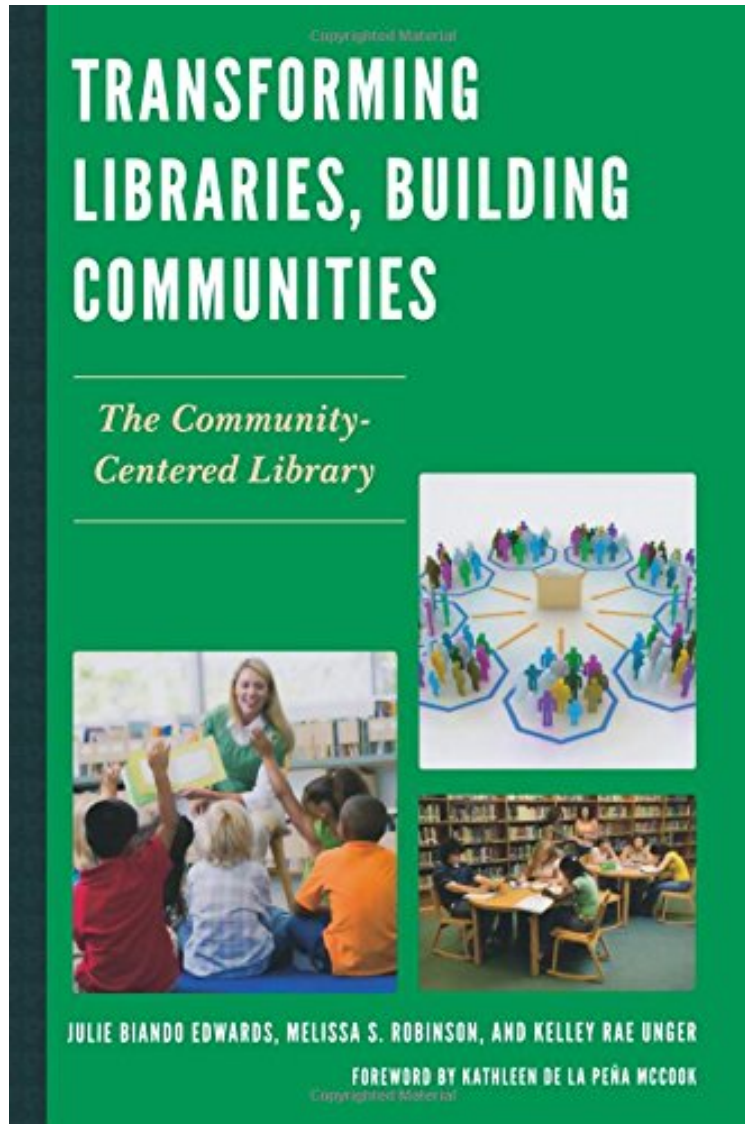


# Transforming Libraries, Building Communities: The Community-Centered Library

Julie Biando Edwards, Melissa S. Robinson, Kelley Rae Unger

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#1585561 in Books 2013-05-30 2013-05-30 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.00 x .72 x 5.911, .83 #File Name: 0810891816252 pages | File size: 60.Mb

**Julie Biando Edwards, Melissa S. Robinson, Kelley Rae Unger : Transforming Libraries, Building Communities: The Community-Centered Library** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Transforming Libraries, Building Communities: The Community-Centered Library:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Essential Book For Library Lovers! By A Customer Before I give my review, in the interest of full disclosure one of the authors is a friend of mine. That said, this is a must read for anyone

who loves libraries. Whether you work in one, volunteer, or are a community leader, you will find incredibly useful ideas on changing your local institution into one that will appeal to and attract everyone in your community. Given that more and more libraries not just in the U.S. but other countries are closing or having their hours drastically reduced, it is essential that libraries look to other ways of staying relevant. Edwards, Robinson, and Unger do this in a very easy to read, appealing style. The book is divided into three main sections: The What and Whys of Community-Centered Libraries; How to Create Community-Centered Libraries; and Inspiration for Community-Centered Libraries. Each section gives a multitude of examples of how libraries have transformed themselves by not only maintaining their leadership as institutions of learning, but have added programs and services whether they're geared toward those in need of jobs and housing, the homeless and disabled, the LGBT community, or teens which not only draws them to the library, but also makes them feel like valued members of the community. They do this by forming partnerships with not only community and business leaders, but also with but also with their own patrons such as local professionals, activists, artists, and teens. Collaboration is the prevailing theme throughout this book which is especially important given that libraries often lack the funds for programming and other extras. By the end of this book your head will be filled with so many inspired ideas, you'll immediately want to start implementing them!

This book is for those moving their library beyond places to find information. Written by practicing public librarians and an academic librarian with an interest in public libraries, the book focuses on how public libraries can become more community centered and, by doing so, how they can transform both themselves and their communities. The authors argue that focusing on building community through innovative and responsive services and programs will be the best way for the public library to reposition itself in the years to come. Repositioning the library acknowledges that information is in abundance in contemporary life. And while accessing information will always be at the heart of what libraries do, it isn't the only thing they do. It may not be, in the future, even the most important thing that they do. This book encourages librarians to admit that our role has evolved and to reframe the discussion so that it is about what we actually can do play an essential role in meeting community needs and building strong and vibrant local communities. The authors argue that repositioning libraries as community centered institutions is a responsibility. Libraries bring people together. They create community, and they also create mini-communities everything from book groups to writing circles to new citizen groups to linguistic or ethnic communities reflected in programming and in collections. These mini-communities help provide fellowship and foster relationships amongst the group members, but also, because they exist in the public place that is the library, help the larger community recognize and learn about the mini-communities that create the larger community. This is the work of libraries. The book is divided into three parts which include explorations into the importance of the community centered library, practical advice on making your library more community centered, and a showcase of community centered library programs, services and initiatives across the United States. A special focus of the book is on how community development literature and practice can inform librarianship, with an emphasis on Asset Based Community Development principles. The book looks at how community centered libraries build individual and community assets and how, in doing so, they serve as essential community anchors and institutions.

Authored by the ethnic studies librarian and multicultural coordinator at the Mansfield Library at the University of Montana in Missoula, the teen librarian at the Peabody Institute Library in Peabody, Massachusetts, and the adult services librarian at the Peabody Institute Library, this work offers 15 chapters organized into 3 parts: the what and why of community-centered libraries, how to create community-centered libraries, and inspiration for community-centered libraries. Intended for the public librarian, 'this work demonstrates how public libraries can position themselves as active and vibrant centers of community life in the twenty-first century' (p. vii). Drawing on real-life examples, the co-authors demonstrate through case studies how libraries of all sizes, demographics, and budgets in the United States can and do work to become community-centered. Drawing on what has already been done, sharing tips, tricks, inspiration, what to do, and what not to do, this book will encourage and enable any public library to become more community-centered. Librarians in other types of libraries can also benefit from selected chapters, based on the community needs, whether looking to find the importance and relevance of being community-centered; how to allocate the resources, collaborate, and obtain grants; or determining how to focus on civic action, sustainability, the arts, or other purposes. Down-to-earth and practical, yet packed with ideas and inspiration, this work is beneficial to any public library's professional collection. (American Reference Books Annual) About the Author Julie Biando Edwards is the Ethnic Studies Librarian and Multicultural Coordinator at the Mansfield Library at The University of Montana in Missoula. Melissa S. Robinson is the Teen Librarian at the Peabody Institute Library in Peabody, MA. Kelley Rae Unger is the Adult Services Librarian at the Peabody Institute Library in Peabody, MA.