

work and the ordinary lives of ordinary people. Only when printing became a public good during the formation of the Italian nation in the nineteenth century did it become important for historians and biographers to begin to record the accomplishments of members of the book trade.

The remainder of the essays in the collection deal with the life of printer John Nichols, the archives of the Nichols family, and a selection of writings by Andrew Brice, an eighteenth-century Exeter printer. These articles are useful only as starting points for further research and do less to add to our picture of the ways in which individual lives contribute to the entire social history of books and the book trade. Because of the specialized nature of several of the offerings in this volume, this title is recommended only for research-level collections in the history of the book.—*Cecile M. Jagodzinski, Indiana University.*

Jones, Reinette F. *Library Service to African Americans in Kentucky, from the Reconstruction Era to the 1960s.* Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2002. 200p. alk. paper, \$39.95 (ISBN 0786411546). LC 2001-52118.

In *Library Service to African Americans in Kentucky*, Reinette F. Jones has written a compelling and important book for both Kentucky and library history. It is not unexpected that the history of library service in Kentucky would reflect the history of African Americans in the state, and Jones uses this history to bring to life the conflicts experienced by blacks during the one hundred years following the Civil War.

Many libraries in Kentucky hired African Americans but did not offer services to them. Through an examination of these libraries, Jones has produced a concise history that illustrates the double standard in a focused, but representative, way. The author, a librarian at Shaver Engineering Library at the University of Kentucky, was concerned about the perception that African American librarians did

not have a history of their own but had “simply appeared in Kentucky one recent day.”

The structure of the book is largely chronological, but the chapter titles hint at a topical approach as well. Although the chronology is not necessarily broken in typical places for African American history, it does work for the topic. For example, 1954–1964 has been referred to as “the Second Reconstruction” in some historical reference sources, but Jones’s chapter division is from 1936–1963. The author obviously chose 1963 because it was the year the first African American received a master of library science degree from the University of Kentucky. Chapter 6, “The Impact,” looks at the years 1892 to 1956, which is a little confusing when paired with the dates of the other sections. This seems to be a minor problem, but it may make some readers wonder whether a different editing approach might have been useful.

The preface sets a wonderful tone for the book by explaining Jones’s need to research the topic and by identifying a neglected aspect of African American and library scholarship. This is a well-documented book, but perhaps more significantly, the documentation supports the personal lament in the preface, giving the facts a very human face. “I cried when the initial research showed that there had been an influential era of colored librarians in Louisville during the early twentieth century, and Kentucky had a history of desegregated and segregated libraries, beginning in 1866.”

It is regrettable that some of the richest parts of this book are nearly lost to the casual reader. The appendices are wonderful, but the structure puts too much information in a small space and important quotes are lost. Citing the Filson Club in Appendix E, the author records their response to providing service to African Americans: “No service—but on several occasions those working on a thesis have been accommodated in a separate room, although not a practice.” The Filson Club is not listed in the index,

which may indicate that the appendices are not as well indexed as the rest of the book.

Despite these editing glitches, the book is full of information that is not only interesting, but also very important. Jones confesses that the first draft of the book was almost lost in well-meaning people's advice that she write a book with a national scope. Her careful research supports the need for a book dealing exclusively with Kentucky, and this book provides a close look at the history of the state's libraries. Here are examples of educators and librarians who were interested

in making library services available to *all* people. Jones also provides us with a professional view of African Americans from a time when their existence was ignored, if not denied. *Library Service to African Americans in Kentucky* goes beyond statistics for libraries, it is a testament to the possible because in the context of segregation and oppression, African Americans pursued educational goals with great dedication, and places such as Berea College and Covington Public Library provided extraordinary and optimal settings for the exercise of this dedication.—*Jane R. Wilson, Berea College.*