

From the Guest Editor



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In many ways, library work related to collections looks significantly different today than it did even in the very recent past. Whether it's responding to record-high levels of book challenges (American Library Association, n.d.), considering the impact of AI on publishing and the ethical implications thereof, or making collections decisions against a backdrop of rapidly evolving information needs, library workers have been presented with a number of new challenges in their efforts to connect the communities they serve with resources that inform, entertain, and inspire.

In spite of these developments, there are some areas of concern related to collections that remain evergreen. These include making impactful use of limited resources, working to provide equitable access to communities that have been historically underserved, and staying up to date on trends in the publishing industry and in the broader field of librarianship.

The theme of this issue of the *OLA Quarterly*, "Collections: New Challenges, New Solutions," was chosen to reflect the tension between an ever-changing library landscape and the ongoing obstacles that continue to affect the ways in which library collections are built, managed, and marketed.

As a Collection Development Librarian at Deschutes Public Library (DPL), I have had the opportunity to observe firsthand how, even as new approaches to collection management are applied, new concerns arise. In recent years, DPL has developed and implemented a word-based system of classification that we call "Wayfinder." The motivation behind this change was to make the library's collection more navigable for a public that may not be familiar with the Dewey Decimal System, and to address racial- and gender-based biases that are intrinsically part of a system that was first published nearly 150 years ago (Joseph, 2021). As is to be expected, there have been both positive and negative impacts of this change. Overall circulation of library materials at DPL has increased since the implementation of Wayfinder, which suggests that the library's customers are more easily able to find materials of interest. However, inconsistencies in initial cataloging, differences between anticipated and actual category sizes, and the work of

helping customers adjust to a new system of classification have all proven to be barriers that have required time and attention from the DPL team.

The articles in this issue of the *OLA Quarterly* highlight some of the innovative and impactful solutions that have been developed by library workers across the state in response to perpetual areas of concern: managing limited resources, serving underserved communities, and keeping informed on relevant topics.

- Holly Gabriel, Emily Miller-Francisco, and Jasmine Waters from the Southern Oregon University Hannon Library reflect on efforts to combat the rising costs of education by exploring alternate means of providing access to textbooks, including targeted ebook purchasing, promoting open educational resources (OER), purchasing on demand, and controlled digital lending (CDL).
- April Witteveen from Oregon State University Cascades considers how best to meet the diverse needs of a student population with very limited library space and with emphases on discoverability and accessibility.
- LaJean Humphries, a retired librarian, provides tips on building a collection that meets the unique needs of individuals experiencing cognitive decline, with a particular focus on pop-up books and picture books.
- April Younglove from Lake Oswego Public Library shares how, after it was determined that an enhancement of the library's world languages offerings was necessary, a sequence of community engagement efforts resulted in a more robust collection of materials in languages other than English and stronger bonds between the library and a diverse range of individuals and organizations in the community.
- Emily Moxley from the Central Oregon Community College Barber Library discusses the Orbis Cascade Alliance DEI Standing Group and the trainings it has undertaken related to building and maintaining LGBTQ+-inclusive collections, providing guidance for others seeking to remain engaged and informed on these issues.
- John Replinger from Willamette University describes the Oregon Authors Project, an online resource that facilitates discovery of Oregon authors, and shares how it can be used to diversify a library's collection by highlighting authors who identify as BIPOC and/or LGBTQIA+.

We can anticipate that advances in technology, demographic shifts, and broader social currents will continue to change what library collections look like and how they are accessed, managed, and promoted. However, as long as libraries serve as hubs of information, community, and connection, library workers are certain to continue envisioning new solutions to whatever challenges may arise.

References

American Library Association. (n.d.). Censorship by the numbers. <https://www.ala.org/bbooks/censorship-numbers>

Joseph, C. (2021, August 18). Move over, Melvil! Momentum grows to eliminate bias and racism in the 145-year-old Dewey Decimal System. *School Library Journal*. <https://tinyurl.com/5xauwr5k>

