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Book Reviews: Monographic Musings

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Book Reviews — Monographic Musings

Column Editor: **Debbie Vaughn** (Adjunct Instructor, Clemson University) <vaughn.deborah@gmail.com>

Column Editor's Note: Since libraries, and academic libraries in particular, typically follow a fiscal year that differs from the calendar year, January 1 isn't always the "professional new year." However, the season of "Auld Lang Syne" can still inspire new projects or fresh ideas for the coming semester. New *ATG* reviewer **Tamara Rhodes** investigates a new title that considers library instruction and instructional design. As the *Online Learning Librarian* at *East Carolina University*, she is well-versed in online resources for library instruction. Many thanks to **Tamara** for her contribution to this month's *MM*. Happy New Year and happy reading, everyone! — *DV*

Su, Di. *Library Instruction Design: Learning from Google and Apple.* Chandos Information Professional Series. Oxford: Chandos, 2014. 978-1843347415. 168 pages. \$80.00.

A declaration that rings throughout librarianship as a whole these days is that libraries aren't just about books any longer. For academic librarians especially, we need to be instructors and masters of technology as well. This statement is affirmed in **Di Su's** *Library Instruction Design: Learning from Google and Apple.*

If you are a librarian interested in library instruction, technology, or both, this title will grab your attention as it did mine. You'll want to open it up and see just how **Google**, **Apple**, and library instruction can be related. And you'll get there, but you have to wade through the introductory chapters first.

The intention of this book is to "present viewpoints on library instruction theories and practices and offer suggestions...on library instruction program design of both philosophical and practical levels." **Su's** idea is well placed. Just as the **Virginia Mason Medical Center** in Seattle looked to the management style of **Toyota**, there

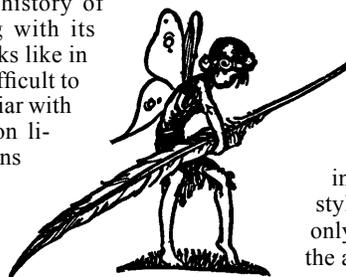
is much to learn from other industries of public service.

This title has six chapters that set up the variables of the topic in great detail, library instruction more so. This makes sense considering **Di Su** is an Associate Professor and a Head of Information Literacy. His expertise comes in handy at the end where, after the seventh conclusion chapter, you'll find multiple appendices that layout possible library instruction plans based on what is learned from the **Google** and **Apple** design philosophies. In the first two chapters, you will get a definition and history of library instruction, along with its philosophy and what it looks like in practice. These are a bit difficult to get through if you are familiar with or have read other texts on library instruction as it contains similar information. This leads into chapters on the design philosophies of **Google** and **Apple** with

bits of interesting history on the ways and whys they were formed. Then finally, what you've been waiting for, a look at the particular philosophies and principles that can be applied to library instruction. To bring it home, the final two chapters, which are the most interesting, discuss the particular design styles of each and parse through them while relating it to instruction.

Much of the comparisons made by **Su** between the design philosophies and library instruction seemed a bit cursory and common knowledge, but his focus on the bottom-up, top-down styles regarding the use of user data was incredibly interesting. While **Google** relies heavily on user feedback, **Apple** prides itself on being secretive because they should already know what the users want without them asking. Wondering how this plays out in library instruction? Read this book to find out! Also helpful was the practical section where he suggests instructional programs that would work for each style and provides a sample teaching scenario, one-shot for bottom-up and credit bearing for top-down. Although the samples would have been better received if it used either/or for both styles, it was helpful to see the styles in action.

Overall, this title gets you thinking outside the box and entertaining the idea of looking to other industries to guide instruction styles. It is an intriguing read, if only for chapters three to six and the appendices. 🍌



From the Reference Desk

by **Tom Gilson** (Associate Editor, *Against the Grain*, and Head of Reference Emeritus, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC 29401) <gilson@cofc.edu>

The *Encyclopedia of Language Development* (2014; ISBN: 978-1452258768, \$195) is a recent offering from **SAGE Reference** that adds to their collection of specialized, single-volume reference works. Edited by

Patricia J. Brooks
and **Vera Kempe**,
the *Encyclopedia*



contains some 200 articles in a traditional A-Z arrangement that explore the "miracle" of language development.

The study of language development is a highly interdisciplinary field that draws from disciplines ranging from neuroscience and psychology to education, linguistics, speech and hearing studies, and genetics. A look at the Reader's Guide with its broad subject categories reinforces this observation in addition to providing a sense of the coverage. Individual articles address specific concepts and theories, research models and methods, cognitive and biological issues, social and family impacts, disabilities and disorders, and special populations including nonhuman primates.

Besides the Reader's Guide, finding aids include numerous "see also" references and a

thorough general index. Each entry is signed and has its own bibliography of further readings. Value-added features include a resource list of books and articles, journals, associations, and Websites; a glossary; a chronology; and an appendix of world literacy statistics.

The *Encyclopedia of Language Development* is an informed and scholarly work that employs fact-filled descriptions and explanations of the topics covered. Given that ongoing research is essential to the discipline, there are numerous references to relevant sources and scholarship throughout. Although there are some illustrations, this volume is text dense. While the informed and interested lay reader will find the *Encyclopedia* helpful, it is obviously intended for students, faculty,

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