Reader's Roundup: Monographic Musings & Reference Reviews

Corey Seeman

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>

Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries.
Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

Reader's Roundup: Monographic Musings & Reference Reviews

Column Editor: **Corey Seeman** (Director, Kresge Library Services, Stephen M. Ross School of Business, University of Michigan; Phone: 734-764-9969) <cseeman@umich.edu> Twitter @cseeman

Column Editor's Note: We are carrying forward our new model for the **Reader's Roundup** to include books that are focused on librarianship (broadly speaking) and reference works (formerly in the Reference Reviews section). As your humble editor, I am feeling a bit more confident that we are hitting our stride (so to speak) and will be able to share reviews in each issue. Our goal is to have a review column in each of the six **Against the Grain** issues that come out each year.

If you would like to be a reviewer for **Against the Grain**, please write me at <cseeman@umich.edu>. If you are a publisher and have a book you would like to see reviewed in a future column, please also write me directly.

Thanks to my great reviewers for getting items for this issue's column. I have three new reviewers included in the mix — **Presley Dyer**, **Christopher Edwards** and **Halley Todd**. I am happy to have also reviews from my repeat contributors — **Jennifer Matthews**, **Katherine Swart** (with two reviews), **Steven W. Sowards** (also with two reviews) and my colleague **Sally Ziph**.

Here is the **ATG Reviewer Rating** that will be used for each book covered in the **Reader's Roundup**. This reviewing scale reflects our collaborative collections and resource sharing means. I think it helps classify the importance of these books.

- **I need this book on my nightstand.** (This book is so good, that I want a copy close at hand when I am in bed.)
- **I need this on my desk.** (This book is so valuable, that I want my own copy at my desk that I will share with no one.)
- **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.)
- **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.)
- **I'll use my money elsewhere.** (Just not sure this is a useful book for my library or my network.)

Happy reading and be nutty! — **CS**

forging partnerships that support new initiatives. This is where the “adventure” begins. To be truthful, this approach feels most appropriate for the inexperienced programming librarians, or those really starting from zero. Readers whose libraries have already established partnerships and outreach initiatives may find this part of the book a little basic (but they should stick around as there's still some really good content for breaking out of a rut).

The bulk of the book is devoted to explaining “design thinking.” This process can help people find creative ideas by looking at problems through a fresh approach. There is a nicely detailed explanation of how to open up to new ideas and the dreaded “we’ve always done it this way” traps. If you haven’t had the opportunity to work through a live design thinking training session, this is the next best thing. This part of the book could be used as a workbook for really any new program initiatives, not just technology promotions. It’s necessary to point out here that no two situations are the same and there are no one-size-fits-most solutions. Implementing this approach requires each librarian to adapt new ideas to their own circumstances. The design thinking chapters assist in this endeavor.

Finally, there are case examples that explain how other libraries have used design thinking and technology outreach techniques to assess their interaction with the communities they serve. **Berman** also does a good job of analyzing what worked and what didn’t. Each study walks the readers through the experience from inception to fruition. Iterations of problem-solving discussions, challenges, and outcomes show how professionals were able to integrate the new programs into their workflows and assess their success. Inset callouts among these anecdotes help the reader to pick up additional tips.

This experience is evidence in the simple and instructive design of this book which could serve as a training manual for upcoming professionals. Overall, I consider this a fine book and one that I would return to as a leadership tool for future projects in my own library.

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.)

Berman, Erin. *Your Technology Outreach Adventure: Tools for Human-Centered Problem Solving.* Chicago: ALA Editions, 2019. 9780838917787, 208 pages. \$54.99 (ALA Members: \$49.49)

Reviewed by **Christopher Edwards** (Assistant Head of Information Literacy, Eugene McDermott Library, University of Texas at Dallas, Richardson) <chris.edwards@utdallas.edu>

Technology represents an ever-present challenge for librarians as we continually find ourselves and our collections astride the divide between new tech and traditional media. This is particularly true in the public sector, where libraries need to stay relevant in the eyes of users, manage funds responsibly, and avoid gimmicky fads that won’t stand the test of time.

Erin Berman provides a useful guide to incorporating technology and outreach into library programs in a thoughtful and user-centered way. **Berman** is the Principle Librarian of the Learning Group at **Alameda County Library** in California with a history of leading innovation and technology literacy. For librarians handling programming for the first time or wanting to refresh existing programs, this is a useful step by step guide to make this process easier. **Berman** starts out with tips on identifying technology barriers and needs in their communities and

Gregory, Vicki L. *Collection Development and Management for 21st Century Library Collections: An Introduction.* Chicago: ALA Neal-Schuman, 2019. 9780838917121, 288 pages. \$79.99 (ALA Members: \$71.99)

Reviewed by **Jennifer Matthews** (Collection Strategy Librarian, Rowan University) <matthewsj@rowan.edu>

Collection development covers a wide array of areas from acquisitions, management of different formats, evaluation and assessing collections, and the maintenance and preservation of materials. Very often textbooks in this area tend to split their focus into sections on print versus electronic. This book, however, does not take that approach and instead looks at print and electronic simultaneously under the larger headings that universally apply to collection development and management.

Vicki L. Gregory is a professor at the **School of Information Science** at the **University of South Florida** and teaches collection development, digital libraries and library administration. She has written several books and numerous articles both nationally and internationally. As part of this textbook, **Gregory** has included an appendix of publishers, wholesalers, and vendors that would be a handy reference for the graduate student or even the experienced collection development manager. Throughout the work, **Gregory** provides insight on real-world

continued on page 44

practicum that takes this from just an in-the-classroom perfect environment to one of practical application.

While the primary target audience for this work is a graduate student in library and information science programs, this textbook also works well as a refresher for those who have not worked in collection development for a long time or those who may have just had it added to their responsibilities. Topics start with the basics such as what is collection development and move through budgets, copyright, legal issues, preservation, professional ethics and more.

For instance, in chapter eight on cooperative collection development and resource sharing, she paints a potentially rosy picture about how library collections can be enlarged and enhanced by participation in consortia. **Gregory** even alludes to many librarians' attempts to recreate the **Library of Alexandria** over the many years. However, she also mentions that there are disadvantages to consortia such as imbalanced participation from all members placing what could be a disproportionate burden on some participating members.

In each chapter, **Gregory**, includes some combination of summary, activity, case study, discussion questions, references, and selected readings. The activities are created to incorporate real-life practice such as the budgeting exercise for the acquisitions discussion asking students to find a budget line with no new money and the weeding activity that asks them to visit any library and report decisions. This practical application makes it possible for students to understand how these areas apply once they are working on their library careers. Using these types of examples allows librarians, especially those new to the area of collection management, to see the wide range of possibilities and realize both the challenges, and the opportunities that await them. Students and experienced librarians coming to collection development for the first time should benefit from this updated work, as would those looking for a refresher course.

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.*)

Henry, Jo, Joe Eshleman and Richard Moniz. *The Dysfunctional Library: Challenges and Solutions to Workplace Relationships*. Chicago: ALA Editions, 2018. 9780838916230, 216 pages. \$64.00 (ALA Members: \$57.60).

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

Libraries and librarians of all types are under pressure these days to constantly adapt to changing expectations, declining budgets and new developments in technology. That these pressures can sometimes lead to the creation of dysfunctional workplaces is a reality that most librarians don't like to admit to or talk about openly. The book addresses problems of dysfunctional behaviors in individual library staff as well as in the library's overall organizational culture and suggests evidence-based remedies. The authors mention in the introduction that the book was initially addressed to managers but they later realized the content could be useful to all library staff members.

Authors **Jo Henry**, **Joe Eshleman** and **Dr. Richard Moniz** previously collaborated on the ALA Editions book *Fundamentals for the Academic Liaison*. **Henry** serves as a librarian with the **Charlotte Mecklenburg Library**. **Eshleman** was the Instruction Librarian at **Johnson & Wales University Library-Charlotte** from 2008-2015. **Dr. Moniz** is the director of library services at **Johnson & Wales University's Charlotte Campus** and teaches for the MLIS program at **UNCG** (Greensboro).

Organizational culture, according to the authors, can be boiled down to the phrase "the way we do things here." To quote organizational expert **Edgar Schein**, organizational culture can be derived from three sources: "(1) the beliefs, values, and assumptions of founders of organizations;

(2) the learning experiences of group members as their organization evolves; (3) new beliefs, values, and assumptions brought in by new members and leaders." The authors assert that a "dysfunctional organization, much like the dysfunctional individual, is so characterized because it exhibits markedly lower effectiveness, efficiency, and performance than its peers or in comparison to societal standards." The authors further claim that while the "implication is that culture is rooted, it can also be changed by *individuals*. In the case of a library workplace that exhibits elements of dysfunction this should provide *some hope that individuals can influence and create change*." (Italics mine)

I found the book to be comprehensive, serving as a kind of an encyclopedia of dysfunction. Each chapter consists of a definition of the problem, anecdotes and suggestions for remedies based on the results of research studies in librarianship, psychology, and organizational studies. Individual chapters address the "dysfunctional self," dysfunctional organizational culture, and incivility (in which the authors state that based on the results of a poll by public relations firm **Weber Shandwick**). The authors explore issues including inter-generational interactions and workplace bullying. This book addresses the causes of individual and organizational dysfunction in a (mostly) objective and dispassionate way, providing both a good overview of the problems as well as credible solutions. I'd recommend it for library managers and library staff members who are interested in what they can do as individuals to contribute to a functional and effective workplace for themselves and others.

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.*)

Kirker, Christine M. *25 Projects for Global Explorers*. Chicago: ALA Editions, 2019. 9780838918852, 80 pages. \$24.99 (\$22.49 for ALA Members).

Reviewed by **Katherine Swart** (Collection Development Librarian, Hekman Library, Calvin University) <kswart20@calvin.edu>

With the popularity of STEM programming among elementary-aged children, some librarians might worry that the subjects of history, geography, and art are being de-emphasized as a result. Author **Christine Kirker** thinks so and has developed a book of projects centered on picture books and the theme of exploring. She is a library associate with the Carroll County (Maryland) Public Library and has written library programming books for ALA Editions since 2009. With **25 Projects for Global Explorers**, **Kirker** focuses her programming on both American and international landmarks, festivals, and people. Aimed at children ages 5-10, each chapter has a theme, such as the Day of the Dead in Mexico, and a picture book loosely related to that theme or the country of origin. **Kirker** includes a very short summary of the event, landmark, etc., a fun fact (again loosely related), and the titles of a few additional picture books. A description of a hands-on project, such as a craft or writing exercise, comes at the end of each chapter.

25 Projects for Global Explorers shines as a curated list of themed picture books, but that's about all. It's hard to get your bearings in this book, and a lot of the connections are left to the librarian to make. Take for example the Day of the Dead chapter. **Kirker** introduces a picture book about the Day of the Dead. Then, she veers off course to talk about the ancient Mayan city of Chichen Itza and immigration at the Mexico-U.S. border. No transitions or tie-ins are given in order to help the reader piece together a library program from the information. Likewise, the chapter on the Trans-Siberian Railway gives a few sentences about the railway, but directs all its attention to books of folktales and a craft about mittens.

The hands-on projects are mainly crafts, but a few involve writing or making a graph. I don't often think of writing as a hands-on activity per se, but I suppose it could be. And graphing would appear to fall under STEM, which **Kirker** claims to be avoiding. The crafts themselves appear to be uneven and not very exciting. Many involve inexpensive paper towel tubes and straws, but then others call for pricey specialty items like glow-in-the-dark spray paint for a lantern

continued on page 45

8 Library Services That Will... Make You Smile.

- 1) **Publishing Sources** - Almost 200,000 at our disposal
- 2) **New Title Selection Plan** - Immediate notification
- 3) **Electronic Ordering** - Simple online ordering system
- 4) **Early Release Program** - Immediate availability guarantee
- 5) **Cataloging** - We do the busy-work for you
- 6) **Comprehensive Reporting** - Up-to-the-minute order status
- 7) **Duplicate Order Alert** - We're on guard, you avoid hassles
- 8) **Paperback Reinforcement & Binding** - Avoid expensive wear & obsolescence

For more details, visit:
emery-pratt.com

"Things always go smoothly with Emery-Pratt. Their people are knowledgeable, and always provide friendly, rapid service."

*Cameron University
Lawton, OK*

Emery-Pratt

Dependability. Reliability. Smileability.

1966 W M 21, Owosso, MI 48867-9317
Phone: 800 248-3887 • Fax: 800 523-6379
emery-pratt.com

Reader's Roundup from page 44

and succulents for a terrarium. None of the craft projects include diagrams, which is problematic when trying to follow origami instructions or build a model of the Golden Gate Bridge. The Grand Canyon chapter inexplicably suggests children make a "fossil" by imprinting their hand in clay. The Mount Rushmore chapter suggests children carve their own likeness from a block of clay, something I dare say few would have success at.

Kirker says in her introduction that the activities should draw students away from screens, but her appendix lists websites corresponding to each chapter for further exploring. This isn't all bad, but the international chapters suggest visiting the government website for the affiliated country. How might the government website of Iraq be helpful to a chapter called Ziggurats of Ancient Mesopotamia and incongruously featuring a book about calligraphy?

Ultimately, this book is unsatisfying. Apart from saying in her introduction that STEM and standardized testing are robbing children of their creativity, the author does little to convince the reader that this is actually an issue in schools and libraries. Each chapter hints at an idea for library programming, but leaves all of the research to the librarian. Furthermore, the chapters lack cohesiveness, and the hands-on projects are largely lacking a connection to the subject at hand. The books **Kirker** suggests are interesting, but I would suggest ALSC's list of programs for school-aged kids (<http://www.ala.org/alsc/kickstart>) or a book like *Lessons Inspired by Picture Books for Primary Grades* (ALA Editions, 2019) instead.

ATG Reviewer Rating: *I'll use my money elsewhere. (Just not sure this is a useful book for my library or my network.)*

Pitts, Joelle, Kearns, Sara K., and Collins, Heather. *Creating and Sharing Online Library Instruction: A How-To-Do-It Manual for Librarians.* Chicago: ALA Neal-Schuman, 2017. 9780838915622, 142 pages. \$54.00 (ALA Members: \$48.60).

Reviewed by **Halley Todd** (Business Research and Instruction Library, William M. White Business Library, University of Colorado Boulder) <halley.todd@colorado.edu>

Academic librarians must find ways to meet students where they are, and create digital learning objects for a variety of users. With the rise in distance education and online degrees, it is not a surprise that many academic librarians turn to creating online learning objects, such as self-paced asynchronous modules. While it may be tedious to create these objects alone, you might feel like you may be re-creating content that already exists. Furthermore, the lack of skill, time or technology access might lead to products that might not be as useful as you would prefer to create. This manual suggests creating a team of collaborators to help solve this issue.

The lens of the manual is the formation of the **New Literacies Alliance (NLA)**. **Kansas State University Libraries** and **The University of Kansas Medical Center Dykes Library** formed the NLA in 2012 when the leadership at each library decided that developing online learning objects in a collaborative manner would be more beneficial than each tackling the issue on their own. The libraries wanted to co-create basic information literacy modules that students could take at their own pace, and that instructors could utilize in their learning management systems, so that the librarians could focus on more specialized concepts in their instruction sessions and other learning materials. **Joelle Pitts** (an Instructional Design Librarian), and **Sara K. Kearns** (Academic Services Librarian) work at **Kansas State University Libraries**

continued on page 46

Reader's Roundup

from page 45

while **Heather Collins** (Assistant Director of Research and Learning) is from the **University of Kansas Medical Center Dykes Library**. They won the 2016 ACRL Instruction Section Innovation Award for their joint work on the **NLA**.

The true value of this manual is in teaching librarians how to create a solid foundation with collaborators and establishing a shared framework before tackling projects. This manual will help librarians who have little project management experience learn how to plan, implement, test and revise their projects. It also does a nice job of pointing out potential technical issues, and thinking about long-term planning and maintenance, especially with digital content. I also appreciated the advice of how to consider bringing in non-librarian collaborators (such as instructional and graphic designers). I also appreciated that the authors pointed out how important administrative support and buy-in is for these types of projects. It is also important for the members working on the project to consider how to talk and create an elevator pitch for the project to internal and external stakeholders.

The structure of the manual is very well laid out. The purpose and intent of every chapter is clearly spelled out. Each chapter contains important terms and definitions, learning objectives for the chapter, tips and critical questions, checklists, visual figures, and also references. The manual also has an appendix with worksheets readers can use to plan their own projects. There are examples from the creation of the **NLA** in here, too, so readers can see how the authors utilized these tools. For example, in Chapter 4, "The Design Process," the authors defined assessments, had Figure 4.7, "NLA Testing Cycle" and then showed how the authors used assessment in Appendix G for their rapid prototyping test reports with students to improve their digital learning objects. In short, each chapter serves as a mini-lesson plan. The authors clearly used instructional design principles to create and plan this manual.

Despite the focus on digital learning objects, the lessons can easily be transferred and used with non-digital projects, such as library instruction handouts provided in face-to-face training sessions. Also even though the main focus is on cross-institutional collaboration, the advice can also easily be transferred to any form of collaboration with a peer. This manual may not be of much value to librarians with extensive project planning experience and those who have worked with many collaborators.

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.)*

Schlosser, Maureen and Rebecca Granatini. *Lessons Inspired by Picture Books for Primary Grades*. Chicago: ALA Editions, 2019. 9780838917756, 298 pages. \$49.99 (\$44.99 for ALA Members).

Reviewed by **Katherine Swart** (Collection Development Librarian, Hekman Library, Calvin University) <kswart20@calvin.edu>

The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) developed the new National School Library Standards that were detailed in an ALA Editions book in 2018. Developed "for learners, school librarians, and school libraries," the standards explore six shared foundations: Inquire, Include, Collaborate, Curate, Explore, and Engage. Under each foundation, the authors of the standards then break down the concept into domains and competencies. It's quite an elaborate design, and I can understand why a whole book has been written about the new standards. What's more, school librarians are not only working with the AASL Standards in the profession, but they also need to be aware of state standards such as the Common Core and the objectives of classroom teachers, etc. And while the AASL Standards really are meant to be flexible complements to existing school standards, I imagine that many school librarians would appreciate examples of how to implement the new Shared Foundations in their daily interactions with students. Fortunately for librarians, *Lessons Inspired by Picture Books for Primary Grades* is a great place to start.

Authors **Maureen Schlosser** and **Rebecca Granatini** are a dynamic librarian-teacher duo who have collaborated for years on elementary-level lessons based on picture books. Now retired, **Schlosser** has continued to write and blog about library lesson planning on various platforms. A teacher and curriculum specialist, **Granatini** shares her experience with STEAM education (covering Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) at conferences. Together they have created 21 lesson units based on current children's books and meticulously mapped each one to the AASL Standards Framework for Learners, the Next Generation Science Standards, the C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards, and the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts/Literacy.

Each chapter centers on a children's book, its shared foundation, and a big thematic question. For example, the book *Me ... Jane* by **Patrick McDonnell** is a story about **Jane Goodall** as a child. The shared foundation is inquire and the question is "How Can We Record Our Observations?" Similarly, the book *One Plastic Bag: Isatou Ceesay and the Recycling Women of the Gambia* falls under the explore shared foundation and asks, "How Can People Find Solutions to Problems in Their Community?" Each chapter has four lessons following the domains think, create, share, and grow. Each lesson has a main objective, tie-in to the AASL Standards Framework for Learners, and detailed instructions for how to lead students in activities. Some lessons involve creating anchor charts and filling out pre-made worksheets, both of which are provided in the book. Other lessons involve creating art, music, and movements. Still more lessons involve ways students can share what they learned and demonstrate how they have grown in their understanding.

I like a lot of things about this book. First, the selection of children's books is current and represents diverse characters, fiction and nonfiction, and a variety of topics. Each maps well to the shared foundations, promoting inclusion, exploration, and collaboration. Second, the book is comprehensive. Lessons include objectives, duration, materials, and worksheets. Appendices include additional assessment sheets, wonderfully detailed rubrics, and lists of vetted online resources. Lastly, as I already mentioned, the introduction maps every chapter to the AASL Standards, as well as three additional sets of school standards. This makes it easy for librarians to track what standards they've covered and share that progress with administrators.

Readers will need familiarity with AASL's National School Library Standards in order to get the most out of this book. And while some lessons are stronger than others, I commend the authors for creating such a useful resource for school librarians.

ATG Reviewer Rating: *If I were a school librarian ... 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.)*

Thomas Tandy Lewis, ed. *The 1910s in America*. Grey House Publishing (Salem Press), Ipswich, Mass. 3 vol. 1,050 pp. ISBN set 978-1-64265-040-2. \$395.00.

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

Part of the **Salem Decades** series, this set identifies significant people, events and trends in the United States between 1910 and 1919, especially for undergraduates exploring topics. Essays deal with such milestones such as the New York Armory Show of 1913, World War I, labor unrest, and the condition of women and minorities. Over half of the 285 articles are biographies, ranging from **Charlie Chaplin**, the silent film star, to **W.E.B. Du Bois**, the African American activist and editor. Articles open with a concise note about significance and end with suggested readings. There are some illustrations and quotes from primary sources. Supporting features include a glossary, a browsable list of essays by category (such as politics or religion), and a subject index. **Thomas Tandy Lewis** has edited similar sets for the 1930s and 1940s. A retired historian of the U.S. Constitution, here he writes about Supreme Court cases, among other articles. Many others come from **Michael J. O'Neal**, another veteran editor and freelance writer.

continued on page 47

Reader's Roundup from page 46

Some content is repurposed from earlier Salem Press publications. For example, the article on the Treaty of Versailles is based on an essay in *Great Events from History: Modern European Series* (Salem Press, 1973) with extensive revisions and a refreshed bibliography. The article on **Carrie Chapman Catt** is almost unchanged from *Great Lives from History: The Twentieth Century* (Salem Press, 2008). While nothing in the front matter alerts librarians to the potential for overlapping content, the question is “should this matter?” If so, the main point may involve accuracy, especially the value of very current content. Researchers insist upon the latest findings in the sciences: should the same be true for history? Deficits in current content incorrectly imply a lack of debates or new discoveries in the humanities: for example, nothing here reflects recent criticism of the depiction of Native Americans by **Laura Ingalls Wilder**.

Competing publications are single-volume works. In **Gale's** 11-volume *American Decades* set, Volume 2 covers 1910-1919. *The 1910s (1910-1919)* edited by **Michael Shally-Jensen**, also from Grey House Publishing (2016), analyzes key documents such as **Woodrow Wilson's** Fourteen Points. *The 1910s* by **Stephen Feinstein** (Enslow Publishing, 2015) is aimed at young adults. *The 1910s* by **David Blanke** (Greenwood Press, 2002) limits itself to popular culture. *The 1910s* by **John F. Wukovits** (Greenhaven Press, 2000) offers essays by heavy hitters from the historical community, such as **Philip S. Foner** and **Ernest R. May**. With three volumes, **Lewis** has room to offer more topics and biographies.

The real competition for student attention may be Wikipedia. How do internet resources compare to a traditional reference source? Reference value involves accuracy: factual correctness (including current findings or interpretations), completeness, relevance, balance, and objectivity. In an era of alternative facts and fake news, accuracy from verified authority ought to benefit traditional reference tools. **Lewis** the editor has a track record; so does **Salem Press**. We can evaluate the list of 200 contributors: a mix of professors, graduate students, and independent scholars. Student readers will not care, but librarians should.

Comparing these volumes to Wikipedia, topic coverage is comparable, but editorial balance favors **Lewis**. The first ten articles cover **Robert S. Abbott**, African-American newspaperman; the *Abrams v. United States* First Amendment case; **Jane Addams**, social worker; **Felix Adler**, social reformer; African-Americans in World War I; Agriculture in the 1910s; Aircraft in World War I; the Alien Land Law of 1913; the **American Friends Service Committee**; and the **American Tobacco Company** anti-trust case. **Lewis'** articles consist of two to six pages. Wikipedia has articles for eight out of ten entries, and covers the other two (African-Americans in World War I, and Agriculture) in multiple articles or sections. However, the Wikipedia texts vary in length from a few hundred words to 7,000 words, reflecting contributor enthusiasm rather than editorial judgement. If students need consistent, concise topic introductions, then **Lewis'** set has the upper hand.

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.)

Wilkinson, Frances C., and Sever Bordinanu, eds. *The Complete Guide to RFPs for Libraries*. Santa Barbara CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2018. 9781440859397, 299 pages. \$60.00 paperback.

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

When librarians are asked to employ an RFP — or request for proposal — the stakes are usually high. The necessary attention to detail can be daunting, even for a librarian used the process. Our boards, procurement offices, or other outside entity may scrutinize the results. *The Complete Guide to RFPs for Libraries* speaks to the particulars of representative RFP situations, to demystify the process and break it down

into practicable steps. This anthology of essays begins with introductory chapters about the concepts behind the RFP system, and summarizes the elements and steps to be followed. Eleven chapters then go into detail about common situations such as RFPs in a consortial environment, and selection of a serial vendor, a binder, a disaster recovery service, an RFID system, an integrated library system (ILS), or a digitization service. The final section offers the vendor's perspective including expectations about fair dealing and professional practices: transparency, confidentiality, conflict of interest, and ethical decision-making.

The presentation of information can be highly specific and sometimes dry. To make the content more accessible, the book not only provides an index and a detailed table of contents, but also employs tables, figures, bullet point lists, and numerous subheadings. The reader can go directly to relevant information, while also through keeping track of how each step fits into a context of preparation and implementation. Chapter 8 — on RFPs for integrated library systems in academic libraries — and Chapter 10 — about RFID security and inventory systems — include practical examples of evaluation criteria and the use of grids for scoring and comparing proposals. Chapter 4 — on the selection of a serial vendor — and Chapter 6 — on RFPs for K-12 collections at the school or district level — provide sample timelines. Two case studies describe selection of an ILS by a consortium, one for academic libraries and one for public libraries. Through examples, the reader can see the total RFP process from planning and committee formation, to evaluation, negotiation and eventual implementation.

A glossary explains terms of art in the acquisitions process, and the differences between commonly used acronyms such as RFI, RFP and RFQ, and the unrelated RFID. Most chapters conclude with a list of relevant books, articles and websites for further reading. An eBook version is available.

Frances C. Wilkinson has written extensively about library acquisitions and administration. She is the Senior Associate Dean of University Libraries at the **University of New Mexico**. **Sever Bordinanu** is the Director of Technical Services, and Outreach Librarian for Philosophy/Religion, Foreign Languages and English, also at the **University of New Mexico Libraries**. Twenty other contributors from the United States and Canada include librarians with expertise in technical services, acquisitions or administration; officers in library consortia; and representatives from the publisher and vendor side.

This title updates and expands on earlier works by **Frances C. Wilkinson**, such as *The RFP Process: Effective Management of the Acquisition of Library Materials*, with **Connie Capers Thorson** (Libraries Unlimited, 1998); *Writing RFPs for Acquisitions: A Guide to the Request for Proposal*, with **Linda K. Lewis** (American Library Association, 2008); and *The Complete Guide to Acquisitions Management*, with **Linda K. Lewis** and **Rebecca L. Lubas** (Libraries Unlimited, 2015). Other comparable titles include *Models of Proposal Planning & Writing*, by **Jeremy T. Miner** and **Kelly C. Ball-Stahl** (Greenwood Press, 2016); and *Library Technology Buying Strategies*, edited by **Marshall Breeding** (American Library Association, 2016).

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.)

Williams, Caitlin. *Be Opportunity-Minded: Start Growing Your Career Now*. Chicago: ALA Editions, 2019. 978-0-8389-1772-5, 224 pages. \$49.99 (\$44.99 for ALA Members).

Reviewed by **Presley Dyer** (Catalog Librarian, Tennessee State University) <adyer4@tnstate.edu>

On the surface, one's career growth appears to be one where the only advice you need is to follow common sense. An individual selects their chosen career, she or he masters the given job skills, and then with time, advances up the career ladder. Simple, right? Unfortunately, it's not quite so straight-forward. We now live in a world where new technologies emerge onto the scene at such a pace that innovative skills are continuously needed. What worked five, three or even one year ago may already be replaced and updated in order to meet the demands of what is

continued on page 48

Reader's Roundup

from page 47

considered the next best thing. Such rapid changes have therefore created an unpredictable workplace, one in which an individual must responsibly learn and navigate. Thus, this makes career growth even more challenging and overwhelming, especially in the library profession where change spotlights itself. Change brings major responsibilities to the libraries, and library employees must embrace it if they want to ultimately succeed personally and professionally. The question then is, "How?" How does one become successful in an environment where uncertainty plays a major role? This question and more can be found in **Caitlin Williams' *Be Opportunity-Minded: Start Growing Your Career Now***.

Williams, a professional development consultant, has spent over 30 years working as a career success coach. She works with the **American Library Association** to enrich library professionals with career-enhancing tools and resources. She has also written several books and articles on the subject in addition to numerous speaking engagements. She knows that accomplishments begin with valuing oneself and spending a great amount of time evaluating skills, abilities, and talents. After acknowledging such assets, one can then begin to recognize just how many opportunities are out there for individuals with a growth mindset.

Opportunity-Minded shows how passionate and devoted **Williams** is to career development. Her writing illustrates how she wishes to

motivate people with inspiration and positivity. There is no doubt that she wants people to thrive in their careers and she does a great job of taking such a broad topic and narrowing it down into a clear, precise framework that highlights the essentials. The book has nine chapters covering topics such as workplace changes, self-assessments, and growth opportunities. She also includes two useful sections called "Notes to Myself" and "My Going for It! Growth Plan." These sections provide an opportunity where she asks herself reflective questions and provides the readers for space to jot down their own ideas as well.

Essentially, one can view this book as a self-reflecting journal. Chapter 4 is even titled "How Well Do You Know You?" which dives deep into the importance of knowing not only one's skills but also one's strengths and aspirations. In providing this chapter, **Williams** is encouraging the reader to better understand her or his career and where they would like to go next. Neither this book nor our profession is designed for the "quick fixes" to one's career. Since growth plans change, individuals need to be mindful that their career is a never-ending, learning process. After all, opportunities are everywhere. Now, the question is, "Are you ready for them?" After reading **Williams'** motivational words, I can say, "Yes, I am."

Opportunity-Minded is an invaluable book that nearly anyone who works in the library profession would find beneficial. It is filled with opportunity-minded tips and strategies which can jumpstart or rejuvenate a person's career if put into action.

ATG Reviewer Rating: I need this book on my nightstand. (This book is so good, that I want a copy close at hand when I am in bed.) 🐼

Booklover — Better Late Than Never Summer Reading

Column Editor: **Donna Jacobs** (Retired, Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, SC 29425) <donna.jacobs55@gmail.com>

The next choice for this **Booklover** is a more stereotypical summer read than the previous work by **Wole Soyinka** entitled *Civilian and Soldier*. A work of fiction, *Jenny*, a novel by **Sigrid Undset**, is described in the inside flap of the book cover as "an important and courageous work, but some found it to be 'immoral'." The description continues with more enticement: "The novel tells the story of Jenny Winge, a Norwegian painter, who goes to Rome to seek artistic inspiration but ultimately betrays her own ambitions and ideals." *Jenny* is included with other works, *Thjodolf*, *Simon-sen*, a sampling of **Undset's** personal letters, and an "Introduction" by **Tim Page**, a **Pulitzer Prize** winner on staff at the *Washington Post*, in *The Unknown Sigrid Undset*. The inside flap of the book cover alerts the reader that *Jenny* is a new translation (2001) by **Tiina Nunnally** and this translation "captures the fresh, vivid style of **Undset's** writing and restores passages omitted from the 1921 English version." A comfortable chair, a little time, and soon I'm in Rome with Jenny who is trying to navigate the world, an artistic career, relationships, romance, and all the entanglements that come with this journey.

Sigrid Undset won the 1928 **Nobel Prize in Literature** "principally for her powerful descriptions of Northern life during the Middle Ages," her work that is usually referenced with the award is *Kristin Lavransdatter*, a trilogy set in medieval Norway. (*Jenny* is not representative of this body of her work; rather this story comes from her early "realistic" period where she focused on women and love.)

Tim Page's "Introduction" to *The Unknown Sigrid Undset* is in itself a delightful read. Right from the first paragraph his perspective is: "Still, unless a present-day English-speaking reader happens to be of Scandinavian descent, the Catholic faith, or unusually interested in world literature, the name **Sigrid Undset** will likely draw a blank." (Sidebar personal bio: English-speaking, not Scandinavian, raised Catholic, interested in world literature — I guess I'm reading the right book.)

Undset was born in Kalundborg, Denmark in 1882. Her father, **Ingvald**, moved the family to Kristiania (Oslo) in 1884 where he accepted a post with the university museum. Her parents were keenly aware of her intellect and from an early age spent great effort in her intellectual cultivation. Discussions on history, politics, archaeology, and the Old Norse language were dynamic between father and daughter. This all came to an unfortunate end when her father succumbed to malaria when she was 11 years of age. The family struggled on a small state pension provided to widows. This struggle could be the reason behind **Page's** description of **Undset** as a "quiet, dutiful, highly serious, and somewhat remote young woman whose closest companions were her books." Not to be daunted by circumstance, she attended a commercial college and then took a secretarial position at **Wisbech Electrical Company** at the age of 16. She persevered for ten years at this job that she hated. During these ten years she must have been writing, for **Page** relates this interesting anecdote about her coworkers: "During one midmorning break she was heard chuckling

over something she was reading. 'It was a piece she had written herself,' according to her first biographer, **A.H. Winsnes**. 'She read it to the others. It was written with such 'warmth and humor,' say her colleagues, 'that we could not help interrupting — Good Heavens! Why don't you write instead of sitting in an office?'" I guess we know where this went...

Jenny begins with a young man, Helge, arriving in Rome. "At last, now at last there was one sight that was richer than all his dreams. And it was Rome. A wide plain of rooftops lay beneath him in the hollow of the valley, a jumble of roofs on buildings that were old and new, tall buildings and low buildings. They looked as if they had been put up quite haphazardly and as big as was needed at the time; only in a few places did the streets cut regular clefts through the mass of rooftops. And this whole world of disorderly lines that intersected each other at thousands of sharp angles lay rigid and motionless beneath the pale sky, in which an invisible sinking sun sporadically ignited a tiny rim of light on the edges of the clouds. The sun hung dreaming under a delicate, whitish mist, into which not a single spurring column of smoke blended, because there were no factory smokestacks in sight, and no smoke came from any of the comical little tin chimneys sticking up from the buildings. ...And above everything hovered the church domes, a countless number of them. The magnificent gray dome far off in the distance, on the other

continued on page 49