

Book Review

Hughes-Hassel, Sandra (2020). *Collection management for youth: Equity, inclusion, and learning* (2nd ed.). Chicago, IL: ALA Editions. 128pp., \$57.99, ISBN 978-0-8389-4684-8 (Paper)

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No work oriented toward the professional development of library workers today can afford to ignore DEIA – Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility. How prescient of Sandra Hughes-Hassell, professor in the School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, to make equitable access and inclusive learning central to the second edition of *Collection management for youth*. In eight chapters, plus 13 tools, Hughes-Hassell helps the reader appreciate how library materials collections can better “support the interests and needs of an increasingly diverse group of young learners” (p. xv). The author urges library collections managers to “reimagine their role,” encouraging them to “act as change agents, leaders, learners, and resource guides” (p. xvi). This text presents a roadmap for collections managers to realize five goals:

1. Ground collection development decisions and practices in an equity framework.
2. Adopt a learner-centered model of collection management that guides collection decisions and demonstrates accountability in the learning process.
3. Redefine the roles of collection managers to support the concept of library staff serving as teachers and information guides who actively center equity in their collection development practices.
4. Apply appropriate strategies and tools for working in the learner-centered equity-based paradigm that demonstrate knowledge of the learners, recognition of equity issues, familiarity with educational theories, awareness of resources, and attentiveness to the uniqueness of the community the library serves.
5. Form a community of practice that shares responsibility for defining, developing, and evaluating the development and delivery of library resources to facilitate youth learning and advance equity (p. xvi).

The book is divided into three sections. Part I, Theoretical Foundations, presents arguments supporting the author’s thesis that collection management decisions and practices should focus on equity. Chapter 1 answers why today’s collections managers must focus on equity: “*When we focus on equity, our ultimate goal becomes justice*” (p.3). The author reviews the demographics of youth in America, how changes in race and ethnicity over the first two decades of this century have increased the number of children who are English language learners (ELLs), and the increasingly diverse set of languages spoken by children enrolled in U.S. schools. Dr. Hughes-Hassell highlights the need for libraries to recognize an evolving understanding of gender, and counsels

librarians to do better at serving youth with one or more disabilities, including chronic conditions and learning disabilities.

The author emphasizes a need to address traditionally marginalized youth by altering library services to advance equity and inclusion. They point to Paul Gorski (2017), who identified four abilities educators need to address equity literacy:

1. Recognize even the subtlest biases and inequities,
2. Respond to biases and inequities in the immediate term,
3. Redress biases and inequities in the long term,
4. Create and sustain bias-free and equitable classrooms, schools, and institutional cultures (p. 11).

Chapter 2 lays the theoretical foundation and framework for learner-centered collection management. Hughes-Hassell enumerates three changes influencing the work of librarians today:

1. The proliferating nature of information,
2. Increasing awareness of the need for diverse books and other media, and
3. Shifting educational theories and frameworks that focus on the learner, acknowledge the complexity of learners' lived experiences, and respect learners' home cultures, languages, and cultural histories.

In this chapter, the author references the works of pioneers of various (and often competing) educational theories and frameworks, including constructivism (Walker and Lambert 1995), culturally relevant pedagogy (Gloria Ladson-Billings 1994), connected learning (Mimi Ito and the Connected Learning Alliance 2018), critical pedagogy (Freire and Macedo 1998, hooks 1994, Katz 2014), and UDL - Universal Design for Learning (CAST, n.d.).

In Chapter 3, the author presents four models of collection management: Collection-Centered, Learner-Centered, the Collaborative Access Environment, and the Equitable Access Environment (EAE). The EAE model “centers the concepts of equity and learning” (p. 33) that Hughes-Hassell believes essential for library adoption today. EAE demands the inclusion of all the youth of a community and the text emphasizes the need for outreach to those “who do not regularly visit the library or attend library programs” (p. 36). The teaming approach for collection management collaboration—a central feature of the EAE model—encourages libraries to partner with parents, caregivers, and “other members of the community who work with or care about youth” (p. 37).

The final chapter of this section (4), Collector Behaviors, addresses how the role of the collector must change to address “the needs of today’s diverse learners, support the teaching-learning context, and advance equity” (p. 41). To be successful, collection librarians must embrace the changing information AND educational environments, shifting from distant expert to personal guide, learning “how to manage kiosks on the information superhighway... expected to carry an ever-changing and inclusive stock as well as provide instant access to other stores of items and to resource officials, wherever they may be located” (p. 41).

Collectors must collaborate with members of the learning community, helping all to collectively anticipate learner needs and emerging technologies. In learner-centered educational settings, “library resources are... considered central to the success of the learner” (p. 42). The author believes that collection librarians can assume leadership roles by negotiating better prices for resources, updating access policies, and advocating for equity.

Part II, *Strategies for learner-centered equitable collection*, presents strategies for creating a collection and library services that commit to equitable access, including clear, written policies that communicate the library’s commitment to equity and inclusion and stress the benefits of collaborative planning. One of the most useful chapters in the book is Policy as the Foundation for the Collection, where the reader can relate the need for written and transparent collection policies explained in Chapter 5 to the increasing number of book challenges by concerned parents and other community groups.

Hughes-Hassell reviews the essential elements of traditional collection policies and highlights sample language that can enhance those policies to address a learner-centered equitable access policy in terms of broad goals, selection, formats, funding, evaluation, weeding, confidentiality, copyright, consortial agreements, and intellectual freedom. The author details the necessary steps for creating or revising a learner-centered Equitable Access Environment policy, including:

- how to identify stakeholders,
- perform community analysis,
- conduct stakeholder focus groups designed to help the library establish a strategic vision and goals,
- prepare a written draft of the policy and test it with stakeholders,
- revise the policy, as needed,
- gain approval for the policy, and
- communicate the policy to the community.

Chapter 6 offers decision-support tools to aid the collections librarian in making appropriate resource selections that support learning and advance equity. These tools include:

- a matrix for gathering data about the curriculum,
- sample teaching tolerance social justice standards,
- a collection development analysis worksheet,
- qualitative and quantitative measures of a collection,
- learner-centered selection criteria, and
- strategies for including your community in making these decisions to avoid challenges in the future.

In *Budgeting for Maximum Impact* (Chapter 7), the author specifies the advantages and disadvantages of typical budget models, such as lump-sum, line-item, performance, program, and zero-based. Chapter 8, *Collaboration and Collection Planning*, is a paean to cross-cultural collaborative efforts and an inclusive process. Here, the author highlights the importance of planning to persuade authorities (school or public

library administrations and governing bodies) to adopt an Equitable Access Environment model of collection development.

The best part of the book is the completed set of tools throughout Part II allowing the reader to see how the blank forms available in Part III might look when completed, such as a SWOT analysis, shelf audit for diversity and inclusion, budget justification plans, and a checklist for planning promotional efforts for an Equitable Access Environment collection development plan. The blank worksheets included in Part III are also available online (<https://alaeditions.org/webextras/>).

The author states that the audience for this book includes all library staff who serve children and teens, not simply the collections manager. The book's most practical chapters are those that supply the collections manager with the rationale for explaining why a change to library collections is necessary so they can explain what they are doing to others in their community, be it a public library situation (library administrators, boards, community groups, parents, youth) or school library (school administrators, teachers, students, parents).

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