

Developing a Collection for the Allentown Public Library

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Collection Development

The Allentown Public Library's (APL) 729 section for architecture design and decoration shows need for improvement as many of the titles are older and does not comprehensively encompass all the genre has to offer. This proposal includes a recommendation for thirteen titles costing approximately \$360 before discounts, remaining well within the \$500 budget allotment.

Architecture Design & Decoration:

The current 729 section only includes 28 titles, and only 20 of them were within the standard Adult Non-Fiction section. They centered on mainly western architecture, with no international perspective, and over 80% were published over 20 years ago, making the collection quite old. Most of the collection was older than a quarter of the Allentown population, which skews younger than the rest of the county and the state. The collection deserves to be updated to include newer titles focusing on modern elements, as well as international styles that reflect the diverse nature of Allentown. The demographics of this town are not a hegemony, but the collection as it stands today is and should be updated to reflect the developments in this medium.

Approach

Each of the titles has been scoped out and proven not to be elsewhere in the APL's system, and in most cases is also not available in other nearby Allentown or Lehigh County public or university libraries. Additionally, each title is in at least one the nation's largest public library collections, such as New York Public Library (NYPL), Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL), Free Library of Philadelphia (FLP), and the Chicago Public Library (CPL) (according to WorldCat or each system's individual catalog)

Titles had a higher chance of being recommended if they met any of the following classifications:

- Published after the year 2000
- Written from an international author or perspective

- Included both photos and text on the subject
- Highly rated by customers on book sites such as Amazon, Goodreads, or AbeBooks

Recommended Titles:

The following thirteen works are listed in no particular order.

- *Lessons For Students In Architecture* by Herman Hertzberger, 2016
 - Hardcover: \$70
 - Originally published in 1991, this 2016 edition updates for the twenty-first century. Various editions of this title are in the CPL and LAPL, with the closest edition being in University of Pennsylvania. It is directed at college students, making it a great comprehensive choice for our student-heavy population. This is the most costly title in the proposal at \$70 for the hardcover edition.
- *Architectural Styles: A Visual Guide* by Margaret Fletcher, 2021
 - Hardcover: \$20
 - This is a comprehensive guide to western architecture styles, including photos from the ancient, classical, medieval, renaissance, baroque, art nouveau, modern and contemporary eras. NYPL, LAPL, FPL, and CPL all include copies of this 2021 release, with the closest current copy at the Muhlenberg College Library.
- *A Field Guide to American Houses (Revised): The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture* by Virginia Savage McAlester, 2019
 - Paperback \$30
 - E-book: \$22

- This 848 page book provides in-depth descriptions and illustrations of domestic homes across the country, providing a detailed look at suburban architecture. The closest current copy is at the Muhlenberg College Library. NYPL, LAPL, and FPL all hold copies. Also recommended to obtain an e-book version as well because its size can make it inaccessible to some patrons.
- *Elements Of Architectural Design: A Visual Resource* by Ernest Burden, 1995
 - Used: \$6
 - This is a broader overview of the concepts of architectural design and how they can combine to form a coherent blueprint. It is currently available locally at Cedar Crest College and Lehigh University, as well as at larger institutions such as NYPL, LAPL, and CPL.
- *The Architecture Of The Classical Interior* by Steven W Semes, 2004
 - \$40
 - One of the few recommendations that covers a specific western design style. Given the impact of the classical style on American architecture it was too big a gap to leave empty. There is not a copy of this title within a 30 mile range. It is included in the collections of NYPL, LAPL, CPL, and FLP.
- *The Nature Of Design* by M. Scott Lockard, 2017
 - \$30
 - This title goes over broader understanding of design and aims to reframe misconceptions on the topic. Commonly held at university libraries, but this title is not available in a 30 mile radius. Held at NYPL and LAPL.

- *The New Asian Architecture : Vernacular Traditions And Contemporary Style*
by William Siew Wai Lim and Hock Beng Tan, 1998
 - ~\$30
 - This title was published in Hong Kong, making it one of the few international titles in this collection. It would also be the first title to cover non-Western design styles, and was particularly chosen because it was published in a non-Western country. There is not a copy within a 30 mile radius, but is held at NYPL and CPL
- *Facades : A Visual Compendium Of Modern Architectural Styles* by Oscar Riera Ojeda, Byron Hawes, Prestel Verlag, 2019
 - \$30
 - One of the newest publications recommended, covering a modern topic not covered in any of the existing titles. There is not a copy in a 30 mile radius. Held by both NYPL and CPL.
- *Colors Of The World : The Geography Of Color* by Jean-Phillipe Lenclos and Dominique Lenclos, 2004
 - \$10
 - Includes a global perspective on how color affects design. This is another title attempting to fill the international gap in the collection. There is not a copy within 30 miles. It is in the collections of both NYPL and LAPL.
- *Tropical Minimal* by Danielle Miller and Richard Powers, 2006
 - \$30
 - A title of color illustrations and chapters on the concepts of a tropical design and lifestyle. This topic is currently not covered in the collection

and this title isn't available in a 30 mile radius. Held by both NYPL and LAPL.

- *Moroccan Style* by Alexandra Bonfante-Warren, 2000

- \$8

- A title aimed at describing and demonstrating the Moroccan Style.

This region is not covered in any of the collection. It is not available in a 30 mile range, and is held at NYPL and LAP

- *Stories In Stone: Conserving Mosaics Of Roman Africa : Masterpieces From The National Museums Of Tunisia*

- \$50

- The current collection contains a title on early Christian mosaics, and this title looks at that style from an earlier perspective: the Northern African style from the Roman Empire. The closest copy of this title is available at Kutztown University. NYPL and FLP both currently have this title in their collections as well.

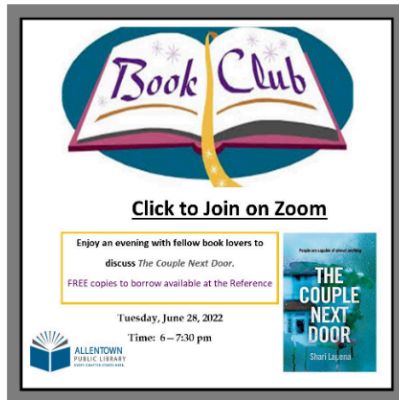
Marketing Plan:

After expanding the 729 collection from its existing 28 titles to the additional 14 titles the library must make the community aware of the change. The following low-cost or free approaches are recommended after the additions:

- **On-site spotlight display:** Add several of the new titles to the rotating spotlight display in the front of the library. Photo-copy select images from several titles to showcase the variety in photographs. Also include stand-out design tips from the titles in the display (Examples: "Did you know" or "Tips for Your Home")

- **Online spotlight:** Add an update about the collection to the library homepage on the “New and Noteworthy” section, as well as on the New Titles on the catalog landing page:

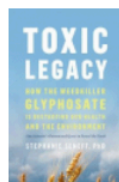
New and Noteworthy



Adult Book Club: June



New Non-Fiction Titles



Toxic legacy :
how the
weedkiller
glyphosate is...



The gut-
immune
connection :
how...



On the line : a
story of class,
solidarity, and
two women's...



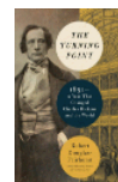
Dear Highlights
: what adults
can learn from
75 years of...



Imaginable :
how to see the
future coming
and feel ready...



We don't know
ourselves : a
personal history
of modern...



The turning
point : 1851--a
year that
changed...



In on the joke :
the original
queens of
standup...



- **Partner with local schools:** Given the high density of students in the Allentown area, reach out to the architecture and design programs at the local colleges and universities. Let the professors of the program inform their students that additional resources can be found not only in the onsite academic library, but the Allentown Public Library as well. Include the following schools: Muhlenberg College, Cedar Crest College, Lehigh University, DeSales University, Lehigh Carbon Community College, Moravian University, and Lafayette University

Reflection:

After this entire project I stand by my initial thought that the most challenging part was aiming to find a library with a population size and appropriate collection that also had a call number search to utilize. Many of the call numbers I was interested in using were either much too small or already quite large. It felt as if a library overly dedicated themselves to a specific topic or did not care to fill it out at all. This left me to choose a topic that I had very little prior knowledge in, and it was difficult to tie this subject back to the needs of the community. I still do not feel I have a very clear reasoning for why this section specifically needs to be built out for this library, and in fact if I was actually the collection manager I would probably aim to fill out the sections with ten or fewer books that were more crucial to the patrons instead of this middle sized range.

However, a part I really enjoyed was comparing the collection to the larger collections across the country. After the struggles of searching through catalogs of smaller libraries the larger catalog systems were a breeze to use and search through. This subject area was definitely not one I was familiar with (as with probably 95% of the total collections) so I had to rely on the recommendations and justifications from the larger library systems and other resources. Turning to NYPL and LAPL for guidance was extremely helpful. If those plus the other larger systems I checked all had the same titles I felt quite confident in that recommendation.

One area I am still wary of would be working with the vendors and finding these specific titles, a sub-task I am grateful was not a part of this assignment. Several of the titles I found were only available as used, or not available at all. It could be very difficult to track down copies of those works in usable condition at a reasonable price. Fortunately, the titles that seemed harder to get were also relatively inexpensive, with several titles averaging under \$10.

Overall, this assignment and this class as a whole made me consider aspects of librarianship and collection development that I had never thought deeply about. Filling out a collection is much more than stocking up on the latest best-sellers. It almost feels impossible to keep up with all of the releases for non-fiction sections, and it is important to rely on experts. However, it's also crucial to strike the balance between one's own research and judgment and those of peers and reviewers, since the experts aren't going to know the community that will be searching through the catalog. A good collection manager must know the resources available and be deeply familiar with the public they are serving with the library collection, and they will likely be the only person to understand both, making their qualifications unique and challenging.