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Book Reviews -- Monographic Musings

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Book Reviews — Monographic Musings

Column Editor: **Debbie Vaughn** (College of Charleston) <vaughnd@cofc.edu>



Column Editor's Note: *ATG* readers are in for a treat this month: three new Monographic Musing reviewers are gracing our pages with their evaluatory prose. **Rachel Augello-Erb** received an MS in Library Science from **Florida State University** and is the Head of Technical Services at **Greenville Technical College**. **Brian Erb** has been a practicing librarian for a number of years and has recently become the Media Specialist at **J.L. Mann High School** in Greenville, South Carolina. And though **College of Charleston Electronic Services Librarian Kristen DeVoe** is no stranger to *ATG* — she guest edited the November, 2006, issue — she is a newcomer to this column. We are fortunate to have such talented and knowledgeable library professionals offer their opinions. Happy reading, everyone! — **DV**

Anderson, Shelia B. *Extreme Teens: Library Services to Nontraditional Young Adults*. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2005. 1591581702. 175 pages. \$37.00.

Reviewed by **Rachel A. Augello-Erb** (Head of Technical Services, Greenville Technical College) <Rachel.Augello@gvltec.edu>

When I first glanced at the title of this work I had an image of a Surge (circa 1996) inebriated snowboarder screaming into the mountainside after an exhilarating run on the half-pipe. Perhaps subconsciously, the semantics of “extreme” has been altered by marketing executives and a cursory glance at the title page can be a bit misleading; perhaps detracting from the relevance of the information provided. The author uses “extreme teens” as an all-inclusive term to describe not only those who are considered at-risk youth, but also those who are nontraditional in some way, and as a result, do not fit into mainstream society. The term “extreme” is not pejorative, but one that serves to broadly define those who are different from most other teens because of their lead disparate lives from mainstream teens. The author humbly states her work is no attempt to cover all possible extreme categories, but asserts the principles set forth could be applied to most teens.

After establishing this working, general definition of what it means to be extreme, the author posits why it is imperative to serve this group. For one thing, extreme teens traditionally are an underserved group, and one of the principles of library service is to know your users and serve them to the best of one’s ability. Secondly, despite their circumstances, they go through normal stages of adolescent cognitive development, and naturally exhibit information seeking behavior.

Before the author describes specific categories of extreme teens, she cites statistical information to further enhance her definition of extreme teens as well as to elucidate current national trends. In addition to relying on statistics, she recommends conducting local surveys to create a more complete profile of this demographic. To increase our understanding before laying out the specifics, she demonstrates a charming nod to popular culture by providing a brief list of songs about extreme teens.

The first chapter concretely outlines the specific life situations denoting a teen as “extreme”: unschooling, home schooling, dual enrollment (high school and college), drop-outs, reluctant readers, ELS and immigrants,

homeless and runaways, those under foster care, juvenile delinquents, emancipated and independent teens, married and cohabitating teens, sexual behavior, pregnant and parenting teens, and GLBTQ teens (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning teens). Note most extreme teens may have more than one life situation that apply. Each category is preceded by a brief description and most have a list of cited references to enhance understanding of these groups.

The second chapter serves as a practical guide to implement programs for extreme teens. The author prescribes particular outreach and services strategies for each type of extreme teen briefly described in the first chapter. Moreover, there is sound advice on getting staff involved, networking, and being mindful of special considerations. The program ideas provided enable library professionals to begin establishing programs targeting extreme teens.

The third chapter’s focus changes from

Baumbach, Donna J. and Miller, Linda L. *Less is More: A Practical Guide to Weeding School Library Collections*. Chicago: ALA, 2006. 0838909191. 194 pages. \$32.00.

Reviewed by **Brian Erb**, MLIS (Media Specialist, J.L. Mann High School) <erb@greenville.k12.sc.us>

In 1988, the state of Florida began an automation project called **SUNLINK** to provide an online union catalog for Florida’s public schools. As part of this project, schools were encouraged to weed aggressively before beginning retrospective conversion to avoid entering items in the new database that either should not be on the shelves at all or are going to be withdrawn in the near future. To encourage weeding, the **SUNLINK** project instituted a **Weed of the Month** program that broke the collection into manageable chunks, concentrating on specific areas of the school library by **Dewey** number to guide busy school librarians in weeding guidelines and offering documenta-

patrons, to collection building.

The author discloses all the salient tenets of collection development: revising policies, weeding, and learning about one’s community. She also advocates using online information from sites such as **Amazon.com** and attention to professional library organization in addition to standard collection development tools. To assist in collection development efforts, a bibliography of fiction, non-fiction, audiovisuals, and Websites are provided. Enhancing this bibliography are several lists of contact information for relevant organizations.

The final chapter aptly entitled “Beyond the Regular Routine: Promoting the Library and Resources”, recommends cutting-edge ways to promote library services that can often be difficult to reach. Ideas range from ensuring the library is a welcoming place to using cable television for program promotion. She also recommends promoting library services in places extreme teens might frequent, such as homeless shelters, schools, GLBT bookstores, doctor’s offices, etc. Her ideas for networking in the teen community are also very reasonable and not patronizing.

It stands to reason this work is suitable for public and school librarians, but is also useful for community college librarians — especially those who work in more diverse population centers. Librarians who work with nontraditional teens in a four-year college or university setting could at least glean some relevant insight for greater understanding of their life situations. According to the author, this work, by no means, is the final authority on the topic of library service for extreme teens, but it will definitely engender more discussion and a body of literature in this area.

tion to support their weeding decisions. *Less is More: A Practical Guide to Weeding School Library Collections* by **Donna Baumbach** and **Linda Miller** is a guide to weeding in school media centers that grew out of the **Weed of the Month** project.

Baumbach and **Miller** begin with three introductory chapters of general information about the importance of weeding that will probably be quite familiar to many school librarians, especially those with experience in other types of libraries. The role of weeding in collection development, general weeding guidelines, and tips on getting started and establishing

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an ongoing weeding routine are all covered in these introductory chapters. The bulk of the book consists of seventy-one "tip sheets" each concentrating on a very specific Dewey number and topic — generally areas that are ordered fairly heavily in a school setting and are prone to fairly rapid or glaring obsolescence. These helpful sheets are organized in a standard format. "Why Weed this Area?" explains the particular time sensitivity of the Dewey number in question. "Dewey Numbers to Check" calls attention to similar books that may be shelved in other areas. Also included are "Specific Criteria for Weeding?" and "Tips for Replacing Titles." in the area. The final section of each "tip sheet" is a helpful "Consider Weeding Titles Like These" list of hypothetical titles from the area that would be considered

Fenner, Audrey, ed. *Managing Digital Resources in Libraries*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press, 2005. 9780789024039. 186 pages. \$19.95.

Reviewed by **Rachel A. Augello-Erb** (Head of Technical Services, Greenville Technical College) <Rachel.Augello@gvltec.edu>

The current breadth of library patrons' expectations is a fairly recent phenomenon; they now expect to have equal access to both print and electronic materials. As library patrons expect ready access to both formats, their expectations have redefined the concept of a library collection. Concomitantly, publishing has also changed as electronic formats are steadily supplanting print items in efforts to drive down costs.

The addition of electronic items alongside physical items now presents a multi-faceted conundrum in acquisitions and cataloging. As publishers experiment with pricing, formats, licensing, librarians are trying to incorporate electronic formats into their workflow. The idiosyncrasies of publishers often challenge the acquisition librarian: books combining print and electronic texts, etc. This lack of publishing uniformity presents challenges to a previous streamlined approach to cataloging work as well. For example, new metadata standards allow book reviews to be displayed in bibliographic record. Furthermore, to add a dimension of complexity to serials librarianship, electronic journals have not eclipsed their print brethren.

Co-published simultaneously as *The Acquisitions Librarian*, numbers 33/34, 2005, *Managing Digital Resources in Libraries* addresses the concerns and presents concrete solutions for managing library materials in digital formats. Many of the posited solutions are supported by case studies. Librarians report "from the trenches" offering ideas about licensing, access, funding. The contributors also describe creative projects that enrich the traditional library paradigm. Specifically, the integration of PDA-accessible resources into the collection of a large, research library, developing an all-digital public health library, and special management issues regarding elec-

tronic resources in two different sized public libraries are disclosed.

The chapters in this book are divided into four sections: licensing, opinions, research and analysis, systems and software, and special projects and histories. In the first chapter, licensing, the authors conclude the varied licensing agreements interfere with the library's role as "information repository and disseminator". The once owned library collection is now one that is bifurcated: owned and leased. Their solution is that the establishment of the First Sale Doctrine will liberate digital environments from these inconsistent, if not unreasonable, licensing agreements. Another author explains why even though most licensing agreement issues can be resolved, they still often create barriers to the "development of fully integrated collections."

The second chapter, broadly entitled "Opinions, research, and analysis", covers the role of open archives in the academic library and the unique position of the electronic librarian striving to provide access to electronic journals. One author presents an historical account of the

open access movement and describes current issues. Another author posits as academic libraries are in a transitional state, there has been some restructuring in librarian position to accommodate electronic resources, but many traditional library services remain. The third author suggests ways journal management software could possibly expand their capabilities.

The third chapter, systems and software, the authors discuss cataloging options for electronic journals, describe two electronic journal management software products (**ELIN** and **TDNet**), and present alternative print and electronic resource management. In one case, the authors created a dynamic alternative to a traditional subject Web guide. With the use of **Cold Fusion**, another author offers her account of its application to electronic journals access.

The authors of the concluding chapter, special projects and histories, cover integrating resources for PDA users, issues in developing an all-digital public health library in Michigan, and two case studies of electronic collection management. The authors explain how to integrate PDA-accessible collections and discuss licensing issues, cataloging, and processing of PDA books. Other authors focus on collection management strategies for electronic resources in the face of restrictive budgets.

This is a fine compilation of not only ideas, but also possible solutions for addressing current issues in electronic resources management. In keeping with one of the work's central themes regarding print and electronic resource integration, many chapters contain print and electronic references. Also, the index is comprehensive and keywords are appropriately culled from the work.

On the whole, this compendium mostly concentrates on e-serials, but current information about licensing issues and descriptions of specials projects, notably PDA-accessible collections, contribute to the richness of the source. The varied size and type of libraries offered as case studies further confirm there is no one practical solution, but the reader should not be confused, as he or she may glean some viable solutions. This work will be a valuable resource for acquisitions, cataloging, collection development, and electronic resource librarians.



Westman, Stephen R. *Creating Database-Backed Library Web Pages Using Open Source Tools*. Chicago: ALA, 2006. 0838909108. 288 pages. \$48.00.

Reviewed by **Kristen DeVoe** (Electronic Resources Librarian, College of Charleston) <devoek@cofc.edu>

This book was written by a librarian for librarians and serves as an easy to comprehend starting point for creating Web pages using open-source tools and relational databases. While the book does not necessarily provide in-depth discussion of every technique that can be used to develop database backed library Web pages, it gives such a thorough overview

of the necessary elements and techniques that readers could easily move on to more technique specific Web development texts. The book is accessible to even the novice Web developer since readers do not need to have any prior knowledge of coding and programming beyond basic HTML and the ability to create HTML

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forms. Throughout the book the author uses library terminology and library based examples to illustrate key concepts and definitions, a practice which will help librarians better understand the terms and concepts that are explained.

Using straightforward language, real-world terminology, and clear definitions, **Westman** begins by explaining how database-backed Web pages can be beneficial to library Websites. The introduction points to advantages such as providing users with accurate and up-to-date information in real time as well as easier site maintenance and data publishing. The introduction also provides a clear explanation of the open source software movement, what advantages it has over proprietary software, and how open source software can benefit libraries.

Moving on from the introduction, the text is divided into three parts. The first addresses database basics, setup, and administration with a particular focus on relational databases. **Westman** takes the mystery out of technical terms as he explains, using simple examples, how relational databases management systems work, examines **Structured Query Language (SQL)**, and describes open source alternatives for relational database systems. Moving on from these explanations, the book uses a practical hands-on approach to walk readers through the steps of creating a database, importing data into **MySQL** tables, and establish accounts that can access the data via the Web.

The second section of the text focuses on programming and creating reports. As a librarian with little programming experience, this reviewer was apprehensive about the level of experience necessary to understand the programming chapters of this book. Using a cooking metaphor, **Westman** effectively introduces basic programming concepts that readers will need to be familiar with. The reader will gain an idea of how programs are structured as well as an overview of different types of programming languages that can be used. **Westman** takes the introduction to programming one step further when he outlines, step by step, how to use PHP to create a variety of reports. Hands on experience is invaluable when it comes to many aspects of Web development, and this book expertly combines background information with introductory exercises so the reader can see firsthand how concepts can be applied to actual databases.

Finally, this book examines a database-based Web project step-by-step from the original idea and design through programming and implementation. This section of the book builds on exercises explained in previous chapters. In doing this, the reader truly gets a sense of the effort, knowledge, and steps required to create a database backed Web page.

The text also includes a complete glossary of terms used and an appendix of programming standards. The clearly written style of this book coupled with the increasing user demand for dynamic Web pages make this a title worth considering for any librarian who is interested in Web development. 🌿

Something to Think About — A Moment's Destruction

Column Editor: **Mary E. (Tinker) Massey** (Serials Librarian, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Jack R. Hunt Library) <Mary.Massey@erau.edu>

Life seems so straightforward when we live each day in the comfort of our own routines. I've often wondered what crises bring to the situation that would change these procedures. We want to be prepared for any number of circumstances in life, but the fact remains that there will always be something that strikes out of the blue and upsets our daily patterns. Case in point, Christmas Day 2006 **Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University**, Daytona Beach, FL., when a tornado marched its way across campus destroying over 50 planes, a maintenance hangar, and many buildings, including the damage to our library. Three and four foot square holes were blasted through our rear walls and books were tossed from shelves and soaked in fuel contaminated water/gravel/glass shard mixtures. Professional clean-up teams were brought in a few days later and they cleaned and dried the materials. When we were finally allowed into the building more than a week later, we were looking at a partially reclaimed bunch of books and CD's. Study carrels were full of questionable items. Teams were formed to feel and visually inspect each piece for damage. CD's were put aside for separate inspection because they were all in locked cases. Books were inspected first. We ran our hands over every inch of the bindings, looked at and felt the insides, checked the spines and gutters, then sorted the books into those that could return to the shelves, those that were beyond help and those we might be able to save via rebinding, xeroxing (if copyright eligible), or digitizing (if copyright eligible). This last group was small, about two dozen in total. About seventy to seventy-five percent could actually return to the shelves. We all breathed a sigh of relief, as this was a pertinent part of our business aviation section. Many of the books would have been very hard to replace, while others would have been out of print. Twenty four percent of the damaged books could not be returned to the collection, so teams worked to identify the items, make a list for the insurance company (with dollar values), and withdraw them from the online catalog. Once this was done, we could deprocess them and physically remove them from the building. The insurance list was presented to the university and once approved, we are now able to have the Collection Development Team choose replacements and help the school order them from the best sources. Sometimes, it is bet-

ter to order more recent editions when the older ones have been damaged, so that we not only replace the information lost, but we do so with more enhanced material. In some cases, we replace out of print material with other appropriate and similar information. We had to amend several recent studies of our business materials for degree upgrades by stating that the lost materials would be appropriately replaced by newer materials and that the collection's content would not be diminished by the replacements, but rather enhanced. Some of the few CD's lost were those that matched up to the books that were withdrawn. They were not damaged themselves, but were useless once the books were withdrawn. Teams viewed the discs to make sure they were only supplementary to the texts and not the complete texts, before we discarded them. It was interesting to note that although very dirty, the CD's survived where the books didn't. I was very impressed that we only lost two jewel cases from breakage and only one locked case showed signs of stress fractures.

It appears that if damaged materials are treated quickly, most can be saved. Circulation will watch for further developments as these materials are checked in and out of their desk. We want to make sure that there is no other chemical or biological degradation of the material. As for now, what looked like a huge loss turned out to be very minor compared to the building's damage. We are all very appreciative to the university's quick recognition of the problems, the crisis team's treatment of the materials and our own team actions to save as many materials as we could.

Do you have appropriate plans for action in physical crises? We only had hurricane plans in place, but recent attention to getting rid of mold in the collection alerted us to the procedures we needed to have in place and companies we needed to call for help. I

believe that sped up our response time and turned a disaster into moderate losses to our collection.

There can always be an unplanned crisis ahead, but advanced preparation and knowledge can reduce the impact to your collections. We are currently revising our emergency response manual to cover a number of situations. Do you

have that preparation and

knowledge? That might be something to think about?! 🌿

