocking parts of collection development, it will be much harder to develop inclusive and diverse collections.

Conclusion

"Just in time" collection development has progressed from an experimental strategy to one which is highly prevalent in academic libraries, particularly with e-resources. While library users have benefited from the ready access to materials and libraries have

benefited from a decreased cost per use of materials, as agreement and pricing terms change over time these benefits may diminish. Many of the challenges inherent in e-resources and patron-driven collection acquisition spill over into DDA, such as concerns over collection longevity, diversity, inclusion, and the de-professionalization of librarianship. While these are significant challenges, they can be mitigated through the appropriate blending of collection development strategies and a recognition of the shifting role of librarians, and highlight the role and potential of advocacy in addressing these concerns and working towards systemic change. DDA may be "here to stay" (Proquest, 2018), but is only one of many useful methods of collection development.

Sources for Further Reading

For further reading about demand-driven acquisition, please explore the following resources:

Blume, R. (2019). Balance in demand driven acquisitions: The importance of mindfulness and moderation when utilizing just in time collection development. *Collection Management, 44*(2-4), 105-116, https://doi.org/10.1080/ 01462679.2019.1593908

> After providing a helpful introduction to the background and development of "just in time" collection management, Blume uses a case study at the University of Utah to show how balance in collection development strategies is necessary.

Costello, L. (2017). *Evaluating demand-driven acquisitions*. Chandos Publishing.

> This book includes background information about the development of demand-driven acquisition as well as a discussion of current research about this method of collection development. Additionally, this book highlights special considerations for specific types of libraries.

Price, A. (2022). Barriers to an inclusive academic library collection. *Collections and Curation, 41*(3), 97-100. https://doi.org/10.1108/CC-05-2021-0018

> Price highlights some of the challenges facing libraries attempting to develop diverse and inclusive collections. While acknowledging barriers, Price also suggests ways of mitigating or addressing these challenges.

Proquest. (2018). *Why DDA is here to stay: An analysis of the demand-driven acquisition model for libraries* [PDF].
https://pq-static-content.proquest.com/collateral/media2/documents/Whitepaper+-+Why+DDA+is+here+to+stay.pdf

> Proquest's white-paper provides a vendor's perspective on demand-driven acquisition and demonstrates how vendors market these services to libraries.

Tyler, D. C., Hitt, B. D., Nterful, F. A. & Mettling, M. R. (2019). The scholarly impact of books acquired via approval plan selection, librarian orders, and patron-driven acquisitions as measured by citation counts. *College & Research Libraries, 80*(4), 525-560. https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.80.4.525

> Tyler et al.'s empirical study provides a nuanced view of DDA in comparison to other acquisition methods. This paper also provides an in-depth literature review of the context and debates surrounding the use of DDA.

Walton, R., Maudlin, J. & Bunderson, J. (2022). Patron drivers, patron impacts: Investigating potential patron impacts of moving to a patron driven acquisition model for print books. *Collection Management*, https://doi.org/10.1080/01462679.2022.2030841

> Walton, Maudlin & Bunderson provide a thorough background of "just in time" collection development in e-resource acquisition, and describe the shift to the use of this strategy in print acquisition. This paper includes a review of prior research in this area, as well as an analysis of the authors' experience of print DDA at Brigham Young University.

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9. Climate Change Considerations in Public Library Collection Development

OLESYA KOMARNYTSKA AND MAIA TROTTER

Introduction

The markings of a planet affected by climate change exist everywhere we look. Although we are slowly coming to terms with the fact that our way of life needs to change to protect and preserve us and the multitudes of species we are connected to, change is not occurring quickly or consistently enough to protect future generations. Since the Paris Agreement of 2015, there has been motion amongst participating countries to meet the emission-reduction pledges set to help with curbing planetary warming to 1.5°C; these international efforts are falling short and climate change is a crisis we all need to face with increasing urgency (Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 2022; IPCC-a, 2022). As the signs and effects of climate change begin to disrupt the everyday lives of more and more people around the world, public libraries are located in a critical position of potential to be educational leaders in their communities. Climate change impacts all members of society, regardless of age and it is of critical importance for libraries to make a greater effort to include children in discussions surrounding climate change as several recent studies bring to light the increasing eco-anxiety children are experiencing about the perilous future of the planet (Martin et al, 2021; Hickman, 2020).Libraries

need to take initiative to implement collections and utilise resources that provide accurate, accessible, and up-to-date information that does not alienate people and offers useful methods about how people can incorporate greener practices into their everyday lives.While libraries occupy a unique position in connecting the general public with climate change resources, this role does not come without challenges. Library collections must remain accessible and comprehensible while battling climate change denial, provide curated resources to help deal with eco-anxiety, support environmental literacy, engage in sustainable collection development practices, and do it all on a tight budget.

In this chapter, we will take an exploratory look at how public libraries can be active members of their communities and promote conversations about climate change with the specific actions of their collection development. As the effects of climate change have more significant impacts on our communities and information about the nature of climate change becomes more complex, libraries will become an even more important access point for people to freely acquire the information they need. We will examine several challenges that impede climate change conversation and engagement in our communities and society at large, and how these challenges relate to public libraries and their collections. Two case studies of Canadian public libraries will illustrate different scenarios of the public space and how climate change collection development was approached within it. To conclude, we will draw on current literature to propose a variety of suggestions and use examples as a guide for libraries navigating these challenges.

Background and Current Content Realities of Climate Change

The constant and consistent flow of warnings about the seriousness

of climate change is nothing new. A study begun in 1972 that follows the projections of a computer model predicting the effects of climate change on the world, estimated that if the current state of the world continues, there will be a "catastrophic population collapse in the middle of the 21st century" (Henk, 2014, p. 18). Efforts are constantly being made to instill a greater sense of our impending extinction, but despite the available research, the rate of change remains low. In 1988, the United Nations assembled the working group, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), whose experts are responsible for determining the scientific measures of climate change (2022-a). Their most recent report, published in February 2022, presents high-confidence estimates and projections of what is to be expected if measures aren't taken to prevent the current progression of climate change. According to the most recent report, the impacts and risks to our planet include unpredictable and rapidly changing weather patterns, severe effects on mortality of plant and animal species, threats to food production security, adverse health effects for populations in cities and even more severe impacts on Indigenous peoples through their close connection to the environment (IPCC, 2022-b). The summary reports can be read as quite overwhelming and bleak. Still, the important takeaway message is that these estimates are current estimates as determined by the effectiveness of our present adaptation and mitigation strategies and action plans; there is so much room for action and improvement.

Climate Change and Library Collections

Library collections are carefully curated by information professionals to provide well-rounded informative resources to the community. Climate change is a universal problem for us all to confront. The nature of climate change research is that this complex and multi-disciplinary topic is constantly being updated with new

findings and contributions to scholarly knowledge. Libraries play an integral role in balancing the often overtly academic literature that results from these studies by presenting their communities with materials that can be consumed by the general public of broad age ranges, educational backgrounds and social demographic categories. The training and job experience of public librarians places them perfectly in a position of encouraging reading and literacy, skills that can be easily applied to include a focus on supporting environmental literacy (Miller, 2010).

As for scholarly work regarding libraries, though there is work that has been published about green libraries and green collections, as of the present day there are currently no more sources being published about this topic than there were 30 years ago (Fedorowicz-Kruszewska, 2022). Publication about green libraries "is irregular and not of an exponential or linear nature" (Fedorowicz-Kruszewska, 2022, p. 916), which is concerning given the increasing anxiety surrounding climate change. Libraries need to conduct further research in order to understand ways they can adapt their library spaces and collections to facilitate conversations about climate change and there needs to be an increased effort in finding appropriate climate change title selections for collections. Due to climate change being a complex and ever-expanding topic, selection for materials is not as simple as choosing the most recently published titles. The community the library is serving needs to be considered, as well as the source of the materials, and consultations with organizations involved in environmental work would be of great value in creating title lists. In a WorldCat search conducted for a 2016 study by Hartman, it was found that 8, 871 newly released books were catalogued with "the subject terms 'climatic change' or 'global warming'"(p. 1). These numbers could be quite daunting when one is tasked with the job of updating a collection to include the most relevant resources on this topic which is why including climate change as a priority factor in a library's collection policy is necessary. The collection development process involves several stages, all of which have to be carefully

addressed when looking at climate change materials. Collections must also acknowledge the barriers that exist in getting people to engage with climate change in a sustainable way, some of the most difficult factors to overcome being climate change denial and the resulting climate change denial materials.

Challenges

There are multiple barriers to overcome in the fight against climate change, not all of which are changes to emissions outputs and general pollution. There is a mentality shift that needs to occur if there is any hope of saving the planet, and this shift begins with education, increased awareness, and active engagement which public libraries have the opportunity to promote. These initiatives, however, are difficult to accomplish when there are many, internal and external, challenges faced by libraries and their collections.

Climate Change Denial Materials

Despite signs of a collapsing planet everywhere we look, nearly a third of Canadians do not believe that climate change is caused by human or industrial activity (Zimonjic, 2018). In a time where acceptance of our reality is needed more than ever, this stubborn denial poses a challenge to libraries. Collectively, we encounter a major challenge in providing a comprehensive collection of climate change resources to the public when we look at the issues posed by the presence of climate change denial (CCD) materials in collections. On the one hand, if our libraries are to abide by the Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries of the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA) then they should aim to have well-balanced collections which supply information from both

sides of the climate change discussion and thus support the "access to the full range of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion" that all persons in Canada are promised (CFLA, 2019, para. 3). On the other hand, these materials can be harmful as they are often full of misrepresentative pseudo-scientific information on this topic. An important consideration in this conversation is that having a less formal education is one of the common factors in developing climate change scepticism (Mayer et al., 2022), which means libraries could become an educational halfway point between scepticism and acceptance. Libraries need to perform a thorough assessment of materials regarding climate change. If a source is denying climate change and it is being added to the collection to show both sides of the argument, it could be beneficial to include an insert in the resource that alerts a patron to the factual incorrectness of the resource.

In the 2013 Dunlap and Jacques study, a thorough assessment of 108 climate change denial books released up to 2010 identifies an important connection between conservative think tanks and CCD materials. The study notes that authors of CCD materials, despite often having a high media presence and many publications, rarely have their books vetted through the peer-review process, the study estimates claim 90% of CCD books do not follow the peer review process (Dunlap & Jacques, 2013). Peer review, while not a perfect process, is a critical component of academic scholarship as it allows experts of the shared discipline to weigh in with their informed opinions before publication occurs. If this step is omitted then the validity of the research content and its claims is made questionable.

The challenge posed by CCD is further complicated when we look at the concept of 'prior restraint'. In legal terms, it is defined as a "ban or restriction on speech or writing prior to its actual expression," and can therefore be perceived as an act of censorship on the part of any organization practising it ("Prior restraint", n.d., para. 11). Not including CCD materials in collections in the first place, even if it is done to practise 'social responsibility,' could then be read as an act of censorship. If libraries are to support the ideals

of intellectual freedom and accessibility, where is the line when it comes to CCD materials? Perhaps every individual library needs to decide for themselves which materials shouldn't be included in a collection and ideally, this process involves intense considerations of and input from the communities whom these collections are ultimately serving. Libraries must establish for themselves where they stand on this issue, what actions align best with their prioritised institutional values and ensure that their collection development policies clearly reflect that stance.

Eco-Anxiety and the Need for Environmental Literacy

On the other side of the scale from climate change denial, a topic that has arisen with growing urgency over the past decade is the concept of "eco-anxiety". There are various definitions for eco-anxiety, but in general terms, it is "anxiety about the ecological disasters and threats to the environment such as pollution and climate change" (Goldman, 2022, p. 18) or, more succinctly, having a persistent fear of environmental doom (Clayton et al., 2017 as cited in Hickman, 2020). There are many ways that eco-anxiety can manifest and affect how someone interacts with climate change, but the most common responses are either avoiding the subject, feeling frozen, depressed, and hopeless about the situation, or moving to action (Goldman, 2022). Libraries have the opportunity to be the bridge between difficult, data-heavy information and information that allows people to feel moved to action without frightening them into a state of passiveness. Being a facilitator for these conversations is also incredibly important when it comes to children and young adults because it is a common sentiment among these age groups that they do not know how to have those discussions and often they feel their concerns are belittled or dismissed by adults (Hickman, 2020). There can even sometimes

be a sense of anger in children and young adults that they are the "future victims" (Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, 2022, para. 23) as the ones left to contend with the state of the planet and must find solutions to the issues they did not create (Hickman, 2020). The challenge that rising eco-anxiety presents fortoday's generation of children and youth all the more highlights the necessity for libraries to actively facilitate conversations about climate change and to aid in the nurturing of environmental literacy skills.

Once you're able to successfully engage people with the topic of climate change, how do you know that they're understanding the information or putting it into practice? An area of collections that is equally as important as having materials that combat eco-anxiety is having materials that promote what many scholars have termed environmental literacy, green literacy, or climate change literacy (Aytac, 2022; Henk, 2014; Miller, 2010). Climate change literacy is the ability to "find, understand, and use information and services to make decisions about the environment" (Aytac, 2022, p. 2). As our world continues to change and eco-anxiety continues to rise it will be necessary for the public to interact with, understand complex environmental issues and evaluate the best ways to move forward and protect the planet (Miller, 2010). Having a collection that promotes climate change literacy encourages people to learn how to properly evaluate their sources to be active and productive members of society in combating climate change (Aytac, 2022). This is a significant undertaking for libraries, but "by embracing their role as an educator for the community, libraries can also play a part in transitioning their communities to more positive societal outcomes" (Antonelli, 2012, p. 242).

While promoting environmental literacy is a common recommendation made in the academic literature that discusses green practices in libraries, it is rare to come across a source that explains how this can be implemented in collections and which types of resources are best. Patricia Hartman's review of recently released climate change books of 2016, stands out in our literature search as the only source that identifies the challenges that this

poses for librarians not only due to the vast amounts of literature on the subject but the breadth of scope as well (Hartman, 2016). The review highlights that there is a need for annotated bibliographies that support librarians when sourcing climate change materials. Hartman's article was written in 2016, which at this point is slightly outdated. Conducting a casual online search was more likely to yield useful results from blog and book review websites; thus, collections librarians should be open to different methods of gathering resource titles, provided proper vetting practices are still in place until there are more academic efforts in this area. Our literature search was by no means exhaustive, but the lack of results is an indicator that libraries and collections have more work to do in making selections of curated and relevant titles. New climate change materials are being consistently published and updated at a rapid pace, librarians need to ensure that their collections are kept up to date as much as possible (Hartman, 2016). It is crucial for library collections to consistently re-engage with and re-evaluate climate change materials and resources for their validity and relevance.

Collection Practices and Operational Challenges

If libraries are going to advocate for the fight against climate change, or at least encourage awareness of this topic, then one area to consider is how their collections represent their commitment to sustainable practices. Materials that help create conversations about climate change are important, but other collection-related factors should also be considered such as paper type, green materials, collection waste, delivery and packaging methods, and online resource carbon footprints. A sustainable collection is about more than choosing more eco-friendly suppliers and methods of acquisition. Sustainability is "the notion that those currently living have an obligation to themselves and to future people to ensure

everyone has equal opportunities in life" (Henk, 2014, p. 15). When developing a collection that reflects a sustainability mindset, collection managers need to look beyond the green stamp approving something as good for the environment. Sales tactics such as the upselling of green products, or 'greenwashing', where vendors attempt to capitalize on the need for more environmentally friendly products, are popular methods among vendors that aren't necessarily sustainable so it is important to evaluate them carefully (Henk, 2014). When vendors come in, regardless of what they are selling, specific questions about sustainable practices should be asked, even for online resources. A librarian at the DePauw University Library in Indiana once asked a vendor what the carbon footprint of the vendor's servers would be should the library buy the collection of ebooks they were proposing and the vendor did not have an answer for them (Henk, 2014). Unsurprisingly, the librarian did not select this ebook collection. Difficult and uncomfortable questions need to be asked sometimes and creating collection policies that ask questions about the sustainability of a resource, whether physical or digital, is a good way to increase focus on environmental issues and lead by example.

Having the option to dedicate funds to more sustainable materials and practices, however, is not easy when "funding is under threat for libraries in communities of all sizes" (American Library Association, n.d., para. 1). It is interesting to note that even when funding is available for climate change collection upgrades and initiatives, libraries do not always choose to participate in this endeavour and the following case study is a prime example.

Halifax Public Library Case Study

In 2007, a report came out that outlined the projected effects of climate change on the coastal province of Nova Scotia. Because the reports predict higher sea levels, extreme and increased rainfalls,

and more frequent storms, the populations of Nova Scotia which reside primarily on the coastlines are all at an increased risk of the impacts of climate change (Government of Canada, 2007). Hurricane Fiona, which was the most expensive extreme weather event to affect the East Coast, is a prime example of these kinds of impacts and caused nearly 385 million dollars in damages (Canadian Press, 2022). Weather events such as Hurricane Fiona will most certainly occur again in the future and libraries are uniquely positioned to be informers on the subject. The Halifax Public Library (HPL) is ranked among the top 10 largest library systems in Canada with in-person visits sitting around 3,605,552 per year (Canadian Urban Libraries Council, 2019). These statistics were taken pre-pandemic from 2019, and although they may have changed post Covid-19, the fact remains that HPL is a well-used library system. The HPL system comprises 14 branches and their catalogue contains a fair number of sources about climate change. The HPL system has a total of 333 items in its catalogue that are connected to the keyword "climate change." This number includes 297 physical books, 30 eBooks, 25 DVDs, four large print books, one graphic novel, three audiobooks, two CDs, and one unknown resource. HPL also created a section on its website called "Climate Action" which can be used as a resource for finding web pages, blogs, and events that promote climate education (HPL, n.d.-b). There you can find curated and recommended lists of titles for further reading about environmental awareness and climate change. The information about how often books about climate change are assessed for their current relevance, or how often weeding occurs is not available, but upon looking at the published dates for the resources about climate change, the vast majority were published in the years since 2010 (HPL, n.d.-a). HPL has more climate change resources than many other major library systems in Canada, and yet even a library that is moderately engaged with the subject of climate change was not willing to go the distance when further possibilities were presented to them.

In 2019, a project was pitched to the Halifax Public Library by a

committee of four people who proposed a Climate Change Centre be built in the Halifax Central Library, the newest and largest library in the system, to house a climate change-specific collection. They imagined the centre as an easily located and accessible resource centre where patrons could find information about climate change, participate in activities, and ask a designated staff member any questions about the material (Gamberg et al., 2019). We were able to contact one of the people who proposed the Climate Change Centre to the Halifax Public Libraries Board and gain some insight into the details of the project. Initially, after a presentation to the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee in Halifax, although there was genuine interest and much discussion about the proposed Climate Change Centre, the point was made that although City Council makes decisions regarding budgetary allowance, the library is responsible for deciding how funds are allocated. With that in mind, the council voted not to pursue the matter further. It was suggested to the committee that they contact the CEO and Chief Librarian of HPL instead (R. Gamberg, personal communication, October 28, 2022). One of the Councillors offered his entire discretionary fund for the year if the proposal was accepted (R. Gamberg, personal communication, October 29, 2022). The committee contacted the Chief Librarian and a meeting was set with her and the Librarian in charge of programming. Early in the meeting, it was made clear that funding was not an issue (R. Gamberg, personal communication, October 29, 2022). The proposed total budget for building the centre, which is a small physical structure, and filling it with climate change resources, was $10,000 (all figures in CAD) which would be a first-year cost (Gamberg et al., 2019). The budget for running the centre year to year was projected to be around $130,000 (R. Gamberg et al., 2019). The total amount may seem large, but in comparison to the total annual budget of the Halifax Public Library which in 2020/2021 was $27,664,086 with $2,744,180 put towards library materials and $4,360,535 put towards special projects (HPL, 2021), it is not a wholly unrealistic number. And if the investment in the planet's future

is considered, plus the advantages of creating a well-informed community, it puts the funding into greater perspective. After pitching the idea to the Chief Librarian, several concerns were voiced including not wanting a physical structure to disrupt the flow of the library, and projects such as this needing more time to be realized and come about "organically" (R. Gamberg, personal communication, October 29, 2022). Ultimately, the centre was not actualized even when there was interest, funding, and drive to make it happen. It is fair to say that projects such as this are huge undertakings for a library and require a great deal of collaborative effort and funding, but if we cannot rely on our public institutions to make an increased effort of promoting environmental literacy and change, who can we rely on? Libraries must make difficult choices in the coming years about which side of the fight they want to be on and how performative their stance is.

Responses to the Challenges

Public libraries have to contend with a wide spectrum of challenges when it comes to the complex issue of climate change and the collection development of materials relating to it. We will offer suggestions and responses that address the outlined challenges above; all this with the goal to encourage and inspire public libraries and their staff to take a more active role in our collective fight against climate change. The following section will also present a case study of a Canadian public library that is actively demonstrating a commitment to educating its community about climate change with the creation of a specific physical and virtual collection that houses useful resources of various formats on this multifaceted topic.

Thunder Bay Public Library Case Study

The city of Thunder Bay attracted headlines in 2022 when two young people residing there made history by joining a lawsuit that protests the current Ontario government's target for reducing carbon emissions (Ecojustice, 2022). This lawsuit is the first of its kind to go to the Ontario Superior Court of Justice and the argument of the seven involved applicants is that the "government has endangered their right to life, liberty and security of the person under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms" (TBnewsWatch.com Staff, 2022, para. 3). Citizen action can be a powerful way to cause change. The suggestions of one patron, in particular, became a catalyst for an exciting new climate change collection initiative launched by the Thunder Bay Public Library (TBPL) on Earth Day, April 20, 2022. The patron pointed out that climate change materials were too spread out in their physical locations in the library system; thus, making them difficult to find for the interested browsing patron (A. Meady, personal communication, October 21, 2022). The collections staff followed up on these observations and identified climate change as a key issue for their community, one that was worthy of being pursued further by the library. This new initiative was given priority by the collections department and a survey was carried out of the existing collection of various formats; outdated titles were weeded out and content gaps were filled with significant titles in current research (A. Meady, personal communication, October 21, 2022). In our communication, Meady, the TBPL director of collections, highlighted that establishing successful collaborative community relationships with local environmental agencies was integral in promoting and advertising the new collection (October 21, 2022). Prioritising and developing the list of titles was done with input from the involved agencies to ensure the titles selected were the most essential for well-rounded coverage of the topic. Donations from groups such as the Thunder Bay Environmental Film Society

and strategic grant applications greatly offset the financial costs of this ambitious project (A. Meady, personal communication, October 21, 2022). To further attend to the needs of the browsing patron, in collaboration with the librarians, the collections staff developed Book Industry Standards and Communications (BISAC) category headings that were used to group materials into easy-to-navigate topics such as sustainable living, environmentalist biographies, weather, political aspects, animals, and energy (A. Meady, personal communication, October 21, 2022; TBnewsWatch.com Staff, 2022). TBPL also has materials about water stewardship in the Indigenous Knowledge Centres located within library branches; these were left in their locations and specifically created guides connect them to the overall climate change collection and thus encourage patrons to engage with other collections (TBnewsWatch.com Staff, 2022).

The climate change collection page on the Thunder Bay Public Library website is a further valuable resource that provides compiled online sources for further exploration, associated groups and agencies, and links to CloudLibrary, the online resource provider, which hosts eBooks and eAudiobooks (TBPL, n.d.-a). The two largest TBPL branches, Brodie and Waverley, were chosen to house the newly gathered collection. The centralization of resources benefits this collection of materials by increasing its visibility and foot traffic. The final climate change collection created boasts an impressive 308 items in the online catalogue; 271 of these materials are physically present at the two participating branches (TBPL, n.d.-b). Of these, 74% are printed materials, 25% are DVDs, and 1% is of the spoken record format (n.d.-b). While there is always room for improvement in the diversity of formats presented and there are currently no indications of large print materials, this collection is a promising and rare example of this kind of specialized use of public library resources in Canada. The TBPL collections director reflected that since this collection was unveiled in 2022 it is still an early initiative with more anticipated changes to be developed as the public continues to interact with and give

feedback on the featured materials (A. Meady, personal communication, October 21, 2022).

Eco-Anxiety Literature and Resources

So how do libraries begin difficult conversations about how to approach the educational opportunities of climate change collections and what can collection managers do to ensure the proper materials are available to aid those conversations? Libraries are perfectly situated within their communities to be places where dialogue about climate change is started and facilitated. Understanding and valuing the concept of eco-anxiety should be an important consideration when making selections for library collections. Title selection of resources on the mental health repercussions of eco-anxiety would be an incredibly useful addition to a well-rounded climate change collection. The World Health Organization acknowledges these impacts and urges having support for those experiencing mental health challenges, especially in communities already closely experiencing the effects of climate change (2022). Resources on this topic range across multiple disciplines, there are compilations of book lists that can be found on websites such as 'Climate & Mind' that present a foundational list of titles worth exploring (n.d.).

Some other ways to combat eco-anxiety through collection materials and improve engagement with the subject of climate change are having materials that focus on and encourage sustainability (Mathur, 2022). A collection should also have a curated mix of fiction and non-fiction titles that discuss climate change and take into account the different reading needs of a community. An overload of information in non-fiction texts may be too overwhelming for some users, whereas fiction can inform while still maintaining a distance from the user and how they view their life. The literary genre of 'climate fiction', or 'cli-fi', has the potential to

serve as a "proxy by which humanity can anticipate and imagine itself in disastrous futures" (Winn, 2020, p. 8). This form of escapism through fiction might even help some library patrons with mitigating feelings of eco-anxiety, navigating complicated feelings about climate change, and participating in conversations about future actions.

It is important to find "creative, playful, caring, kind and clear ways to have these conversations" (Hickman, 2020, p. 422), especially with children and young people (Hickman, 2020). An example of a playful attempt to engage children in the subject is the My Tree House library in Singapore which is a green library for children and is designed in the shape of a large tree. The tree is constructed almost entirely out of recycled materials and several features like touch screens allow children to interact with the tree (Li-Soh & Ni-Lo, 2013). The children's collection is comprised of 45,000 materials and 30% of those materials are related to the subject of climate change (Li-Soh & Ni-Lo, 2013). This library attempts to communicate with children about a difficult subject in an innovative and creative way. They are creating a safe and playful space for children to learn without overwhelming them. Experts across disciplines agree that establishing meaningful connections is critical when tackling the challenging conversation about climate change and its effects; it can be most effective when these connections are made about universal values of family and community (David Suzuki Foundation, n.d.). Rebekkah Smith Aldritch, a co-founder of the Sustainable Libraries Initiative, urges that there is a need, especially in these times after mass library closures due to the pandemic, for libraries to be active participants within their communities and to use its well-positioned location to reconnect community members (Library Land Project, 2021). The David Suzuki Foundation is internationally recognized as a leader in environmental conservation and protection research and education. The foundation has developed tools like the CliMate chatbot, integrated within Facebook Messenger, that when used with their 'Conversation Cycle Cheat Sheet' can be used as aids towards

facilitating effective conversations about climate change (David Suzuki Foundation, n.d.). Libraries have many resources at their disposal already that would enable them to promote these conversations and help manage eco-anxiety: physical spaces for workshops and community meetings, staff trained with effective interpersonal and information literacy skills, and collections of materials that can be curated thoughtfully. Climate change is a complex scientific topic that requires a great deal of specialized knowledge, but it is not an impossible phenomenon to understand, at least on a fundamental level. Libraries can curate collections to include specific tools that present information in a digestible way which will help patrons connect with the subject. They can also lead by example and make dedicated efforts as institutions to learn more about sustainable practices and put them into action.

Collections and Sustainability

There are many ways libraries can develop collections that practice the sustainability that they should preach. Libraries can ask their vendors to use environmental packaging when delivering materials, or purchase books which are printed on recycled paper (Miller, 2010). When collections need to be weeded, deselected materials can be recycled or repurposed by being sold to used-book companies who then resell them (Miller, 2010). Instead of throwing out electronic waste and materials that are more difficult to recycle such as lead, batteries, monitors, displays, and plastics, have a policy that incorporates proper disposal methods provided by the city (Miller, 2010). The development and integration of specific sustainability goals into the collection development policy can ensure that they are not missed and become a regular part of re-assessment practices at the individual libraries.

While all of these suggested changes to regular practices might seem overwhelming or like they would require a lot of financial

investments that libraries often don't have, it's important to look at the long-term advantages of adapting to more sustainable practices. This process would certainly require increased allocations of time and budget, but sustainability practices can often be less expensive and save libraries money in the long run. Research studies conducted on the development of green libraries have noted that library expenses can be diminished while also making a "considerable impact on the conservation of natural resources" (Gupta, 2020, p. 86). Climate change is a universal problem and if libraries are capable of implementing changes in their organizations that contribute to this fight, they should, in order to invest in the survival of future generations. What makes having collection cycle initiatives that model environmental awareness valuable is their educational impact (Dudley, 2013). Libraries need to make the most of their visibility in communities because their physical spaces and collections have the potential to be the sites that launch powerful community action.

Conclusion

While there are a few examples of libraries across Canada that are pushing for active engagement with climate change through their collections, there is still not enough scholarship being published on the subject and not enough initiatives that push for a climate change focus in collection development. We have presented two case studies of public libraries within Canada that demonstrate how the commitment to climate change resources in the collection and physical library spaces varies among different institutions. The Halifax Public Library stands as an example of a library that has tremendous potential to create a climate change resource centre that could be of significant community benefit, should the administration choose to support and push for it to happen. The Thunder Bay Public Library has demonstrated that through the

involvement of experts, community collaborations, application of grants, advocacy, and general creative thinking about library operations and policies, it is possible to become active members in encouraging public awareness in the fight against climate change. There are numerous challenges facing libraries when it comes to building a collection that is well-rounded and addresses all aspects of climate change literacy, engagement, activism, and mental health concerns like eco-anxiety. As the need for understanding and action becomes more dire, library policies and collection development strategies need to reflect those needs. Very little else matters if we continue to drive our ecosystems into the ground and threaten the stability of future generations. Libraries, their collections and collection practices need to look to the future because the opportunity remains to make meaningful and significant impacts on their communities through education, leadership, and environmental stewardship (Gupta, 2020).

Sources for Further Reading

Climate & Mind. (n.d.). *Books*. Retrieved October 27, 2022, from https://www.climateandmind.org/books

> This website provides access to a variety of books lists and materials that explore the social effects of climate change. The content here is explored from a multidisciplinary perspective with topics ranging from psychology, ecology, education and social work.

David Suzuki Foundation. (n.d.). *How and why to have climate change conversations.* https://davidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/how-and-why-to-have-climate-change-conversations/

> The David Suzuki Foundation is world-renowned for its work in climate research and education. This website provides many well-researched and accessible tutorials and guides that will be of assistance to anyone wanting to learn more about climate change, actionable ways to contribute to the fight against its effects, as well as ways to engage in educational efforts.

Dunlap, R. E., & Jacques, P. J. (2013). Climate change denial books and conservative think tanks: Exploring the connection. *American Behavioral Scientist, 57*(6), 699–731. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764213477096

> This was a unique article that researched and analysed 108 books on climate change denial published through 2010. It presents an interesting perspective that connects the publication of these materials to conservative think tanks and the potential reasons for this. This was helpful in realizing the amount of climate change denial literature that is published while failing to observe the peer-reviewed process in scholarly publishing and the possible misinformation consequences resulting from this.

Fedorowicz-Kruszewska, M. (2022). Green library as a subject of research – a quantitative and qualitative perspective. *Journal of Documentation, 78*(4), 912-932. https://doi.org/10.1108/ JD-08-2021-0156

> This study was particularly useful in understanding the production of academic research concerning green practices for libraries. Our assumption was that as climate change becomes a more prominent issue, the number of publications about how libraries can engage with the issue would increase, but the findings of this study did not support this theory. The study was beneficial in demonstrating a gap in the research and a lack of engagement from libraries which supported the idea that collections need to adapt.

Government of Canada. (2007). *From impacts to adaptation: Canada is a changing climate 2007.* https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/sites/www.nrcan.gc.ca/ files/earthsciences/pdf/assess/2007/pdf/ full-complet_e.pdf

> This website offers a wealth of online information and while we acknowledge that there are significant climate change resources available through it on the federal level, this is limited as it is only an online resource and currently does not allow physical public access to any of its six locations across Canada.

Gupta, S. (2020). Green library: A Strategic approach to environmental sustainability. *International Journal of Information Studies & Libraries*, 5(2), 82-92. http://publishingindia.com/ijisl/107/green-library-a-strategic-approach-to-environmental-sustainability/912/6289/

> In this article, Gupta analyses green libraries by focusing on four essential components: building design, green practices, collections issues, and technologies that can facilitate these changes. The article discusses green innovations implemented in libraries in India and also supplies useful research data from an analysis of several North American libraries which aids in constructing the larger picture of what kind of resource demands and financial advantages these changes can mean for the libraries adopting them.

Hartman, P. J. (2016). Keeping current with climate change resources: it's always the day after tomorrow! *Reference Reviews, 30*(1), 1-5. https://doi.org/10.1108/RR-05-2015-0128

> This was an excellent resource that provides an annotated bibliography of 22 recommended titles about climate change-related topics. Since it is published in 2016, we do note that this is slightly outdated but during our literature search we were unable to find any other sources that compared to this list and found that the recommendations would still be a useful resource to any library professional

looking to start on the task of creating or updating a climate change collection. The limitations of this article also help to identify a gap that exists in the literature of current similar resources.

Henk, M. (2014). *Ecology, economy, equity: The path to a carbon-neutral library.* ALA Editions.

Sustainability was a key component of this resource which was helpful in informing us of how collections need to approach the topic of climate change holistically. It's not enough to simply purchase climate change resources and put them on shelves, or purchase a product from vendors because they say it is eco-friendly. There are many other factors that need to be considered when developing a climate change collection like the materials used to make resources, where a resource comes from, and the size of its carbon footprint.

Hickman, C. (2020). We need to (find a way to) talk about ... Eco-anxiety. *Journal of Social Work Practice, 34*(4), 411–424. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650533.2020.1844166

This is a very enlightening article that explores the concept of eco-anxiety and particularly how it is experienced by young children and youth of today. It is informed by Hickman's experiences as a psychotherapist conducting climate psychology and eco-anxiety workshops. It highlights the need for conversations that need to be had with an

age demographic most at risk of having intense emotional reactions to the topics of climate change as well as the need for an emphasis on mental health resources.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2022). Sixth assessment report: Climate change 2022: Impacts, adaptation and vulnerability. https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/

This resource is very current and takes a look at a variety of multifaceted ways in which climate change affects all geographical areas. The 3068 page report is easily digestible through a break up into sections: FAQs, Fact Sheets by continent, Summaries for Policymakers and Technical Summaries that present the major findings.

Miller, K. (2010). *Public libraries going green.* American Library Association.

This book was one of the few found in the literature search that was specific to the subject of public libraries incorporating green practices into their institutions. The book covered three aspects of 'greening libraries': having a sustainable space, offering environmentally focused services, and improving environmental literacy in collections. The book is a brief overview of all these initiatives but it was a good starting point to engage with these subjects.

Portland Community College. (2022, October 26). *Climate change LibGuide.* https://guides.pcc.edu/climatechange

> This LibGuide is quite a thorough and current academic resource that features subcategories dealing with topics such as climate change basic information, actions and solutions, grief and anxiety, justice, and misinformation. This would be of high educational value for someone interested in exploring this topic as it presents a broad overview as well as some challenges involved in its discussions.

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10. Collection Development and Management of Research Data

DANDI WANG

Introduction

In 2011, Carpenter, Graybill, Offord, and Piorun projected the academic library's role in the scholarly community in 2025. The researchers believed that one of the primary roles of librarians includes "managing information for projects of all sizes, including bibliographic management, data creation and preservation, usage rights, and assisting with the distribution of finished works and raw data by promoting open access and local and national data repositories" (p. 66). With the development of high-performance computers, researchers nowadays can more easily collect, access, search, and analyze data than ever before, and librarians get more involved in research data management and preservation. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) also analyzed the trending topics in the academic library field between 2021 and 2022; the result implies that data has become one of the top trends that librarians and researchers have constantly discussed (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2022). The emergence of big data also resulted in the increasing number of available datasets researchers can use (Khan & Du, 2018). To foster the reuse of digital research data, many funders and peer-reviewed journals have started requesting researchers to provide research datasets with published articles. Though many research papers discussed the influence of research data management on librarians,

few researchers examined the impact of research data management on academic library collections, let alone the challenges in managing research data collections.

This chapter intends to explore the importance of research data collection inclusive, the relationship between research data management and collection management, discuss the challenges in research data management from the perspective of collection management, and find potential solutions.

Background and Current Content

The Shift in Collection Management

ACRL defines *collections* as materials "sufficient in quality, depth, diversity, format, and currency to support the research and teaching missions of the institution" (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2018, p. 9). In a study conducted by Levine-Clark (2019) in the *Journal of Collection Management*, it was noted that the evolution of library collections encompasses the notion that libraries will play a role in assisting their universities in generating and disseminating content. This content can include works by faculty or students, as well as materials that have been digitized from archival sources. As open access and institutional repositories have matured, academic libraries function as consumers of information and as creators and publishers (Genoni, 2004; Gwynn et al., 2019).

Dempsey (2017) defined this changing direction as the "inside-out library." In the past decades, libraries depended on publishers to gain access to licensed material to serve their patrons. Such a collection model is considered as "outside-in." On the other hand, the inside-out library model supports the creation, curation, and

dissemination of institutional creation, including open educational resources, research data, digital scholars, and other learning materials in the digital environment. As a result, supporting digital scholarship and research data management has become a growing interest and an important focus for academic libraries.

The Importance of Inclusion of Research Data in University Libraries Collection

Although librarians have started to see the importance of including data sets in the collection (Boté, 2019; Dempsey, 2017; Saponaro & Evans, 2019), no research seems to consider including research data as part of the collection management. Research data are "used as primary sources to support technical or scientific inquiry, research, scholarship, or creative practice, and that are used as evidence in the research process and/or are commonly accepted in the research community as necessary to validate research findings and results" (Government of Canada, 2021). Note that despite research data sharing many similarities with data sets that Boté (2019) and Saponaro and Evans (2019) described, there is a vast difference between the data sets discussed in these articles and research data. Data sets discussed in those papers are the existing data sets; some are subscriptions with vendors meaning most datasets have a well-developed metadata description created, while research data, on the other hand, are the self-deposit datasets relying on the collaboration work between researchers and librarians to provide metadata (Mannheimer et al., 2021).

Including research data in the library collection can benefit schools and researchers significantly. Firstly, it enhances the educational experience by providing students access to rich and diverse datasets, enabling them to engage in hands-on learning and develop critical data analysis skills. By incorporating research data into the library collection, schools can offer a broader range

of resources for students and faculty to explore, fostering a more comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to research and learning.

Many funding agencies and publishers have started to require researchers to publish their research datasets openly along with the paper (Government of Canada, 2021; Scientific Data, n.d.; Elsevier, n.d.). Thus, developing institutional research data collection would also promote collaboration and knowledge sharing among researchers working on related topics, as they can access and analyze existing datasets, thereby building upon previous work and accelerating the research process. By making research datasets openly accessible, researchers can also discover new insights and generate innovative research questions by exploring and reusing datasets that might have been collected for different purposes initially. Additionally, the inclusion of research data in the library collection supports the principles of transparency and reproducibility in research, enabling others to verify and replicate findings, which ultimately strengthens the credibility and impact of scholarly work.

Moreover, the library's management of research data ensures its long-term preservation and accessibility. By curating and preserving research datasets, libraries preserve knowledge and enable future researchers to build upon previous research. This preservation effort also mitigates the risk of data loss or deterioration over time, ensuring that valuable research data remains available for future generations. Overall, integrating research data into the library strengthens the academic community by fostering knowledge sharing, innovation, and the advancement of research.

Challenges in Research Data Collection Management

In the realm of library collections, research data collection management introduces its challenges, necessitating focused strategies separate from those employed in traditional collection management. The most common challenges researchers mentioned are as follows: insufficient budget and staff, equity of access, and intellectual freedom (Gregory, 2019; Horava, 2010; Saponaro & Evans, 2019). Filson (2017) found that academic libraries often faced funding issues in collection management activities. Empirical research conducted by Hamad et al. (2021) substantiated the assertion that inadequate library budgets emerge as the foremost challenge academic libraries encounter when it comes to managing research data collections. The study highlights the urgent need for improved financial support to facilitate effective collection management practices.

However, the primary challenge in the collection development, and management of research data lies in the effective preparation of research data for long-term usability. This involves addressing various challenges across different categories. One significant category is the lack of institutional research data management policies and strategies, which can hinder the establishment of robust governance frameworks and standardized practices for data management. Additionally, the complexity of research data poses challenges, including issues related to data integration, quality assurance, and the need for specialized tools and expertise. Finally, there may be insufficient support for research data management, such as limited resources, training opportunities, and collaboration platforms, which can impede effective data stewardship.

By recognizing and addressing these challenges, librarians and institutions can enhance their ability to manage research data collections effectively and facilitate the accessibility and usability of valuable research data for current and future academic endeavors.

Lacking Institutional Research Data Management Strategy

An institutional research data management (RDM) strategy serves as a crucial policy for collection management, offering guidance and support to facilitate research activities, especially in the data collection and preservation stage. The three major funding agencies, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), also known as the Tri-Agency, formed the RDM policy in 2021 and stated the benefits of implementing an institutional RDM strategy. For instance, it enables the research community to understand better an institution's RDM capacity, challenges, and needs, fostering collaboration among different institutions and advancing RDM practices across Canada (Government of Canada, 2021). An institutional RDM strategy provides guidance and support for the secure preservation, curation, and accessibility of research data through repositories. Establishing storage and preservation standards assists disciplinary communities within institutions in maintaining consistent practices. Furthermore, it supports researchers in adhering to ethical, legal, and commercial obligations related to data management.

However, despite the requirement set by the Tri-Agency's research data management policy for Canadian institutions to establish a proper institutional RDM strategy by March 2023 (Government of Canada, 2021), many institutions still face challenges in developing an official strategic plan to support RDM. Cox et al. (2019) surveyed libraries worldwide to examine the development of library research data services. Their findings revealed that in 2018 no Canadian institutions had formulated a policy, with only 29% planning to do so in the following year, while 29% had no plans to develop an RDM policy. The small universities

and colleges still struggled to form their own strategy due to a lack of knowledge on RDM and a limited number of librarians working on it (Concordia University of Edmonton, 2023).

The need for institutions to establish an institutional strategy has become pressing and time-sensitive.

The Complexity of Research Data

Research data presents a complex and diverse landscape encompassing various formats, sources, and disciplinary perspectives. Ohaji et al. (2019) highlight the complexity of research data stemming from non-standard data types and varying formats across different fields. Humanities researchers, for example, rely on interview data, whereas medical researchers analyze blood samples. Different data types and formats may lead to the difference in data size. This diversity presents a unique challenge compared to traditional collection management, which deals with more consistent formats such as books, newspapers, DVDs, and journals. Consequently, storing, describing, and accessing research data collections require tailored solutions that account for the specific characteristics of the data.

Furthermore, the sensitivity of the data must be carefully considered when developing research data collections. While researchers must adhere to ethical regulations established by research ethics boards to protect participant privacy and obtain informed consent, technological advancements have introduced new complexities (Government of Canada, 2019). The ease of accessing, storing, and analyzing large volumes of data increases the potential for re-identification of individuals based on their unique characteristics.

Insufficient Technology Support for Depositing

Research Data

Just like bookshelves hold print collections, libraries need to have data repositories to preserve research data collection. As part of the research funding policy, the Tri-Agency requires researchers who plan to receive grants to deposit research data, metadata, and code that support research conclusions into a digital repository once the institutional RDM strategy phase has finished (Government of Canada, 2021).

In a study conducted by Xu et al. (2022), which involved seven first-time users of a data repository, participants reported overall satisfaction with the usability of the repository. However, they encountered challenges that required assistance navigating the repository structure, understanding terminology specific to the repository, and effectively creating metadata. Specifically, participants expressed difficulties in comprehending technology-related jargon, hindering their ability to create accurate and meaningful metadata. These findings underscore the crucial need for guidance in selecting suitable repositories and providing comprehensive support to researchers throughout the metadata creation process to ensure the optimal discoverability and reuse of research datasets.

Librarians, equipped with their expertise in library skills, can play a significant role in assisting researchers in metadata creation. By leveraging their knowledge and understanding of metadata standards and best practices, librarians can provide valuable guidance to researchers in creating high-quality metadata that adheres to established conventions (Gwynn et al., 2019). However, it should be noted that challenges and ambiguities in metadata creation have been identified in the context of database repository setup, as highlighted by the research conducted by Mannheimer et al. (2021).

Given the diverse nature of research data, developing standardized metadata descriptions can be time-consuming and

complex. However, the investment in standardized metadata is crucial for enhancing the discoverability and reusability of research datasets. Librarians, in collaboration with researchers and other stakeholders, must explore practical solutions to streamline and support the metadata creation process, ensuring the quality and usability of research datasets in an increasingly data-driven scholarly landscape.

Insufficient Trained Support Staff on Providing Research Data Service

In a survey analyzing the institution's research data service and workforce development, Tenopir et al. (2015) found that over half of the participants indicated the reassignment of existing library staff to provide research data services. This shift resulted in subject specialists transitioning from traditional responsibilities, such as evaluating and selecting collections, to new roles in liaison work, learning commons, digital repositories, and data services (Day & Novak, 2019; Kranich et al., 2020; Ohaji et al., 2019). In addition to these changes, Ohaji et al. (2019) reported that nearly 70% of research institutions preferred subject librarians or liaison librarians to offer research data management support. However, librarians in these roles often need more time and knowledge of data literacy, curation, and management.

Furthermore, while librarians often provide reference assistance in searching library databases and using resources effectively, there is a lack of specific guidance on accessing, utilizing, and citing open-access datasets. Research papers fail to address this important aspect of librarians' extended role in academic resource collections. By addressing these challenges, librarians can enhance their support in accessing, using, and citing such datasets, thereby enriching the extended collection of academic resources.

Responses

Although academic libraries face numerous challenges in developing and managing research data, the proposed solutions discussed below provide avenues for addressing these challenges and enhancing the effectiveness of research data collection within libraries.

To effectively address research data collection and management challenges, libraries must collaborate with various institutional stakeholders (Boté, 2019). By engaging with stakeholders, such as faculty members, institutional research offices, and IT departments, libraries can establish a comprehensive institutional research data management strategy that aligns with the institution's research and learning objectives. This strategy will reflect the institutional value placed on research and provide clear guidelines on crucial aspects like data curation, long-term preservation, and library support services (Boté, 2019). For instance, sub-strategy plans like a digital preservation strategy can be developed to assist researchers in adhering to research data deposit guidelines, ensuring the accessibility and longevity of valuable research datasets.

Collaborating with various institutional stakeholders offers significant advantages for libraries in creating an institutional research data management strategy. By working closely with faculty members involved in research projects, libraries gain valuable insights into the production of research output, particularly research data. This understanding becomes instrumental in developing and managing accurate metadata descriptions for research datasets (Day & Novak, 2019; Ohaji et al., 2019). Furthermore, close collaboration with the institutional research office is crucial for libraries to stay informed about the ever-changing funding and publishing requirements in research data management, empowering librarians to provide researchers with up-to-date policies and valuable suggestions that align with the evolving landscape (Tenopir et al., 2015).

The institutional information technology department is another stakeholder with which libraries should collaborate closely (Cox & Pinfield, 2014; Tenopir et al., 2015). To ensure the accessibility and reusability of the research data, IT provides support and maintenance on the instinctual repository so research datasets can be accessed and potentially reused. Libraries can gain information from the IT department and provide guidelines about depositing sensitive research data (Boté, 2019). Such collaborations foster a comprehensive strategy that ensures the library's research data management support is in tune with the needs and expectations of the academic community.

National-wide collaboration would be another asset for the development of institutional RDM strategy. For instance, ARMIN (Alberta Research-Data Management Information Network) supports smaller Canadian universities and colleges in developing their institutional strategies for RDM by providing workshops, seminars, and discussions (Concordia University of Edmonton, n.d.). Moreover, the Digital Research Alliance of Canada facilitates knowledge exchange between researchers, librarians, and universities. It contributes to developing national or sector-specific policies and guidelines that align with Canadian institutions' unique needs and priorities.

With the rapid technological advancements, supporting researchers' evolving data demands has become an ongoing challenge. In order to effectively meet these demands, librarians must actively engage with emerging technologies and stay abreast of the latest trends. By keeping pace with this dynamic landscape, librarians can better understand and address researchers' evolving needs. Researchers have identified several core competencies essential for librarians to enhance their support for the research community. Semeler and Pinto (2020) have identified four crucial skill sets for supporting research data. Firstly, interpersonal and behavioral characteristics, including strong oral and written communication skills, enable librarians to comprehend researchers' data requests and develop case studies to facilitate effective

research data management strategies. Ohaji et al. (2019) also emphasize the significance of interpersonal and communication skills in delivering exceptional customer service to researchers. Another vital skill set for librarians is contextual knowledge about the institutional environment. Librarians should be well-versed in funding policies supporting scientific research and understand ethical procedures, disciplinary research methods, scientific communication, intellectual property, access methods, and copyrights (Semeler & Pinto, 2020). This comprehensive knowledge equips librarians with the necessary foundation to navigate the complex landscape of research data management.

Two additional critical skill sets and areas of knowledge pertain to data and technology. According to Ohaji et al. (2019), a comprehensive understanding of data is essential for librarians. This includes knowledge of the research data life cycle, data literacy, business analysis, and metadata. Semeler and Pinto (2020) provide a more detailed description, emphasizing the importance of librarians understanding different data types, metadata, and the significance of questions related to unique identifiers and the preservation of digital data. Furthermore, librarians must possess a solid foundation in technology and its relevant tools. Ohaji et al. (2019) argue that librarians should have basic knowledge of technology, especially in areas such as big data, programming languages, database design, and natural language processing tools. Acquiring these skills enables librarians to engage effectively with the ever-changing technological landscape, as highlighted by Semeler and Pinto (2020). In addition to these four skill sets, Ohaji et al. (2019) also stress the importance of librarians' familiarity with research practices. This includes understanding the research cycle and e-research, enabling librarians to align their support with the specific needs of the research community. By developing expertise in data management, technology, and research practices, librarians can play a pivotal role in supporting researchers and ensuring the effective management and utilization of research data.

Two broad training options for librarians are personal and

organizational (Ohaji et al., 2019). Librarians can greatly benefit from collaborating with experienced professionals, such as fellow librarians or other experts, to gain insights into research data management practices. Engaging in meaningful conversations with researchers about their data usage, management techniques, and the tools they employ for data collection and analysis can significantly enhance librarians' skill sets and knowledge. These personal opportunities serve as invaluable avenues for librarians to develop their expertise. Moreover, organizations and institutions are crucial in providing librarians with training opportunities; they should offer formal training programs specifically designed to address research data management needs within universities. Additionally, professional development opportunities focused on research data management should be made available to librarians. These can include workshops, seminars, and courses that equip librarians with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively support researchers in managing their data. Institutions should also consider sponsoring librarians to attend conferences and workshops dedicated to research data management, allowing them to stay updated on the latest advancements and best practices in the field.

In conclusion, the solutions presented not only empower librarians to build comprehensive research data collections but also ensure the utilization of research data for future academic endeavors. By implementing these solutions, academic libraries can play a vital role in supporting research and fostering data-driven scholarship.

Conclusion

The evolving research and learning landscape necessitates changes in academic library collections and management. When addressing research data management (RDM), libraries should view it not

merely as a new service but as an extension of collection management in the digital age to preserve the core value of collection management. Establishing a research data collection presents numerous challenges, but collaborating with all stakeholders in collection management allows libraries to develop a strategy aligned with the institution's vision, mission, and policies, enhancing the library's ability to serve the research community effectively. Simultaneously, as information professionals, librarians must proactively acquire data literacy skills to actively engage in the research life cycle, comprehend the needs of researchers, and provide optimal research support, thereby satisfying the requirements of library patrons.

Sources for Further Reading

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The Tri-Agency RDM policy is the theoretical foundation for the development of institutional research data management strategy. Data librarians and research data management librarians could use this as guidance to 1) provide correct and updated research data management information to researchers; 2) collaborate with other stakeholders around

the institution to provide better dataset collection management services.

Cooper, A., Steelworthy, M., Paquette-Bigras, È., Clary, E., MacPherson, E., Gillis, L., WIslons, L., & Broduer, J. (2021). *Dataverse Curation Guide*. Zenodo. https://zenodo.org/record/5579820#.Y2DdP3bMJD8

Dataverse Curation Guide gives step-by-step instructions for researchers and data scientists on how to deposit datasets into Dataverse. In Canada, Datavers works with many institutions to provide institutional repository services. The guidance also explains the differences between dataset and dataset collection in Dataverse.

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Previously called Portage, the Digital Research Alliance of Canada is the leading organization to provide support and consultations to Canadian researchers on topics related to advanced research computing (ARC), research data management (RDM), and research software (RS). Digital Research Alliance of Canada also provides a digital tool of data management template to researchers with best practice guidelines.

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