

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

the face of these opportunities and uncertainties, it is appropriate that librarians dig deep and (re)consider the bases of their profession. What is the *raison d'être* of librarianship? What should librarians be doing to ensure its continued vitality? Fundamental questions of professional self-definition such as these stand at the core of R. David Lankes' ambitious new book, *The Atlas of New Librarianship*, in which he sets out a panoramic vision of librarianship for the future.

Lankes, who is a professor at Syracuse University's School of Information Studies and directs the Library and Information Science Program there, calls his envisioned form of librarianship "new librarianship." This formulation is telling. Lankes is well aware that librarianship is heir to a rich historical legacy that has shaped its contours, and he acknowledges that a number of aspects of this legacy will continue to have value for the future: he thus duly allows for elements of continuity in the profession. He also maintains, however, that, if librarianship is to be a truly progressive profession in the present and into the future, it needs a richer and more expansive understanding of its mission than it has hitherto possessed. Such a shift in worldview, he avers, requires significant changes in the way that librarians conceive of themselves, their tasks, and their tools. The model of new librarianship presented in the *Atlas* is intended to foster these changes: indeed, it offers nothing less than a blueprint for redefining the conceptual foundations of librarianship in order to renew it.

The aims of new librarianship are encapsulated in the statement that "the mission of librarians is to improve society through facilitating knowledge creation in their communities." This mission statement sounds several thematic leitmotifs that continue to reverberate throughout the book. For one thing, it focuses squarely on the agency of professionals (that is, librarians) rather than on institutional structures and document collections (in other words, libraries). Second,

it identifies the improvement of society as the *summum bonum* toward which the work of librarianship must tend. Third, it specifies the particular modality by which librarians are to contribute to social amelioration—facilitating knowledge creation within their communities. On a superficial reading, it may seem that such a mission does not differ appreciably from that of traditional librarianship: after all, ever since the late 19th century, librarians have viewed themselves as members of a profession that contributes to the betterment of society by providing access to sources of knowledge that can further the (self-)education of information seekers. The idea of facilitating knowledge creation within communities, however, goes considerably further than that of providing access to sources of knowledge; and it is in Lankes' development of this notion that the distinctiveness of his approach becomes evident.

Lankes' understanding of knowledge is rooted in conversation theory, an account of learning originally developed by the cybernetician Gordon Pask. As its name implies, this theory holds that knowledge is generated in the course of *conversations*, wherein the conversants (or participants in the conversation) seek to reach agreements about the matters under discussion. The understanding of the matter under discussion that each conversant brings to a conversation is based on his or her experience and participation in past conversations; over the course of a conversation, it can either modify the understandings of one's interlocutors or, in turn, be modified by them. Lankes terms such understandings, which are expressible as conceptual definitions and propositions, "agreements." Agreements are not isolated but rather stand in relation to one another within conceptual networks or, to adopt the parlance of conversation theory, *entailment meshes*. A conversant's knowledge, then, consists of agreements articulated into an entailment mesh, the various nodes of which are constantly implicated in conversations. On this view,

knowledge is dynamic and dialogically constructed in a conversant's encounters with his or her fellows: to be in conversation is to engage in knowledge creation.

A number of consequences flow from Lankes' conversation-based understanding of knowledge, of which only two particularly salient ones can be considered here. First, his application of conversation theory underwrites a sharp departure from what he characterizes as the traditional focus within librarianship on the creation, organization, and maintenance of document collections. Stating that it is a categorical mistake to identify documentary "artifacts" with knowledge itself, Lankes argues that librarians should move from an artifact-centered to a conversation-centered model of professional activity. Such a shift would involve greater emphasis on the construction of tools and creation of environments—be they physical, digital, or hybrid—that promote knowledge-creating conversations, whether these be between authors of documents and their readers, reference librarians and members of the community served by the library, or members of the community within the context of a library: connection, not collection, would become the primary focus of professional activity. Lankes' critique of an artifact-based approach to librarianship and his advocacy of a conversation-based one informs his treatment of such core bibliothecal areas of practice as collection management and information organization, both of which, in his estimation, stand in considerable need of reform. The critiques are bound to stir controversy at a number of points, while the discussion of how these areas of activity would look under the dispensation of new librarianship will offer readers much food for thought.

Second, conversations are dynamic processes and, if they are to bear fruit, demand active participation on the part of the conversants. Accordingly, Lankes calls on librarians to take on an active professional role in the lives of the communities within which they serve. This

entails the tailoring of library services—both physical and digital—in ways that align them to the needs of the members of the communities that they serve. It involves finding innovative ways of outreach to draw more members of the community into the ambit of the library and to connect them with conversation partners, be these documents or persons, who can empower them through knowledge creation. It demands that librarians engage in dialogue with, and learn from, community members. And it requires that librarians actively project their own core professional values—which Lankes identifies as a commitment to learning, openness, intellectual freedom and safety, intellectual honesty and transparency, and ethical action—into their conversations with people and institutions beyond the library. In short, new librarianship is to be participatory, open to change, action oriented, and, indeed, activist in its nature. Again, Lankes applies these general tenets of new librarianship to a number of specific issues within the profession; his proposals for reconfiguring LIS education will be of special interest to readers of this journal.

The premises of conversation theory not only saturate the content of Lankes' vision of new librarianship; they have also conditioned the form in which he presents it. The *Atlas* is articulated into three sections. The first of these consists of six extensive chapters, which Lankes calls "threads." These chapters, which correspond to six key elements in the mission statement for new librarianship ("mission," "knowledge creation," "facilitation," "communities," "improve society," and "librarians"), map out, through prose text and accompanying illustrations, the tenets of new librarianship and give examples of how it can be instantiated in different sectors of the profession. The second section takes the form of a foldout sheet representing the contents of the threads as an extensive circles-and-arrows diagram: here, Lankes' exposition of new librarianship is visual-

ized as an entailment mesh, in which key concepts and propositions (circles) are connected to each other by relationships (arrows). This provides readers with a comprehensive, yet compendious, overview of the territory being mapped. The third section comprises an alphabetical listing of each of the concepts or propositions—that is, “agreements”—that appears in the diagram. In this listing of agreements, each entry includes a picture of the fragment of the diagram in which the agreement appears, information for locating the agreement in both the threads and the diagram, and, in many cases, a brief essay that supplements the discussion of the agreement in the threads: in short, it functions as an analytic index that allows the reader to enter into Lankes’ representations of new librarianship at a number of different thematic points. Finally, let us note that Lankes’ articulation of new librarianship is very much an ongoing project: accordingly, he has set up a supplement to the book in the form of a Web site (www.newlibrarianship.org/wordpress) that contains supporting materials and promises to incorporate, over time, new additions to the model of new librarianship.

Taken as a whole, Lankes’ *Atlas* is a remarkable work of synthesis that integrates a plethora of insights into a coherent general philosophy of librarianship. The book is addressed to all persons interested in the profession of librarianship, be they practitioners, academics, or students. To write for such a diverse intended audience requires considerable skill in exposition: the matter must be presented in such a way that it conveys complex ideas clearly without oversimplifying them. In this, Lankes has succeeded brilliantly: his explanations and arguments are models of lucid and effective exposition, often leavened by humor, that will get his message across to all segments of his audience. The book, however, is more than a work of analysis; it is also very much a work of evangelization. Lankes passionately believes in new librarianship and so

has written the *Atlas* in a deeply personal style that seeks to entice, persuade, and, indeed, inspire the reader to take up the banners of his vision. It is true that the rhetoric sometimes becomes overheated and enters the realm of bathos; nevertheless, many readers will draw inspiration from the engaged and affirmative tone of Lankes’ prose. Whether one agrees with all details of Lankes’ vision or not, one cannot but profit from perusal of the *Atlas*, the contents of which will doubtless contribute to many conversations about the *Wesen und Werden* of librarianship.—*Thomas M. Dousa, University of Illinois, Urbana–Champaign.*

Transforming Research Libraries for the Global Knowledge Society. Ed.

Barbara I. Dewey. Oxford, United Kingdom: Chandos, 2010. 208p. \$75 (ISBN 9781843345947).

In an environment where public university budget allocations for research libraries are increasingly recouped as a stratagem to forestall the current crisis of the political economy, academic administrators charged with reducing costs and services may look to *Transforming Research Libraries for the Global Knowledge Society* to find justification for the dwindling support for library programs. After a close analysis of the heterogeneous essays contained here, however, I am confident that such a reading mistakenly vacates the core findings of this book. Self-doubt is expressed. Will the library exist? Ought the library exist? But these questions, staged as they are in familiar ways, do not make the book remarkable. They are deployed as if to satisfy a polemic our professional literature seems to demand, to announce the authors as 21st Century/Next Generation librarians. After due formality, the text moves beyond the garb of library obsolescence to forward some serious new thinking on the enduring cause of academic libraries, by offering grounded ideas and strategies to position today’s libraries as institutions capable of adapting and transforming again,