

Book Reviews



Vicki Gregory. *Collection Development and Management for 21st Century Library Collections: An Introduction.* New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2011. 260p. alk. paper, \$75 (ISBN 9781555706517). LC2011-009274.

Vicki Gregory enters a textbook market dominated by Edward Evans' many editions of *Developing Library and Information Center Collections* and, more recently, by Peggy Johnson's *Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management*. Other introductory texts exist, as do many narrower collection management (CM) works focused by type of library, by material format, or by specific subtopics (such as collection policies or evaluation).

Evans' most recent edition reaches over six hundred pages; and Johnson's second edition, four hundred pages. Both are thorough treatments. Both, like the work at hand, attempt to include all types of libraries, yet favor academic libraries where all authors have their greatest grounding. Johnson's titling of her sweeping work "Fundamentals" is an acknowledgement that the span of collection management stretches easily beyond any single work. Where does collection management end and acquisitions, e-resources management, cataloging, or even government documents begin? Collection management, as all full-time practitioners know well, is an area with no clear boundaries, diffusing into all areas of librarianship. This creates a challenging task for the all-in-one CM textbook author.

Gregory, who is on the faculty of the University of South Florida School of Library and Information Science, brings thirty-five years of experience to this work, with the most recent twenty-five as a faculty member. She is the author of three other library science texts and teaches collection development.

She considers her primary audience here to be graduate students and retool-

ing librarians, and she correctly determines that there is room in the marketplace for a collection management text that is truly introductory, as her subtitle indicates. This work does not directly compete with Evans or Johnson in scope, authoritative tone, or depth. It is a sufficient overview of the field, written in an easily read conversational style with the information presented concisely; there is hardly a page lacking a bulleted list of summary points regarding attributes, aspects, or criteria pertinent to the topic at hand.

In a demanding, fast-paced collection management graduate class, this text's twelve chapters, occupying approximately 175 text pages (excluding end-of-chapter material, references, and suggested readings), might properly occupy the first two weeks of a three-semester-hour CM class, grounding the class in concepts and terminology. From there, an instructor would use other readings to draw in more detail licensing, collection policies, budgets, individual and peculiar format concerns, and other key CM elements.

Particular strengths here are the topic overviews on weeding; license negotiation; and gifts and donations. The presentation is organized around processes (selection, budgeting, cooperation, and so on) rather than format. Each chapter includes suggested classroom activities, discussion questions, and key vocabulary. The chapter on selection processes offers well-established and familiar general and specific criteria, with an overview of electronic resource selection considerations. Gregory's conversational style allows insightful asides where actual CM practice may often fall outside policy. A CM librarian's day is greatly assisted by having coherent policy and institutional memory, but the daily work is often fixing

myriad exceptions to policy. An accompanying CD-ROM contains real-world collection development policies from various-sized academic, public, school, and special libraries, as well as a useful classified list of vendors.

Care is taken in noting shortcomings in any brief treatment, but these few aspects merit notice. Electronic resources are at times treated as new, different, intrusive, rather than the now dominant format in most CM work. There is no mention in the collection evaluation discussion of the brief tests methodologies or Howard White's work. Distance learning, now comprising half of the graduate population in some universities, is given one paragraph. Approval plans and the "big deal" are only briefly discussed. The price, at \$75, is high for a paperback text marketed to poor graduate students. Where Evans and Johnson offer many pro/con positions on some topics, this work is understandably less developed beyond a presentation of core collection development issues.

This and most CM texts are more monograph-centric than libraries will ever be again. Books and their trade were once central to CM work, but no more. The CM terrain is changing quickly, and it is difficult to treat this morphing in an all-in-one CM text. Dramatic journal marketing changes; the end of the paper journal; and the rise of the big deal (a term Gregory misapplies to aggregator packages) have redistributed the monograph/serials budget ratio in the direction of 30/70 or beyond. With the seismic movement of academic CM expenditures toward electronic resources, the CM librarian's work is only occasionally concerned with the details of paper materials. Departmental book fund allocation lines have become about the table scraps left after e-serials feast on the budget with their 1000+ title, often-undifferentiated, single-invoice journal packages.

Are the many paragraphs here and elsewhere devoted to past CM and acquisitions processes needed to educate

contemporary CM students and incoming practitioners? For decades, selection processes changed slowly, and a review of evolutionary process and practice history may have been informative. With the disruptive and revolutionary changes brought by the overwhelming shift to a digital CM environment, why revisit and explain how libraries once did things if there is not a clear lineage to the present practice and methods? To let one example suffice: is any discussion of the Farmington Plan needed? It is not that this is not important, but there is so much to current collection management and such topics may best be left to courses in library history with its recountings of mediated Dialog searching and illustrations of Kardex check-in files.

Gregory's text completes what may be the end-of-days for the all-in-one collection development and management textbook. It is a good, easily read, introductory overview of the major issues and topic areas in the discipline. Future CM texts would benefit from a single type of library focus with exploration of the issues of concern to those libraries. — *John P. Abbott, Appalachian State University.*

R. David Lankes. *The Atlas of New Librarianship.* Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press; Chicago: Association of College & Research Libraries, 2011. 408p. alk. paper. \$55 (ISBN 9780262015097). LCCN: 2010-022788.

Over the last two decades, the profession of librarianship has found itself confronted by a rapidly changing informational environment that many in the field perceive as holding both promise and peril. On one hand, the emergence of new digital technologies has greatly increased the number of tools that can be harnessed to enhance library service. On the other, as venues for information seeking beyond the library continue to proliferate on the World Wide Web, there is considerable unease about the position of libraries in an increasingly crowded and chaotic informational landscape. In