

Developing Library and Information Center Collections

Fourth Edition



G. Edward Evans

with the assistance of Margaret R. Zarnosky

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Fourth Edition

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Preface to the First Edition

Collection development is an exciting and challenging area in which to work, and selecting the right materials for the library's community is as intellectually demanding an activity as a librarian will encounter. The selection of library materials is a highly personal process—something that takes a lifetime to learn—and the rewards are great. This book can serve as the starting point in that learning process. Any textbook that attempts to cover all aspects of collection development must give coverage to many topics. This text provides practical information on materials producers and distributors, community survey techniques, policies, materials selection, acquisition, weeding, and evaluation in order to minimize the variables involved in the selection process. Beyond the physical processes of collection development, though, are issues with which a selector should be concerned, as they influence how the collection will and can be developed. Thus, *Developing Library Collections* also delves into library cooperation, copyright (reflecting the changed statutes), and censorship as they affect the process in its entirety.

An author of a collection development textbook should acknowledge that, to a very great degree, the emphasis given each topic is based on a subjective assessment of its importance, reflecting the values and judgments of that author. Certainly, anyone with practical experience in this area knows that selection and collection development are arts, not sciences; and, as with any artistic endeavor, a person wishing to practice the art must devote years to developing the necessary skills. The basic elements of the collection development process—determining what information resources are needed, identifying the appropriate items, acquiring the items, and evaluating the collection—are rather well agreed upon. What is open to debate is how much emphasis to place upon individual steps in the process, and the interrelationship of all the elements.

A person cannot learn selection and collection development only in the classroom. A student will be able to learn the basic elements from this book; whether the student accepts the emphasis placed upon the elements is another matter. With the concepts presented in this book as a base, and using the recommended further readings, however, the student should begin to develop a solidly based, personal approach to selection and collection development.

The purpose of this book is to help library students gain an overall understanding of what is involved in building a collection for a library. Within rather broad limits, one may say that all libraries share certain general characteristics, including the need to assemble a collection of books and other library materials needed by their patrons. This book was written with the intent of emphasizing the similarities between types of libraries in the process of developing a collection.

Unlike any other book on collection development or book selection, *Developing Library Collections* provides an integrated approach to the process of building a library collection for a specific community of users—integrated in the sense that each element in the process is treated as flowing from one to another, and when something occurs in one element, it will have an impact on the others. Thus, as each element is discussed in detail, its relationship with the others will be examined as well, the underlying emphasis always being on the ultimate goal of the process—serving the library's community. To some degree, every chapter in this book has some application to any library. However, some aspects of collection development have more application, or at least are more widely used, in one type of library than another. For example, community analysis has been most widely used in public libraries, and as a result, chapter 4 tends to emphasize community analysis in the public library. Chapters 14 and 15, on weeding and evaluating the collection, deal with issues most pertinent to academic libraries, and this emphasis is reflected in the citations. Nevertheless, every chapter provides information relevant to all types of libraries.

In one sense, this is a jointly authored work. Any librarian who has written or talked about this subject has probably influenced my thinking to some degree. The further readings at the ends of the chapters reflect some of the works that have directly affected my point of view; they are but a fraction of the total waiting to be read. These writings will serve as an excellent starting point for further reading, which will need to continue as long as a librarian is involved in collection development work.

Preface to the Second Edition

The slight change in the title of this book is a reflection of a shift in emphasis from the book and other "information packages" to the information contained in the package. Selection work has always been concerned with the contents of items being considered for a collection. What has happened over the past 15 years is that society has become aware of and concerned about the "values" of information. New systems, often computer based, offer alternative means of providing information for patrons or clients. It appears likely this trend will continue for some time.

In the first edition the first chapter was concerned with definitions and concepts, and so is the first chapter in this edition. However, more emphasis is placed on concepts of information and information transfer. It is virtually a new chapter. Most of the chapters from the first edition have been extensively revised and updated, and additions have been made. The former chapter on selection is now divided into two chapters, on theory and practice. New chapters dealing with serials, government documents, fiscal management, automation, and preservation have been added.

Suggestions for further reading are included in each chapter. Items listed were selected on the basis of ease of availability and currency. (Also, all the items mentioned in a chapter are included regardless of date of publication.) An effort has been made to provide a few references for academic, public, school, and special libraries and information centers in each chapter.

I wish to thank all the individuals who read one or more chapters of this edition and provided many helpful suggestions: Herbert Achlietner, Peter Briscoe, Alan Ericson, William Fisher, Dale Flecker, Doris Frietag, Irene Godden, William McGrath, Assunta Pisanti, Benedict Rugaas, Joel Rutstein, and Sally Williams. Naturally they are not responsible for any of the book's shortcomings. Finally, I want to thank Morris Fry for his copyediting work, Julie Wetherill for the many hours of typing, and Nancy Lambert-Brown for the figures and charts she prepared.

Preface to the Third Edition

This edition reflects the changes that collection management has undergone during the past eight years. There is a new chapter on electronic formats. The additions, deletions, and changes in the presentation grew out of the ideas, suggestions, and comments from a number of people. I started by obtaining input from teachers who used the second edition. Their comments were especially useful. The individuals who took the time to respond in depth and with invaluable input were Robert Broadus, Donald Davis, William Fisher, Elizabeth Futas, Sheila Intner, Bill Katz, Betty Morris, Ronald Powell, James Rice, Judith Serebnick, Phyllis Van Orden, and Adeline Wood Wilkes. I also was fortunate enough to have six people from different types of library environments read the entire manuscript and comment on the material. These readers, who spent long hours reading more than 700 manuscript pages, deserve more thanks than is possible to give in writing. They were Donald Davis (University of Texas, academic libraries and teacher), Bill Fisher (San Jose State University, special libraries and teacher), David Loertscher (Libraries Unlimited, school library media centers), Nancy Pruett (Sandia National Laboratories, special libraries), Brian Reynolds (San Luis Obispo County Library, public libraries), and Margaret Zarnosky (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, academic libraries). Margaret deserves an extra special thank you for her editing efforts, as well as her insightful content comments. Staff members from the Loyola Marymount Library also read many of the chapters. They were Marcia Findley (Assistant University Librarian for Collection Development), Janet Lai (Head of Acquisitions and Serials Department), Paula Nielson (Assistant University Librarian for Systems), and Sachi Yagyū (Database Services and Document Delivery). They deserve special recognition for having the courage to read the director's manuscript and make honest comments. Finally, to the others who read one or more chapters, a special thank you: Dr. Elizabeth Eaton (Director, Health Sciences Library, Tufts University), whose suggestions were of immense help in preparing the electronics chapter; Dr. John Richardson (UCLA's library school), who commented on the government information chapter; and Peter Bodell (Director, Information Services, Loyola Marymount University), who provided a computer center perspective.

All the readers' comments greatly improved the manuscript. However, they are not responsible for errors in content. I hope this edition will prove as useful to students and others as did the second edition.

Preface to the Fourth Edition

Less than six years have passed since the issuance of the third edition. When the call came suggesting that it was time to start work on a new edition, it seemed much too soon. However, after reviewing what might require updating and thinking about new sections, it became clear that it was indeed time to get to work.

Electronic issues now pervade collection development and management activities. The underlying basics remain, but the whats and hows are changing rather quickly. As a result, this is a somewhat longer edition, and almost every chapter contains something about electronic resources, reflecting the changing environment of collection management.

As with the prior editions, I asked for user feedback to help plan the contents of the new edition. To that end, 61 instructors who used the third edition received a questionnaire/survey form. That form listed sections where I thought additions would be appropriate, as well as suggestions for dropping sections to keep the book to a reasonable length. Forty-seven individuals took the time to reply; some even included their students in the process. To all those who took the time to respond, my very sincere thanks. This edition does in fact reflect your feedback.

One of the surprises in the responses was a rather consistent reluctance to have material dropped. This posed a problem in terms of the overall length of the projected new edition. The final solution was to drop sections that 40 percent of the respondents agreed could be eliminated. Nevertheless, the final manuscript was longer than first envisioned, so much longer that major cuts became necessary in order to keep the final book to a reasonable length.

One of the biggest departures from previous editions of this text occurred as a result of all the additions. For the first time, materials from the text are now available via the Internet. Specifically, the contents of what was Chapter 4 in earlier editions (Selection Process: Theory), and the two Appendices—"Book and Electronic Collection Policies" and the International Coalition of Library Consortia (ICOLC) "Statement of Current Perspective and Preferred Practices for the Selection and Purchase of Electronic Information," are available from two web sites <<http://lib.lmu.edu/dlc4>> and <<http://www.lu.com>>. In addition, there are some examples of needs assessment forms on the web sites. We regret that space considerations prevented

us from including this material in the main body of the text, but encourage you to refer to this material in your studies.

Most of the individuals who devoted some hours to reading one or more chapters for the third edition once again contributed time, thought, and critical comment for material in this edition (see the "Preface to the Third Edition"). To that list I must add: Professor F. Jay Dougherty (Loyola Law School), who provided very valuable advice about copyright material, especially on the Digital Millennium Copyright Act; Mr. Evan A. Reader (Director, CSU-Software and Electronic Information Resources, Office of the Chancellor, California State University System); Mr. Lynn F. Sipe (Associate Director for Collections, University of Southern California and 1999 Chair of the American Library Association, Association for Library Collections and Technical Services' Collection Management Section), who read many of the chapters and also provided ideas for various other chapters; and Ms. Ann Williams (American Health Care Association), who provided a special library perspective.

I also wish to thank those who provided policies for Appendix One: David R. Bender (Executive Director, Special Libraries Association); Mary Lou Calvin (Director of Library Services, Warner, Norcross & Judd); Marcia Findley (Loyola Marymount University); Paul Metz (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University); John Stemmer (Xavier University); Phyllis Young (Collections Development Coordinator, Los Angeles County Library System); and Ann Williams (Director, Information Resource Center, American Health Care Association).

Lastly, as one can see from the title page, I decided that it was time to bring in another person to assist in the preparation of this and future editions. Margaret Zarnosky is serving as a "junior" author on this edition, after having provided excellent comments and ideas for the last edition.

G. Edward Evans
Los Angeles, California
May 1999

This volume has provided me with a unique opportunity, and I have very much enjoyed assisting in its preparation. Beyond those individuals mentioned above, who deserve thanks for their assistance, I also wish to acknowledge several individuals for their efforts on behalf of this project. In particular, Annemarie Anderson and Sylvia Rortvedt (Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria Campus) both deserve special thanks. Annemarie provided a critical "library student's perspective" of the work in progress, including the newly added tables in chapter 4. Sylvia, as Collection Development Officer, was always available to provide insight and suggestions for the text, as well as needed research support. Finally, a very special thank-you to my parents for their love and support.

Margaret R. Zarnosky
Alexandria, Virginia
May 1999