

Book Review

Michael Fernandez, editor

Making a Collection Count: A Holistic Approach to Library Collection Management, Third Edition. By Holly Hibner and Mary Kelly. Cambridge, MA: Chandos, 2023. 162 p. \$79.95 softcover (ISBN 978-0-4431-5365-5).

In the third edition of *Making a Collection Count*, Holly Hibner and Mary Kelly continue to provide valuable information for the new professional. There are nine chapters. Some chapters differ little from the previous edition, while other chapters have been significantly updated and a new chapter has been added. The chapters are “Collection Statements and Policies,” “Life Cycle of a Collection,” “Collection Metrics,” “Physical Inventory,” “Statistics,” “Weeding,” “Collection Organization,” “Collection Budgets,” and “Everything is Connected.” Each chapter has an updated bibliography at the end. Two collection management policies are included as appendices: one for a public library and one for an academic library.

In the first chapter, the authors have revised and expanded the collection objectives and benchmarks section presented in the earlier edition. Vision, mission, and value statements are defined, and the authors discuss how those affect the collection development policy, philosophy, objectives, and benchmarks. Examples are drawn from public, academic, and school libraries. Ideas on what to include in the collection development policy are presented and the chapter introduces a new section focusing on diversity, equity, inclusion, and intellectual freedom. A key take-away from this chapter is that collection management policies must be reviewed and updated regularly as major events, such as COVID-19, may shift the focus of the collection and services.

The life cycle of the collection is described in the second chapter and remains largely unchanged from the previous edition. In the author’s own words, the life cycle “in fact has been put to the test in a changing world, reminding us of the human factor in delivering a collection that serves a library’s mission” (xv). The life cycle starts with selection of materials, and proceeds through acquisition, processing and cataloging, shelving, use, reshelving, repair and maintenance, and finally, weeding and replacement. The authors describe what happens and who is involved at each stage in the life cycle. Due to the wide range of issues involved in weeding and replacement, the authors dedicated a whole chapter to this stage later in the book.

The third, fourth, and fifth chapters discuss data collection and how to use that data in informed decision making. The third chapter is about collection metrics. The authors describe the information obtained from the integrated library system and utilizing data other than checkouts. They continue with a discussion about electronic usage and performing a diversity audit. Caution is advised on how exactly to define circulation of an item when using it as a metric. Chapter 4 deals with the physical inventory of the collection, explaining why and how to perform such an inventory. Chapter 5 deals with taking those metrics and generating statistics from the data. The authors issue warnings about utilizing only one metric or statistic and suggest a balanced approach, looking at many different metrics, and being aware of how to accurately utilize and report statistics.

As already mentioned, the authors chose to dedicate an entire chapter to the weeding and replacement stage in the life cycle of a collection. The authors stated that they did not intend for this to be a handbook for weeding but wanted to provide some basics (xviii). While emphasizing the importance of weeding, they discuss weeding philosophy, weeding personalities, and excuses for not weeding. Guidance is provided on when to weed, developing weeding criteria, and planning to dispose of the weeded materials.

Chapter 7 deals with physical space and how the library is organized. The authors give guidance on providing space for library users and collections. Things to consider when planning spaces are different formats, classification systems, use of space by the user, ergonomics, signage, and displays. Physical space should be planned so that users can find what they need quickly and easily.

The next chapter describes the collection budget and is significantly revised from the previous edition. The authors discuss how libraries are funded, how libraries allocate funds for resources, and accounting practices. Alternative funding sources such as grants, fundraisers, and endowments are presented. The authors emphasize the importance of budget transparency to staff, users, and all stakeholders.

The last chapter is largely unchanged from the previous edition. It discusses how staff, collections, the facility, and technology impact each other and the overall quality of the collection in holistic library services. Beyond these four components of library services, the authors present other connections that make a holistic library, such as library programming, budgets, and evaluations.

This updated edition continues to give good, practical advice to those new to collection development and management. While the authors are both public librarians, in this edition they also draw examples from academic and school libraries, showing that the principles set forth in this book can be applied to any library.—*Leah McAlister (lrmcalister@semo.edu), Southeast Missouri State University, Cape Girardeau, Missouri*