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## Book Reviews--Monographic Musings

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# Book Reviews — Monographic Musings

Column Editor: **Regina Gong** (Open Educational Resources (OER) Project Manager/Head of Technical Services and Systems, Lansing Community College Library) <gongr1@lcc.edu>

**Column Editor's Note:** *It's that time of year again when librarians, publishers, and vendors converge and make a pilgrimage to Charleston. This is no doubt my favorite library conference and I have been attending it for five straight years since 2011. However, much to my disappointment, I'm not able to go this year. The reason has got something to do with my new position which is Open Educational Resources (OER) Project Manager. You see, the premier conference on open education (called **Open Ed Conference**) happens to be on the same date (November 2-4) and of course I need to be there. So I'll be missing all the fabulous food, restaurant hopping, and exclusive vendor-only invitations for dinner this year and of course my friends who I look forward to getting together in this charming city. But I know you all will have a fabulous time learning from the hundreds of concurrent sessions and keynote speakers lined up this year.*

*We have the most books reviewed in all the issues I've done as editor of this column. Each book speaks to the breadth and depth of topics and issues that make the LIS profession a vibrant learning community. I hope you take a sneak peek into each of the titles and decide to get them for yourself or for your library.*

*I'm always open to having more reviewers so if you are interested, just email me at <gongr1@lcc.edu>. Happy reading! — RG*

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**Cox, Brian.** *How Libraries Should Manage Data: Practical Guidance on How, With Minimum Resources, to Get the Best from Your Data.* Waltham, MA: Chandos Publishing, 2016. 9780081006634. 137 pages. \$78.95.

Reviewed by **Ashley Fast Bailey** (Senior Collection Development Manager, YBP Library Services) <abailey@ybp.com>

Data plays a big role in the decision making process of a library. We feel if we have enough data we can use it to make informed decisions or shape the direction of the library. But does having all the data really make answering questions any easier if one doesn't know how to utilize and understand it? **Brian Cox**, Peer Learning Manager at the **University of Wollongong**, provides a simple explanation of how having the right data, not the most data, can make all the difference. *How Libraries Should Manage Data* takes an applied look at using data to answer questions and approach projects in the most efficient and effective way possible. It gives a practical view on data management, and dispels some of the notions that you need more data to answer questions. By using real world illustrations, he demonstrates ways to use, collect, organize, and present data. *How Libraries Should Manage Data* is a great resource for learning more about the tools and ways to help with the data overload we see today.

**Cox** begins by focusing on choosing the right criteria and guidelines to gather the data needed to address a specific decision or purpose within the library. He talks about project management and defining the scope of a project. If this foundation is not in place, a library can gather all the data in the world but might quickly become overwhelmed or bogged down with how to use it. In addition to defining and laying the foundation, **Cox** goes on to dispel common errors in turning the data into usable formats. He outlines the best way to format and layout your data in a spreadsheet and common Excel errors and their ramifications. By organizing data into a single layer and using pivot tables and other available tools, the library can use raw data to easily and quickly answer a multitude of questions. He also argues that data should answer questions easily and quickly. The library should make the data work for them, not the other way around.

The majority of *How Libraries Should Manage Data* is a very practical, informative text that gives step by step guidelines on ways to create, take, and manipulate a raw data set to answer questions. He uses the simple example of checked out items within a library system,

but the illustration could easily be applied to a whole host of different projects. The way he breaks down his example makes the practical application aspect of this book easy to grasp and recreate.

Using data to its fullest potential will not only make the everyday easier, it will help define the library's value position. Data informs the direction a library takes and is used in many projects to answer questions. Being able to gather and use good data is a skill that a librarian must possess. A library can utilize good data to drive important decisions. **Brian Cox** clearly writes about gathering, using, and presenting data in an efficient, easy to use, and compelling way. *How Libraries Should Manage Data* is an easy to understand, practical guide on making the most of your data.

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**Schroeder, Robert.** *Critical Journeys: How 14 Librarians Came to Embrace Critical Practice.* Sacramento, CA: Library Juice Press, 2014. 97819366117925. 188 pages. \$52.00

Reviewed by **Leslie D. Burke** (Collection Development & Digital Integration Librarian, Kalamazoo College Library) <Leslie.Burke@kzoo.edu>

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I'm always interested in an adventure and so was curious to read more about what constitutes a "critical journey." I was not disappointed. This work, a collection of interviews, is a thoughtful, challenging, reflective work that is unlike many others I have read. The principal author, or interviewer, **Robert Schroeder**, corresponds with fourteen librarians or practitioners in library or archival settings about their views, personal paths, and reflections on critical theories of many types and how each uses critical thinking in their work in libraries and information literacy sessions.

The work begins with **Schroeder's** explanation about why he desired to create a book like this, and in this somewhat unusual format. Each interview was done over an extended period and primarily by email, allowing both interviewer and interviewee to reflect, rethink and compose their answers to the questions. It reads more like a shortened, typical interview and I sometimes wished that I was listening to it as an audio-book, with the actual people speaking.

A short biographical paragraph about the person interviewed heads up each chapter. Each answers a similar opening question about the type of critical theory they might employ in their work. As the questions continue, the follow-up questions change somewhat so that each interview is tailored and unique to that respondent. This work is somewhat challenging, especially for those librarians, like me, who never had exposure to critical theory in library school. Some of the chapters were very philosophical and harder to read since I felt I was "catching up" with some of the terminologies. The real experience examples that many of the authors give helped me to put their ideas in context with their practice.

The respondents often mention reading similar authors — and often each other — so it is apparent that **Schroeder** has chosen prominent thinkers in our profession. Many will recognize the authors as presenters and writers whose works they have read. For those of you who know the Undergraduate Library Rap (<http://acrl.ala.org/2011presprogram/?p=39>), you might be interested in **Dave Ellenwood's** chapter. Others will recognize names like **Emily Drabinski**, **Heather Jacobs**, **Alana Kumbier**, and **Maria Accardi**. There are archivists, library school professors and library deans represented as well. I found myself looking for **Paulo Freire's** *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in our collection as many people reference it in their comments.

Each of the interviews reveals the type of critical thinking that each might employ in their type of library. Some reference critical race theory, queer theory, or feminist pedagogy. Each of the theories takes

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one step back and analyzes the structures in place in their library milieu and how those structures or practices should be challenged to ensure that the library is truly meeting the needs of their users.

After reading this work, I feel like I am working on my personal “critical journey.” I was stretched mentally and challenged to examine my practice, reading, and research. Thankfully, each author includes references to some of the writers that have influenced them, and the work concludes with a helpful bibliography and index. Something **James Elmborg (University of Iowa)** mentions in his interview resonates with me: “We need to inform our doing by thinking and our thinking by doing. We need to have the courage to think, to think about ourselves, the academy, and our place in it.” (p.98) With this work as a starting point, I have some direction for continuing my study into critical practice.

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**Grover, Robert J., Roger C. Greer, Herbert K. Achleitner, and Kelly Visnak.** *Evolving Global Information Infrastructure and Information Transfer*. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2015. 978161699587. 150 pages. \$75.00.

Reviewed by **Dao Rong Gong** (Systems Librarian, Michigan State University Libraries) <gongd@msu.edu>

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It’s been thirty years since **Frederick Lancaster** first used the words “paperless society.” Although we are not completely paperless today, the way we use paper as information carrier has dramatically changed. This book tries to illustrate a global picture so we can look at some of the changes, and more importantly, establish some systematic approaches toward a better understanding of those changes. Written by information science educators and library professionals, this book “offers a fresh approach for analyzing and explaining the complex flow of information in today’s world (p. xi). In its well-structured ten chapters, readers are exposed to several information theories, views of information paradigm shift in contemporary society, and evolving trends in digital age.

The book is concise and carefully structured despite some rather complex topics and cross-disciplinary studies. A brief overview and summary accompany each chapter, making the discussion in the book focused and cohesive. The title *Evolving Global Information Infrastructure and Information Transfer* shows two key concepts of the book. Information infrastructure is defined as a global network that is “organized in a loosely coordinated system to enhance the creation, production, dissemination, organization, diffusion, storage, retrieval, and preservation of information and knowledge” (p.2). On the other hand, information transfer describes the “life cycle” of information where a “recorded message” is communicated (p.49). The various parts of information life cycle — from its creation, production to preservation process — defines this process of information diffusion. Generally, in library world, these concepts belong to the information technology perspective. However, the book does not only stay within technology, rather it attempts to view the two key concepts through the lens of history, society, culture, politics, and economy.

The book applies the Kuhnian paradigm shift theory to capture the characteristics of the revolutionary changes in modern society. A different view of the nature of reality can emerge as the old set of values and practices become challenged. From **Gutenberg’s** printing press to cloud computing, or from information transfer 1.0 to 3.0 according to the book, it is really the environmental and social context that influence the change. For example, the new technology is “dictated by economics. Affordability precedes adaptation on a wide scale” (p.20).

The book also touches upon the impact of the competing paradigms in information professionals. What roles do information professionals play in the information infrastructure? The authors point out that the emerging participatory culture defines the trends of today’s information world. In the last chapter, it provides an overview of emerging trends in information agencies such as globalization, open access, outreach, meta-learning, and shift from transactional service to engagement, out-

sourcing and crowdsourcing in technical services, etc. All of the changes not only impact the leadership roles of information professionals, but also have implications for ILS education.

This book showcases a framework for readers to gain perspectives toward the complex topic of information and knowledge in the digital age. It paints an overview of information paradigm shift, through well-balanced coverage of issues and topics. Although one may not be able to see an in depth study about each of the topics it touches upon, it certainly provides a set of good thinking points for its readers, who can use this as a research guide, to navigate through the landscape of information and knowledge.

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**Magi, Trina (Ed.) and Martin Garnar (Asst. Ed.).** *Intellectual Freedom Manual, 9th Edition*. Chicago, IL: American Library Association, 2015. 9780838912928. 296 pages. \$70.00.

Reviewed by **Margaret M. Kain** (Reference Librarian for Education, University of Alabama at Birmingham Libraries) <pkain@uab.edu>

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Various editions of the monograph *Intellectual Freedom Manual* have been a collection staple for all types of libraries since it was first published in 1974. The *Intellectual Freedom Manual, 9th Edition* contains similar content that has been made available in previous editions. However, it has been significantly revised so as to provide a more user friendly reference tool with resources and tips designed to provide assistance to librarians as they strive to maintain intellectual freedom. Listening to input collected from librarians, the redesign of the book has improved the readers’ ability to quickly locate the information needed.

*Intellectual Freedom Manual* provides an up-to-date overview and explanation of libraries’ issues, covering timely topics, such as those relating to access through social media and how access can work in harmony with the privacy of minors and the right to free speech. Rather than libraries restricting access or using filters, practical tips are provided so librarians may guide users to develop skills and attitudes that will help them effectively communicate and access information in the digital age. It is imperative that librarians continue to educate and inform users of the importance of intellectual freedom. After all, the library’s role in maintaining intellectual freedom is critical now more than ever.

The *Manual, 9th Edition* is organized into three major parts, with easy-to-read summaries. Part one uses core documents, essays, and supplementary materials to provide the reader with a foundation of knowledge. The significance of intellectual freedom to libraries is explained in great detail. Policy checklists are a plus for those library professionals tasked with writing new or revising existing policies.

Intellectual freedom issues, such as censorship, filtering, collections, privacy and copyright are some of the topics covered in part two. Beginning with a summary covering key concepts, specific information relating to all libraries and applicable policies are provided. Also included are supplemental “deeper look” materials on various topics, such as, how to proceed when a user has filed a complaint about a library employee or materials; recommended procedures when law enforcement representatives request library records or information about a library user or employee. While each situation will be unique, included supplemental material provides even the seasoned librarian with useful practice tips and tools.

Lastly, part three rounds out the discussion by providing information about how library professionals can effectively convey their library’s message about intellectual freedom, covering such topics as lobbying, media relations and dealing with negative publicity. Should a librarian wish to get involved in an association focused on intellectual freedom or is seeking additional information, a list of resources is provided.

The *Intellectual Freedom Manual, 9th Edition* offers core documents relating to library policies for all types of libraries and other key resources, such as applicable case law, and a glossary of terms. The policy guidelines

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and best practices that are included serve as useful resources for library professionals. Librarians utilizing this one resource will take a solid first step towards researching intellectual freedom. The *Manual, 9th Edition* offers guidance, including helpful tools for dealing with timely issues so as to ensure continued intellectual freedom for all library users. The revised, reorganized edition is easy to use and provides valuable information relating to intellectual freedom. While it may not be necessary for all librarians to read from cover-to-cover, it is a key reference resource that should be added to the collection of all types of libraries.

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**Wilkinson, Frances C., Lewis, Linda K., and Lubas, Rebecca L.** *The Complete Guide to Acquisitions Management*. 2nd ed. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited. 2015. 9781610697132. 208 pages. \$60.00.

Reviewed by **Frances Krempasky** (Electronic Resources Management Librarian, Lansing Community College Library)  
<krempf@lcc.edu>

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Acquisition managers and staff have witnessed first-hand the changes that technology has made in the acquisition of library material in the last two decades. In this second edition of *The Complete Guide to Acquisitions Management*, the authors offer a comprehensive framework for navigating this ever-changing acquisitions environment. First published in 2003, this updated edition expands to include the many changes that have occurred in the library, acquisitions, and publishing industry since then. Some of these changes include the move from acquiring primarily print resources to electronic journals and eBooks, options to lease or own material, consortial purchasing, and options for setting up patron or demand-driven acquisition programs. The move to electronic resources has also brought about changes in Acquisitions staffing, including the addition of Electronic Resource Librarian positions and the shifting of acquisitions staff to e-resource processing.

*The Complete Guide to Acquisitions Management* is part of the "Library and Information Science Text Series" from Libraries Unlimited and written by **Frances C. Wilkinson, Linda K. Lewis, and Rebecca L. Lubas** who are all experts in management, technical services, collection development, and acquisitions in academic libraries. The authors are successful in bringing together a book that is comprehensive in scope and covers all aspects of acquisitions management.

The authors' combined experience in acquisitions and management is evident with each of the twelve chapters covering the key topics and practices in acquisitions management. The chapters include historical background and touch on philosophical and theoretical aspects of acquisitions management. The authors note that in today's world, acquiring physical materials such as books and print serials has transformed into obtaining licensing and access to electronic materials. Also included in the book is an insightful overview of the publishing industry that offers a chronology of the serials pricing crisis of the 1980s, scholarly publishing crisis, rise of electronic publishing, self-publishing, and open access initiatives. As the authors state, "electronic publishing revolutionized research, publishing, and libraries" (p.23).

The authors also provide excellent recommendations when planning, implementing, and evaluating an outsourcing project, Request for Proposal (RFP), and selecting an acquisition system. Anyone who is contemplating any of these projects would be well advised to read these chapters and follow up with the reference lists at the end of each chapter, as well as the in-text citations.

One topic that I found particularly useful was on vendor outsourcing services. The authors make the case that vendors are often able to offer services that were once performed in-house such as shelf-ready books and approval plans for collection development. These services allow libraries to achieve cost-savings, increase services, and free staff to perform other tasks, especially as related to core services.

The authors describe some of the best practices of acquisitions management and bring clarity to the processes, structures, organization,

and resources. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in learning about the acquisitions environment today, from new acquisition librarians to library directors. While some chapters are more attuned to academic research libraries than others, small college libraries and public libraries will benefit from this excellent resource as well.

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**Rubin, Richard.** *Foundations of Library and Information Science*. 4th ed. Chicago, IL: Neal-Schuman, 2016. 9780838913703. 648 pages. \$85.00.

Reviewed by **Maurine McCourry** (Technical Services Librarian, Hillsdale College, Mossey Library)  
<mmccourry@hillsdale.edu>

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**Richard Rubin's *Foundations of Library and Information Science*** continues to deserve its place in the required curriculum of many American MLS programs. The fourth edition reuses a good deal of text from the third edition, published in 2010, but also includes quite a bit of significantly updated material and a greatly improved layout and structure. The printed text is much easier to read, with a slightly larger font and slightly greater line spacing and margins, and the somewhat distracting sidebars used in the last edition have been eliminated. The page count is greater, but the changes are well worth the additional weight. The employment of an impressive "faculty advisory board" has been retained, fittingly for a foundational textbook, and **Joe Janes** once again provides an engaging foreword.

**Rubin's** text is very well-suited to an introductory course in library and information science, particularly at the graduate level, although it could serve an undergraduate audience just as well. It provides a clear outline of the elements that make up the "knowledge infrastructure" in the United States, including a helpfully concise table showing the range of types of libraries in the U.S. This edition incorporates a welcome reduction in the use of jargon and acronyms from the third edition, and the elimination of a rather dense multi-page table of data regarding media usage. There is a focus throughout this text on American institutions and practices, which may limit its broader use, but which does provide rich practical content for American students.

Coverage of the history of libraries in this edition has been enhanced with recent scholarship and clarified language, making an already strong summary even more useful. This coverage is followed immediately by a discussion of the structure of libraries as institutions, and one on the changing nature of library service. These library-specific chapters occur earlier in the text in this edition than in the last, making the historical importance of libraries in the world of information much more clear. A very thorough explanation of the discipline of library and information science is provided largely unchanged, but in a more useful place in this edition. The chapter previously titled "The Organization of Information" is now "The Organization of Knowledge," reflecting current scholarship, and has been updated to include recent developments in the field, as has the chapter focusing on information science.

The text concludes as the previous edition, with chapters on information policy, intellectual freedom, and values and ethics. All of these subjects are covered as thoroughly as can be expected in a general textbook, and all have been updated to reflect recent developments in news and legislation, including brief mention of the Snowden case. Appendices from the previous edition are updated, listing and describing the work of major library and information science organizations, and listing ALA-accredited MLS programs in the United States and Canada. Added to this edition as a third appendix is the text of ALA's 2015 Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library and Information Studies, which should be helpful to students just starting their work in those programs.

*Foundations of Library and Information Science*, in its latest edition, lives up to the broad expectations set by its title. It will be useful to graduate students for years to come, but will also serve as a useful review and update to current professionals, and will serve as a needed reference to those outside the field interested in what information professionals actually do. I heartily recommend it to all of those groups.

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**Powell, James and Matthew Hopkins.** *A Librarian's Guide to Graphs, Data and the Semantic Web.* Chandos Information Professional Series. Kidlington, UK: Chandos, 2015. 9781843347538. 242 pages. \$80.00.

Reviewed by **Michelle Polchow** (Electronic Resources Librarian, George Mason University) <mpolchow@gmu.edu>

Do you recall an engaging teacher who used stories to illustrate complex concepts and a joke or two to break the monotony of tedious details? **Powell** and **Hopkins** earn exceptional teacher merit tackling a multitude of complex topics at an introductory level, creating highly readable appeal for a broad audience. From mathematics to linguistics, computational science to software engineering, this book is an excellent encapsulation of the evolution of the Semantic Web, and could have well-served the library and information science education community, if it had been fully supported with bibliographic citations.

Using historical reference, the work first examines the principles which inspired **Tim Berners-Lee's** application for a linked data web. Understanding the fundamentals of graph theory, how it is used to represent and explore data, capturing both simplistic and complex systems, is a new frontier. This may sound intimidating but the book's illustrative networks such as subway transportation maps, Facebook or the spread of a disease, brings a tangible and familiar quality to graph theory. Even when narrowing the focus to computing and software engineering tools that facilitate the study of complex systems, terminology is well-defined and significant attention is given to comparison, differentiation and summarization to fully connect the concepts to the examples of implementation.

This is a textbook containing a progression of knowledge that is a prerequisite for understanding later chapters. Understanding graph theory and reading graph models is a foundational outcome. It unlocks the complex alphabet soup of acronyms that makeup the standards and tools supporting the Semantic Web. Definitions and development contextualize a plethora of metadata, ontologies, taxonomies, ranging from RDF, geospatial data, Friend of A Friend (FOAF), BIBFRAME, SCHEMA, through JSON, REST API, SPARQL and more. The book joins many important puzzle pieces, particularly the discussion that reveals how MARC fails at remaining a flavorful ingredient in this alphabet soup.

The authors unveil decades of development, comparing the evolution of the Semantic Web in tandem with progress by information specialists. This book is filled with emerging social network applications, Semantic Web search engines, opportunities for just-in-time information retrieval and applied language learning, demonstrating broad application for library and information science, library technical staff, software engineers, data scientists, information architects and informational retrieval experts.

Still not convinced this book is for you? Consider that the world's digitized content has reached critical mass so as to change the way researchers explore information. The work of **Powell** and **Hopkins** is an excellent starting point to understand and recognize the fundamental forces rewriting how information and knowledge will be managed in the future. Case studies and practical applications of graph theory concretely illuminate how this knowledge can empower professionals to speak the same language as innovators and leverage complex insights for research in a wide variety of knowledge fields.

The disappointing flaw was that two librarians from **Los Alamos National Laboratory**, an internationally recognized research organization, would omit connecting this great work to the bibliographic citation framework, particularly in light of the book's topic and target audience. If this was an editorial decision, it calls into question the current quality of the Chandos Information Professional Series. Due to this omission, it makes it impossible to recommend the book without this admonition. Perhaps a second edition will right the situation and this correction would create a true gem of a book.

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**Bowles-Terry, Melissa, and Cassandra Kvenild.** *Classroom Assessment Techniques for Librarians.* Chicago, IL: ACRL, 2015. 9780838987759. 118 pages. \$36.00.

Reviewed by **Susan Ponischil** (Access Services Librarian, Grace Hauenstein Library, Aquinas College)  
<susan.ponischil@aquinas.edu>

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Assessment as a means of determining value has taken a front seat for many academic library administrators. In a climate of right-sizing, librarians who may be searching for meaning are further incentivized by college administrators who are looking for value. With this book, the authors **Melissa Bowles-Terry** and **Cassandra Kvenild**, academic librarians who have published a variety of articles about the valuation of library instruction, provide a primer for classroom assessment. Using the second edition of **Thomas A. Angelo's** 1993, four hundred forty-eight paged tome *Classroom Assessment Techniques* as inspiration, the authors "approach assessment as a learning activity for students and instructors" adhering to **Angelo's** definition of assessment as "an ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning." References to **Wiggins** and **McTighe's** *Understanding by Design* principles are brought into discussions of assessment planning. Overall, emphasis is placed on instructors and students making use of the results of *Classroom Assessment Techniques (CAT)*.

This succinct manual applies student assessment to a variety of situations ranging from library one shots to credit bearing information literacy courses. The approach to assessment is clearly stated on the book's cover: plan, do it, respond. Each of the six chapters identifies a specific type of assessment and addresses why it's important. This is one of the book's strengths as it attaches meaning to the process. Assessment types are identified as prior knowledge and understanding, analytical skills and critical thinking, synthesis and creative thinking, skill in application, attitudes and self-awareness, and learner reactions. In outlining how to implement assessment techniques for each type, the authors include a number of familiar methods ranging from a minute paper to assess prior knowledge and understanding, to concept maps to assess synthesis and creative thinking. Each method includes an example or two with how to evaluate and score, and how to use the results. The authors' devote an entire chapter to gauging students' perceptions of the research process which inform both instructor and student. The last chapter focuses on students' assessment of both instruction and material, and is prefaced with an interesting breakdown of qualities students value in an instructor. Two brief appendices introduce learning outcomes and rubrics as tools, and provide first steps.

In the introduction the authors state, "Whenever possible, we have aligned these assessment techniques with the *ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, as well as with the *AASL Standards for the 21st Century Learner*." The Framework in practice is introduced in Chapter 3 when each one of the frames is used as an example of the one-sentence summary technique, then again in Chapter 4 with the mention of knowledge practices. Though connections are inferred, those looking for clear lines connecting CAT to frames will be disappointed. That said, at a time when the focus of information literacy has shifted from finding and using information to a more thoughtful analysis and evaluation of information, this book helps to bridge the gap as both an introduction and an effective beginner's guide to strategies for assessment.

This book is geared toward academic librarians. It is unique in that it simply and succinctly provides step-by-step instruction in context. The layout is consistent throughout the chapters, all beginning with a basic theoretical defense for assessment in a variety of situations. This assignation of meaning provides perspective and sets up the lessons that follow as a way to satisfy an identified need. Though the addition of an index would enhance the reader's use of this tool as a ready reference, the authors are able to achieve their goal of identifying the potential of classroom assessment techniques for both students and instructors, and the significance of ongoing assessment.

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**Goldsmith, Francisca.** *Crash Course in Weeding Library Collections*. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2016. 9781440836886. 109 pages. \$45.00.

Reviewed by **Steve Sowards** (Associate Director for Collections, Michigan State University Libraries) <sowards@msu.edu>

What can a weeding manual for small public libraries say to larger academic libraries? The takeaways are limited for workflow and processes, but surprisingly provocative in terms of motivation, challenges and pitfalls. Readers may not always adopt **Goldsmith's** method, but evaluating her approach can clarify local issues, requirements and tactics.

The author is a veteran of public and school libraries in the U.S. and Canada, a consultant, and the author of works on collection development and readers' advisory. Her audience is library staff in need of basic information, a weeding plan, or orientation to a new assignment. With user services rather than collections in mind, her goal for weeding is "to create and maintain an environment that welcomes, provides substance, and is accessible both physically and intellectually" (p. vii). The text can be a workshop manual or a "how-to" guide that positions weeding work in day-to-day operations. After definition of terms and concepts, the reader moves from purpose to execution in eight chapters. Worksheets and checklists connect abstract ideas with practical situations. Supporting features include an index, endnotes, and a bibliography of books, articles, reports, and Websites. Part of the publisher's "Crash Course in..." series, the text is available in print or as an eBook. **Rebecca Vnuuk's** *Weeding Handbook* is a similar work built around discussion of Dewey Decimal call numbers, rather than service goals. An older resource is **Stanley J. Slote**, *Weeding Library Collections*.

**Goldsmith** embraces the CREW (Continuous Review and Evaluation Weeding) method with worksheets and to-do lists to jumpstart the process. The "CREW Manual" is freely available online (<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/sites/default/files/public/tslac/ld/ld/pubs/crew/crewmeth12.pdf>) and readers of this review can explore more deeply there. **Goldsmith** sometimes modifies CREW to match realities in small libraries: for example, **Goldsmith** implies wider participation by all staff to share the work.

To the extent that academic librarians think about preserving the cultural record, a shared national collection, or topics like "last copy" policies, **Goldsmith's** approach can be jarring. She deploys revealing metaphors, describing unwanted books in terms of garden weeds (p. vii) dental hygiene (p. vii), knick-knack clutter (p. 7), old cars (p. 9), and refrigerator cleaning (p. 59). If "[p]eriodicals are by definition intended ... to be replaced" (p.3) does that suggest an absence of backfiles? A worn book is a candidate for suspicion, rather than conservation or preservation. She assumes that other larger libraries can supply books when the weeded collection is too lean.

On the other hand, many of her points will resonate with academic librarians. Building space is a rare and valuable "commodity" (p. 8) for which collections and services compete: hence the need to weed. Weeding pressures may prompt strategic realignments, such as dropping an entire format (microfilm, for example) in favor of newer options (usually digital). Collection development policy statements can guide, define, publicize, and defend weeding decisions. Emotional factors can distort the process for both staff and readers. Ethical weeding maintains collection balance and avoids censorship. Open communication must reach all stakeholders. Gifts-in-kind bring potential burdens to all libraries, especially gifts of older or controversial materials. All libraries also face novel weeding situations: for example, how to manage outmoded eBooks that occupy no shelf space but can clutter up the online catalog. **Goldsmith** will not always have an answer for academic libraries, but she may suggest some questions.



**Moss, Michael, Barbara Endicott-Popovsky and Marc J. Dupuis**, eds. *Is Digital Different?: How Information Creation, Capture, Preservation and Discovery Are Being Transformed*. London: Facet Publishing, 2015. 9781856048545. 217 pages. \$95.00.

Reviewed by **Don Todaro** (Director of Reference/Research and Collections Management, Library of Michigan) <todarod@michigan.gov>

The edited collection, *Is Digital Different?* poses various questions surrounding the changes that have occurred over the last 25 years as a result of the digital revolution, and discusses whether the digital realm supplements the analogue world or supplants it. Though the contributors may occasionally appear divided over the issue, the subtitle points to the recurring view that the changes are indeed transformative. In the opening chapter, **Michael Moss** remarks that a binary opposition has opened up between "technologists" and the curatorial professions, with the former favoring the jettisoning of practices developed over hundreds of years in the name of efficiency. He goes on to conclude that the questions raised by the divide can be resolved only through collaboration, and a blending of the new and old practices.

The volume is comprised of a wide-ranging series of essays on various facets of the Web, including cyber security, crowdsourcing, the Semantic Web, privacy and, of course, search and discovery. Several of the essays offer a close-up look at a topic, often concerning archival questions, such as the evolution of the catalog of the (UK) National Archives at Kew. Others consider the effects of the digital revolution with special reference to libraries, including a rather polemical, intriguing piece on 'search' entitled "Finding Stuff," which, through an analysis of five empirical studies of search logs and interviews with researchers, maintains that librarians are 'in denial' and that researchers are perfectly capable and happy to do their work without the need for a librarian's intervention. Still other essays take a higher-level, theoretical approach to an issue, such as security and risk-management, discussing evolving work and research in an area. Over the course of the book's nine chapters, the theme of the book, i.e., difference between the digital and analogue environments, is often only implied. A more general consideration of the networked environment and how it has complicated the lives of information professionals, from managing security and cloud architecture, to curatorial and preservation matters, comes to the fore.

The authors of the essays do a laudable job of dealing with rather complex subjects in a relatively short space, all but one in under twenty pages. Most give the reader a broad introduction to a topic, and bring one up to date on current research, new directions, and the like. For example, the chapter titled "RDF, the Semantic Web, Jordan, Jordan and Jordan" elaborates the differences between the Semantic Web and the earlier textual, non-Semantic Web, though it does not touch on the question of the path from paper to digital. The author entertainingly parses a long definition of the Semantic Web that appears to be "gobbledegook" phrase by phrase to show that its meaning is really rather straightforward.

An exemplary concluding chapter on digital humanities scholarship nicely contrasts the paper era with research methodologies currently on the rise in the digital space, including those involving Big Data. The nuanced and informative discussions in this chapter place the emphasis squarely back on the contrast setup by the volume's title between the digital and paper environments. Interesting discussions of individual projects, as in the crowdsourcing chapter, are offered, as well as caveats and competing views on the pros and cons of developments in a particular area. One criticism might be that not enough attention is devoted to digital preservation. The editors refer to the work as a textbook intended for students of information studies though it also aimed at information professionals more generally. Overall, the volume makes for rewarding reading, though some of it may be rather advanced for a student new to the field. Recommended for those interested in the current state of research on digital developments.

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**Alemu, Getaneh and Brett Stevens.** *An Emergent Theory of Digital Library Metadata: Enrich then Filter*. Chandos Information Professional Series. Kidlington, UK: Chandos Publishing, 2015. 9780081003855. 122 pages. \$78.95.

Reviewed by **Mary Jo Zeter** (Latin American and Caribbean Studies Bibliographer, Michigan State University Libraries) <zeter@msu.edu>

Few in the library world would argue with the assertion that new technologies and changing user expectations have called into question the place of libraries and librarians in today's information ecosystem. We are more than a little familiar with the many surveys and studies showing that most information seekers turn to internet search engines, and we are equally aware of the burgeoning number of digital information resources that we are called upon to organize and describe. In *An Emergent Theory of Digital Library Metadata: Enrich then Filter*, authors **Alemu** and **Stevens** offer a framework to guide 21st century practitioners and developers that is built upon four principles: Metadata Enriching, Linking, Openness and Filtering. In a nutshell, the theory stipulates a mixed metadata approach in which standards-based metadata (expert-created) is enriched with socially-constructed metadata (user-created) in a continuous process, then filtered for users at the point of delivery through a personalized, contextual interface. The principles of Linked Data and openly accessible metadata that can be shared and reused are fundamental to the enriching and filtering processes that are called for.

A thorough review of existing standards-based metadata and discussion of the emergence of socially-constructed (user-created) metadata approaches takes up nearly the first half of the book, but is justified given the mixed metadata approach at the heart of the authors' proposition. Briefly outlining the development of current metadata approaches, be-

ginning with modern cataloging standards (e.g., AACR, MARC format, FRBR, and RDA), the authors go on to focus on underlying principles, which are rooted in the need to achieve maximum efficiencies. The limitations of these standards and of others developed specifically to describe digital information objects, such as Encoded Archival Description (EAD), Dublin Core, and Metadata Object Description Schema (MODS) are discussed in detail, and while acknowledging the benefits of standards-based, expert-created metadata, the authors contend that it fails to adequately represent the diversity of views and perspectives of potential users. Additionally, the imperative to "enrich" expert-created metadata with metadata created by users is not only a practical response to the rapidly increasing amount of digital information, argue the authors, it is necessary in order to fully optimize the potential of Linked Data. In short, Web 2.0 technologies that encourage users to be active participants rather than mere viewers or consumers of information point the way forward, yet expert-created metadata would continue to fulfill important functions.

An early assertion that the book is "informed by 4 years of in-depth interviews with metadata practitioners, researchers and academics," (p. xi) is puzzling; later it is made clear that the interviews are drawn from previous research (pp. 45-46). In fact, the theory presented in the book is the subject of **Alemu's** Portsmouth University Ph.D. dissertation, *A Theory of Digital Library Metadata: The Emergence of Enriching and Filtering* (2014), which is based on an analysis of 57 in-depth interviews with library and information professionals and users. **Alemu** (now Cataloging and Metadata Librarian at *Southampton Solent University*, UK) and **Stevens** (Principal Lecturer, *School of Creative Technologies, Portsmouth University*, UK), along with two of **Stevens'** *Portsmouth* colleagues, also co-authored the article, "Toward an Emerging Principle of Linking Socially-Constructed Metadata" (*Journal of Library Metadata*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2014), which presents an analysis of interview results as well. The book by **Alemu** and **Stevens**, however, provides a much more extensive treatment of the subject, especially with respect to the development and principles of standards-based vs. socially-constructed metadata. Anyone interested in a thorough, well-documented and yet highly readable text responding to the challenges of discovery and findability of library resources is advised to read this book. 🌲

## Oregon Trails — Book Collecting for Fun, not Profit

Column Editor: **Thomas W. Leonhardt** (Retired, Eugene, OR 97404) <oskibear70@gmail.com>

"Of the making of books there is no end." Nor is there an end to book collections. But, it is not the end that I am thinking about but rather the beginning of a book collection and how to go about creating one.

Notice that I say "book collections" and not "collecting books." Merely collecting books can easily devolve into hoarding. There is no prize for dying with the most books. Quality beats quantity in this instance but quantity, too, counts as one's collection grows and another shelf has to be added for the next acquisition.

If you have read any of the many works on book collecting you know that it is ill-advised to have profit as the *raison d'être* for your hobby. If I could find a buyer for my four major author collections, I would scarcely get half of what I paid. But I am not about to part with my sanctuary of writing that I return to again and again, finding something new each time.

To be sure, some books gain in value, but buying books as investments is a subject entirely removed from what I

want to talk about. If you are interested, there are books on collecting that can provide you with enough information to either encourage or, more likely, dissuade you from taking that route. You might be better off playing the stock market if it's monetary riches you are after.

If not for profit, why collect books? The simple answer is because I like books. I am not just a bibliophile, I have what one of my daughters when eight or nine years old called the book disease after seeing the library of a man who regularly donated books to the **Stanford University Libraries**. He was a psychiatrist and keenly aware of the truth of her observation when I told him about it. He would have also understood **William McFee's** comment, writing in the introduction to his own bibliography (*A Bibliography of the Writings of William McFee* by **James T. Babb**, 1931) that "the reader [of the bibliography] ... is probably a collector and therefore a suitable subject for a psycho-pathologist..."

The word bibliophile has connotations of wealth,

private press books, fine printing and binding, fore edge painting, incunables, etc. In short, one thinks of rare books when one thinks of bibliophiles and collecting. As an impecunious collector, my goals are modest and the rare acquisition of a scarce but affordable book is pure serendipity. But such a purchase is really only satisfying within the context of the collection.

I would also differentiate between building a library and building a collection recognizing that a library is a collection but a collection is not necessarily a library but can also be part of a library. My personal library contains at least a dozen discrete collections and a good many other books that reflect my literary tastes and subject interests but not to a degree that compels me to seek out like titles or authors. I have neither the time nor the money, nor the space, nor the inclination in doing so although winning a multimillion dollar lottery might persuade me otherwise.

What are the essentials to building a book collection? One need not be wealthy but some disposable income is required. Part of the challenge of collecting on a shoestring is reducing

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