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Adventures in Librarianship -- On the Couch

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With Hispanics now making up the largest minority in the United States, **Daniel Stanton** and **Edward Stanton's** *Contemporary Hispanic Quotations* is a much-needed addition to the body of quotation reference sources. The editors begin their compilation with a crisp table of contents and introduction, in which they defend their use of the word "Hispanic" and explain how to use their book. Quotations from writers, politicians, entertainers, evangelists, and

other Hispanic professionals are arranged alphabetically and then chronologically by author. Photographs of select authors dot the pages. One appendix feature anonymous graffiti, quotations, and proverbs; another categorizes authors by profession. A subject and keyword index wraps up the book.

The material within highlights rich quotes from notable individuals. However, the arrangement is slightly disorientating. Even though *Contemporary Hispanic Quotations'* subject and keyword index allows readers thematic accession, perhaps readers would be better served

if the book were primarily arranged by subject and concluded with an author index. Additionally, **Stanton** and **Stanton** state in their introduction that they have translated some of the quotations from Spanish to English; possibly, subsequent editions of *Contemporary Hispanic Quotations* could include the original text as well as the translation. Still, **Stanton** and **Stanton's** work is a valuable addition to all library collections.

The Office Professional's Guide: The Essential Reference for the Modern Office.
New York: Oxford UP, 2003. 0195165195. 480 pages. \$22.95.

Reviewed by **Debbie Vaughn** (College of Charleston) <vaughnd@cofc.edu>

Its dust jacket claims that *The Office Professional's Guide: The Essential Reference for the Modern Office* is a "comprehensive 'how-to' for modern office life... that will keep you on a straight course for an exciting and fulfilling career." I am not positive that this single volume will steer readers in such a steadfast direction, but it does offer a wealth of office rules of etiquette and stylistic pointers for correspondence, public speaking, and business meetings.

The Office Professional's Guide begins with a meticulous, nine-page table of contents that breaks chapters down to their sub-headings. Following this, **Edward P. Bailey** makes a clear and strong point in his forward by referencing authors **E. B. White** and **Russell Baker**. Their writing holds a simple elegance; but, as **Bailey**

notes, their literary command is not the result of using pretentious words. Rather, **White** and **Russell** aptly and ably connect(ed) words together. Word choice is key in good business communication. The rest of *The Office Professional's Guide* aims at improving readers' professionalism and professional knowledge base, much of which centers around business communication. Fourteen chapters cover topics from your office environment to professional associations, from making multimedia presentations to making travel arrangements, and from accounting reports to antitrust legislation. The first appendix translates common business words and phrases in English, German, French, Spanish, Russian, and Japanese; the second provides more detailed definitions of business and finance terms. A third appendix lists eight full

pages of "essential" business books for further reading. Most of these suggested titles are other how-to guides, a smattering of them coincidentally published by **Oxford University Press**. Finally, a brief index concludes *The Office Professional's Guide*; the detail in the table of contents makes up for anything left out in the index.

The Office Professional's Guide spells out a great deal of information in a most straightforward manner: by example. Throughout its pages are several handy charts and lists illustrating email protocol, commonly confused words and their proper usage, sample business letters, and even cash flow statements. Indeed, there exist several books that cover each of these topics alone, but *The Office Professional's Guide* assembles select, optimal information into one volume. **Oxford's** office reference would be money well spent for public, academic, and corporate libraries, as well as for your own collection. 🍷

Adventures in Librarianship — On the Couch

by **Ned Kraft** (Ralph J. Bunche Library, U.S. Department of State) <kraftno@state.gov>

So, how was your week?
Fine.
Really?
Well, no.
So? Tell me what happened.
I had a nightmare on Monday and... it was weird. It haunted me the rest of the week.

Mmm hmm.
There was this party, back in the stacks...

The Library stacks?
Yeah. And everyone I knew was there, just milling around, chatting, drinking wine from plastic cups. I wandered up and down the aisles, looking for someone, I... I don't know who.

Could it have been your father?
No, I don't think so. Anyway, everyone was just chattering. I tried to focus on what they were saying and I realized it was all MARC code!

So who is Mark and why do you associate him with a "code?"

That's not the point. It was just gibberish.

Could Mark be a substitute for your father, and this "code" is your inability to understand him?

No, that's not it at all.

Mmm hmm.

Then, in the dream, one by one, everyone stops talking and looks at me. I realize that I'm supposed to give a speech. I'm supposed to talk about LAN security.

Why do you feel that Len is insecure?

Not Len, LAN. And the point is the topic is out of my league. I'm an Acquisitions Librarian, for God's sake....

Could Len be a substitute for your father whose presence causes you great feelings of insecurity?

...So I just stand there, sweating, everyone looking at me and waiting until the scene sort of evaporates and I'm floating in a wooden lifeboat on the ocean. At the other end of the lifeboat there's this old man...

Your father?

He's apparently a retired reference librarian because he's going on and on about the intricacies of government documents. I ask him where we are and he says we're in the "OCLC..." get it? The "OCLC."

Yes, this Ole Sea Elsie is some sort of New England folklore character, am I right?

No, you don't...

...a romantic figure, standing on the rocky shore, waiting for her husband to return from the sea. Possibly a reference to your distant relationship with your father.

It doesn't have anything to do with my father.

Mmm hmm.

Anyway, then I was alone, locked in this room. The walls were completely covered by shelves of old books. I realized there was no door and I started hyperventilating. It was a rare book room: vellum spines, humidity and temperature gauges, but completely sealed, no way out.

Can we get back to the relationship between Mark and your father? 🍷