Against the Grain

Book Reviews- Monographic Musings

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Eshleman, Joe, Dr. Richard Moniz, Karen Mann and Kristen Eshleman. *Librarians and Instructional Designers: Collaboration and Innovation*. Chicago: ALA Editions, 2016. 187 pages. $65.00 ($58.50 for ALA members.)

Reviewed by Jessica Shuck (eResources Librarian, Cornerstone University) <jessica.shuck@cornerstone.edu>

As the role of academic librarian shifts for many of us from one of service to that of an educator, it is beneficial to collaborate with others who are experts in pedagogy and technology to ensure library instruction is effective and useful to our students. One critical position in this transformation of library work is that of the Instructional Designer. While there are distinct differences between the two professions, there is also one shared overarching goal. The authors refer to the ACRL framework for Information Literacy throughout the book and reiterate that both instructional designers and academic librarians aim to create digital and information literate learners.

While reasons for this partnership may seem obvious to academic librarians, *Librarians and Instructional Designers* does a great job of clarifying these benefits, in addition to describing the changing environment in higher education and librarianship. It discusses the history of both professions as well as the differences and similarities in their current roles to stress the importance of the two working together. The work includes a chapter entitled “Best Practices and Opportunities for Collaboration” and provides numerous case studies for demonstration and inspiration.

The authors are the perfect example of librarians and instructional designers working together effectively. Three of the four are from Johnson & Wales University Library (at the Charlotte, North Carolina campus). Joe Eshleman is the Instructional Librarian, Richard Moniz is an instructor and the Director of Library Services, and Karen Mann provides Instructional Technology and Design services.

Kristen Eshleman is the Director of Instructional Technology at Davidson College (in North Carolina) and the lead instructional designer for DavidsonX. Each authored chapters relating to their specialty.

In particular, the two chapters written by Karen Mann are particularly noteworthy. Mann draws upon her technology and design experience especially evident in Chapter 7 (Digital Media in the Modern University) and Chapter 8 (Integrating the Library and the LMS). She emphasizes the importance of multimodal learning and the sharing of instructional tools, free and subscription. She provides concrete examples of sharing such as open houses, small group discussions and workshops. Chapter 8 was especially useful, offering multiple options for integrating librarians into the learning management system and using the LMS to initiate information literacy.

Overall, *Librarians and Instructional Designers: Collaboration and Innovation* was a helpful book for librarians interested in becoming more embedded into instruction. While not all the ideas presented are extremely innovative, they are very inspiring and will be helpful as you develop these competencies for your library. The book also encourages more research with each chapter containing a long list of resources for further reading.

**ATG Reviewer Rating:** I need this available somewhere in my shared network. (I probably do not need this book, but it would be nice to get it with three to five days via my network catalog.)

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Reviewed by Steven W. Sowards (Associate Director for Collections, Michigan State University Libraries, East Lansing, MI) <sowards@msu.edu>

This is a book for any librarian who is weary of flavor-of-the-week management advice, buzzwords, and poorly-grounded advice from consultants. Reviewing decades of management theories from the for-profit world and their (mis)application to the world of library work, the author dismisses them all, arguing instead that libraries have their own inherent management practices, rooted in real experience, and therefore can rely on our own values and self-awareness. This is a text of reassurance, not another how-to manual.

Masanori Koizumi argues for “conviction in the soundness of library management” rather than adoption of faddish business theories. He sees “well established” “implicitly performed” “inherent strategies” as an unrecognized strength (p. ix). “The management strategies developed and presented in this book are based on libraries’ long-standing management practices … unique to libraries, premises... continued on page 40
on ideas and purposes specific to libraries that are not evident in the management theories of private enterprises...” Specific cases point to “management strategies that have been used implicitly and effectively by librarians...” Rather than see librarians cast aside past practices, “...the knowledge and skills they have cultivated over their long history remain useful...” and they provide a firm foundation...” even if “...those library management strategies had been invisible for a long time” (p. 2).

The presentation is thorough and organized, but can be dry, reflecting its origin as a doctoral dissertation. The audience will be professionals and academics. References to the literature appear at the end of chapters, especially chapter 3 which reviews the application of management ideas to library work, and chapter 4 which analyzes the organization of specific libraries. Works cited are in English and cover a period from the 1950s up to 2013. The author is a professor of Library and Information Sciences (LIS) in Japan, with research interests in library management, library governance, and services to communities and citizens. The book, in print and as an eBook, is part of Elsevier’s “Chandos Learning and Teaching Series.”

This is not a long book (some 230 pages) and effectively shorter than it appears, because a third of the text consists of tables and figures. This is especially true in Chapter 4, an analysis of library organizations and reorganizations. For those wanting to cut to the chase, Koizumi’s core conclusions appear on pages 188-201, where he identifies four types of inherent organizational designs: subject-based, media-based, function-based and region-based. Koizumi wraps up his work by listing “General strategies for libraries...” (1) subject-based knowledge and information services... (2) coping with new media and the increase in document formats; (3) effective collection distribution and archival [sic]; (4) sharing collections and bilateral collaboration; and (5) expanding openness and outreach.” General strategies lead to “specific strategies” (one might say, goals or features of library operations) such as “subject specialization” in services, opportunities for underserved populations, “consultation services” ranging from basic reference to sophisticated research services,” expanded “editing and publishing functions” to disseminate information, better “visitor facilities,” and the pursuit of “service and operational improvement” through efficiency.

Koizumi analyzes tables of organization and operations at numerous libraries, such as the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, the Tokyo Public Library, the Boston Public Library, the New York Public Library, and in even greater depth, the libraries of the Japanese Diet (parliament), Cornell University and Harvard University. Some key findings (such as the “general strategies”) appear clearly only as he concludes. The focus is on large institutions: would the same argument apply to small and mid-sized libraries? How comparable are large special, academic and public libraries, especially when looking at both Japan and the United States? A list would help readers access the large amount of information found in the tables and figures. A chronology of business management theories would guide readers through the changing landscape.

ATG Reviewer Rating: I need this available somewhere in my shared network. (I probably do not need this book, but it would be nice to get it with three to five days via my network catalog.)


Reviewed by Michelle Polchow (Electronic Resources Librarian, University of California, Davis) <mpolchow@ucdavis.edu>
veterans, autism’s rise in the general population, to temporary disabili-
ties following accidents or surgery. This is a sage reminder from the
authors, “To forget persons with disabilities when offering these learning
opportunities is to ignore an entire population of users who may most
need your materials and services.”

On a personal note, while earning my masters of library science
(MLS), I was victim to a car accident. Without feeling in my left
hand, I temporarily found myself ill equipped to manage my disability,
~ together with an unexpected time commitment for physical therapy. I
discovered the MLS lab equipped with assistive technology, and this
lesson in experiential learning has stayed with me. First-hand, I became
familiar with screen readers and database platforms, some more inclusive
than others. Everyone benefits from learning what inclusivity means,
and it’s worth point out, no one is immune from the effects of aging.
Is your library ready?

**ATG Reviewer Rating: I need this in my library.** (I want to be
able to get up from my desk and grab this book off the shelf, if it’s not
checked out.)

**Monson, Jane D.** *Getting Started with Digital Collections:
9780838915431, 184 pages. $69.00 ($62.10 for ALA members.)

Reviewed by Katherine Swart (Collection Development Librarian,
Hekman Library, Calvin College) <kswant20@calvin.edu>

It’s all too common for patrons to ask, “Can I get that online?”
And, much of the time the answer is yes. However, when it comes to
cultural heritage collections, there is often a gap between patron desires
and the realities. This is especially true with collections held by small
institutions who may struggle to make their collections available online.
Creating digital collections isn’t as easy as slipping an old photograph
on a scanner and uploading the file to a website. But at the same time,
digitizing a collection doesn’t have to be an overwhelming burden.

**Jane D. Monson** enters the conversation with a well-researched
guide introducing librarians to what it takes to create a digital collection.
As the digital initiatives librarian at the *University of Northern
Colorado* and reviews editor for the *Journal of Web Librarianship,*
Monson writes from experience. She also does well to focus the book
“... on the needs of professionals at small and midsize cultural heritage
institutions who do not have previous experience with digital collections
and who may be working with limitations related to money, staffing,
and technology (viii).”

The book begins with a section on managing projects. Monson
describes how smaller institutions face unique challenges when embarking
on a digitization project, namely money, staffing, and infrastructure.
Remaining positive yet realistic, the author explores the skills needed to
be a successful digital librarian, often as a solo act in smaller institutions.
She has excellent ideas for working across departments at a library and
details best practices for how to collaborate with colleagues to leverage
the strengths of one’s institution. Lastly, she explains collaborative
digital repositories such as Europeana and Digital Public Library of
America (DPLA) and the benefits and drawbacks of collaborating across
institutions.

The second half of the book delves into the nitty gritty of digitiza-
tion. With whole chapters on image conversion and metadata, the book
teaches novice librarians the differences among file types, how to select
an image resolution, useful metadata terminology, and how to create a
metadata scheme. Furthermore, Monson objectively surveys common
proprietary and open source digital collection management systems
(DCMS) in another chapter while tackling copyright basics in the next.
The book ends with a chapter on the importance of digital preservation.

**Monson** truly succeeds in covering every aspect of digitization that
small institutions should know about and does so in a readable style
that will appeal to librarians. The book clearly conveys what readers
are getting into when conducting a digitization project from beginning
to end. However, the author is wise to point out periodically that flex-
ibility, not perfection is key. The basic skills chapters are invaluable,
as are Monson’s innovative ideas for collaborating across institutions.
Every small institution starting a digital collection project should read
this book.

**ATG Reviewer Rating: I need this on my desk.** (This book is so valu-
able, that I want my own copy at my desk that I will share with no one.)

**Reale, Michelle.** *Becoming a Reflective Librarian and Teacher:
Strategies for Mindful Academic Practice.* Chicago: ALA
978-0838915295. $57.00 ($51.30 for ALA members.)

Reviewed by Sally Ziph (Librarian, Kresge Library Services,
Ross School of Business, University of Michigan)
<sweston@umich.edu>

The idea of reflective practice for professionals can be traced back
to the writings of John Dewey and others, including management re-
searcher Chris Argyris in the late 1970s. The key aspect of “reflective
practice” is to explore your own experiences as a means to improve the
way that you work. In this thoughtful and provocative book, Michelle
Reale, librarian and associate professor at *Arcadia University,* posits
an active process of reflection as a way for academic librarians/teachers
to improve their performance in both the classroom and in the library.

The book’s chapters cover all aspects of starting a reflective practice
with a notion of this being for librarians and educators. Reale writes
about intentional reflection, the cycle of reflection, using a journal,
reflection with colleagues and reflection as a class assignment. Each
chapter includes anecdotes, suggestions, references and step-by-step
strategies and exercises.

The book explains in detail how to create a self-perpetuating “re-
flexive loop” process in which we “interrogate, and respond to our own
thoughts, feelings, and dilemmas” in order “to take stock of our practice
by interpreting, analyzing, and questioning the way we work.” These
days, many professors are asking students to write and turn in “reflective
interlude” assignments, even here at the Ross School of Business. That
fact alone is a good enough reason for librarian educators to try out the
process for themselves.

I found this book fascinating, and I was especially interested in
Reale’s breakdown of the reflexive loop into three processes: making
the time for reflection, becoming a perpetual problem solver; and questioning
the status quo, as well as her discussion of the three precepts of meta-
cognitive awareness: *declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge
and conditional knowledge.* There’s even an intriguing autobiographical
note that reveals how Reale stumbled into her own reflective practice
after being criticized for her “authentic” work style.

**ATG Reviewer Rating: I need this in my library.** (I want to be
able to get up from my desk and grab this book off the shelf, if it’s not
checked out.)

**Sowards, Steven W., and Juneal Chenoweth, editors.** *The
Reference Librarian’s Bible: Print and Digital Reference
Resources Every Library Should Own.* Santa Barbara,

Reviewed by Julie Huskey (Head of Cataloging, Tennessee State
University, Nashville, TN) <jhuskey@tnstate.edu>.

This work admits that it might be considered something of a throw-
back: since the rise of the Internet, reference books have fallen out of
fashion among patrons (and many librarians), in favor of (preferably
free) online sources. Although librarians know that curation of resources
is more important than ever, reference shelves are nevertheless often
squeezed by other demands for space, from both inside and outside the
library. The *Reference Librarian’s Bible* is the sort of bibliography
continued on page 43
Wryly Noted — Books About Books


When I once asked my friend Bob Willig why he had opened a bookstore (Troubadour Books for Saints and Holy Fools) he replied: “Because books are oceanic. They contain everything.” I couldn’t agree more. The book at hand is for those who hold a similar belief and want to read a book that confirms it. Stuart Kells is an authority on rare books and book-trade history. He has previously written a history of Penguin Books, Penguin and the Lane Brothers, and he is the author of Rare, the biography of Kay Craddock, the first female president of the International League of Antiquarian Booksellers. Because of his background, he is the ideal companion for a fresh tour through the minutiae of library and book collecting history.

With chapters on Renaissance book hunters, English bibliomaniacs, secret library compartments, destructive library fires in history, and infamous book thieves, we follow him through almost every country and time gleaming bits of history and odd facts. He is also fond of lists and tells us about his education in book history when he learned about book collectors such as the “black-letter men, gilt toppers, rough edgers, tall copyists, broadsiders, Aldusians, Elitzvirians, Grangerities, pasquinaders, and tawny morocccotes.” For his research he delved into “national libraries, workingmen’s libraries, subscription libraries, scholarly libraries, corporate libraries, club subscription libraries, plish private libraries, and also modest libraries such as a ‘found’ library amassed by a demolition man.”

The author begins his book with a unique idea: that the first libraries were oral libraries and he cites the Aboriginal people of Australia as having the oldest continuous oral tradition. Their stories include histories and fables and religious “texts” and especially descriptions of Songlines, or dream tracks. These libraries are highly organized and intact after thousands of years of history. The author also mentions the Kope people of New Guinea, the Mandika griots of Mali, the nomads of Mongolia, and indigenous tribes of the Amazon as possessing similar “libraries.”

Soon after the author delves into the history of the Alexandria Library and compares it to an even earlier exemplar, the cuneiform libraries of Sumeria. The Royal Library at Nineveh, founded by King Ashurbanipal, preceded the Alexandria Library in its attempt to gather all available knowledge in one place. He even speculates that cuneiform writing gave rise to hieroglyphic scripts.

Fortunately, much of tradition of the Alexandria Library was passed on to the great libraries of Constantinople: The Imperial, Patriarchal, and university libraries. He also speculates that the demise of the Alexandria Library was attributable to the simply mundane fact that papyrus is extremely fragile and that the collection simply “wore out” in the damp conditions of the Nile River delta.

In his typically meandering and idiosyncratic style, Stuart Kells breaks up his history with digressions on the pleasure of books where book collectors describe their books as “garden flowers, elixirs, meteorites, gems, friends, tenants, devils, and wraiths.” These book collectors were engaged in a “psychically loaded enterprise” that engendered “anxiety, avarice, envy, fastidiousness, obsession, lust, pride, pretension, narcissism, and agoraphobia.”

A perfect example of the above obsessions is the Renaissance book hunter, Gian Francesco Poggio Bracciolini. In 1416, during a church general council in present day Switzerland, Poggio took a break as secretary to the Tuscan representatives to follow up on a rumor that a nearby monastery guarded an ancient library. The monastery in question was the venerable St. Gall which traced its roots to Irish monks in the seventh century. Books were central to Benedictine monastic practices and St. Gall held incredible treasures of the illuminator’s art. Among the books discovered here by Poggio are such key works as Vitruvius’ On Architecture, works by Quintilian and commentaries on Virgil, books that had been unknown outside of this monastery library.

This was just the beginning for Poggio and his companions who began to scour monastery libraries throughout Europe, sparking a renewed interest in many ancient authors and thus the Renaissance itself, Poggio and his band considered themselves savors of lost and mistreated texts. They called the monastery libraries filthy, damp and dusty backwaters and promoted themselves as benefactors of civilization, even though many considered them to be thieves who were profiting off the naïve monastics. Despite Poggio’s and subsequent book hunter’s predations, the St. Gall Library remains rich in “herbals, breviaries, evangelicalies, antiphonaries, psalters, missals, gradu- als, hymnals, processions, pontifical, decrees, edicts, satires, allegories, epics, festschritts, palmistests, calendars, and lexicons.”

Further on the author chronicles the history of many private book collections, including the Morgan and Folger Libraries. He also explores imaginary libraries, such as those of Jorge Luis Borges, Umberto Eco and J.R.R. Tolkien.

For such a dense and detailed book, it is lacking in both an index and footnotes, serious impediments to returning to find those intriguing and odd facts that Stuart Kells piles up. This is a book to fill in those missing pieces from standard book histories.

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that is too rarely consulted these days; it serves as both a collection development tool and an ever-present reminder that reference books still have a place.

Co-editor Steven W. Sowards is associate director for collections and past head of reference at Michigan State University Libraries; he also serves on the board of ARBA. He is also a reviewer of books for Monographic Musings. Juncal Chenoweth is managing editor of ARBA and ARBAonline. All of the five hundred entries were originally published in ARBA (American Reference Books Annual) or the ARBA- online database, although a few have notes indicating publication of a more recent edition. Each review includes the scope and organization of the work, strengths and weaknesses, audience, price at time of publication, Dewey and LC classifications, and, if applicable, changes from previous editions. Some reviews include comparisons to similar works.

The editors are clear about the scope of the book and what reference tools were included and what were not. Sowards and Chenoweth do not include many search engines, directories, and only a handful of dictionaries. About ten percent of the items listed in the work are free online resources, (including government documents and resources from commercial and nonprofit sites). The reviews of online sources are from recent editions, which in some cases is a decade ago with a continued on page 45
reviewing literary criticism, devoted a full page to the book with a review by novelist Thomas Mallon.25

Of the strictly critical, non-biographical works about Donne, The Oxford Handbook of John Donne will be of great interest to undergraduates and their instructors.26 Robert Fraser, in the TLS, found it hard to think of “a compilation of fifty essays containing more concentrated scholarship than these do.”27 The Contemporary Review found the Handbook equally compelling.30

To put Donne in the context of other metaphysical poets, one could delve into the opinedation Harold Bloom in John Donne and the Seventeenth-Century Metaphysical Poets, George Williamson’s Six Metaphysical Poets: A Reader’s Guide, or Helen Gardner’s Metaphysical Poets.31-33 Louis Martz broke new ground with his The Poetry of Meditation, in which, in revelatory style, he traced the influence of religion and St. Ignatius of Loyola’s Spiritual Exercises on the poetry of Donne and other poets.34 Still cited frequently, it was a groundbreaking work at the time, and serves as an interesting counterpoint to Carey’s later work. Arthur Marotti’s John Donne. Coterie Poet reminded readers that, before moveable type, and for several centuries after, reading manuscripts, rather than printed books, was, if not the norm, then exceedingly common.35 Despite criticism from reviewers (including a biting review from Jonathan Goldberg), Marotti’s book revived interest in manuscript circulation and reading among friends.

In closing, we must acknowledge the prime place Donne studies hold in the undergraduate curriculum and in the scholarly community. In the space of forty years, Donne wrote love poems, satires, elegies, epigrams, sermons, and self-examinations. As A. J. Smith puts it in his DLB review of Donne’s life and works, “The amorous adventurer nurtured the dean of St. Paul’s.”36 One wonders what Donne would have made of the undergraduate focus on the love poetry, when he clearly would have made of the un-Done.

Endnotes
36. Smith, A. J. “John Donne.”

*Editor’s note: An asterisk (*) denotes a title selected for Resources for College Libraries.