BOOK REVIEWS

Consumer Health Issues, Trends, and Research: Part 1: Strategic Strides Toward a Better Future; Part 2: Applicable Research in the 21st Century. Edited by Tammy L. Mays, AHIP. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and Information Science. Library Trends 2004, v.51, nos.2–3. ISSN: 0024–2594.⊗

Editor Mays has brought together a diverse group of medical, academic, governmental, and public librarians as well as library school faculty with proven expertise in the consumer health arena to share their research, experiences, and passion for empowering people through providing health information. The stated goal is to provide a valuable resource for librarians with an interest in providing consumer health information services at their institutions. While some of the articles overlap, this two-part compilation offers a wealth of factual and experiential information beneficial for both the beginner and the experienced consumer health information provider. The two volumes have something for everyone. *Part 1: Strategic Strides Toward a Better Future* examines the different elements that constitute consumer health information services. *Part 2: Applicable Research in the 21st Century* explores best practices for consumer health information services and the important role that strong partnerships and collaborations play in fostering consumer access to quality health information. The discussions do cross-pollinate, and, therefore, this reviewer recommends readers take at a look at both issues to glean the pearls of wisdom distributed throughout the compilation.

As one might expect, a key focus throughout is the virtual quality of information and the ways the Internet has transformed how consumer health information is delivered. A number of articles discuss how the library field has responded to this new medium and the challenges it presents. Miller et al. describe the birth and evolution of the National Library of Medicine's brainchild MedlinePlus. Kovacs encourages librarians to develop Web-based consumer health information workshops as a way to promote the value of library services and encourage the use of high-quality health information by consumers. But does a health information seeker differentiate between a quality health site and a poor one? Crespo's article, ''Training the Health Information Seeker: Quality Issues in Health Information Web Sites,'' is a must read to learn about the growing body of literature researching consumer health information–seeking behavior and the general lack of critical appraisal in assessing the appropriateness of health information on the Web.

Concern is growing that much of the health information currently available is written at a level that exceeds the reading recognition and comprehension skills of many nonmedical readers. Sandstorm, Burnham, and Beany Peterson provide in-depth discussions of the scope of health literacy and the advocacy role librarians can play. Baker and Gollop point out that it is not just the Internet that is causing concern. Their assessment of the readability of ten popular medical textbooks challenges the validity of including medical textbooks in a consumer health collection.

Community outreach and meeting the needs of diverse populations is a major theme throughout the compilation. Spatz challenges librarians to leave the comfort zone of the library and venture out into the community. Ottman Press and Diggs-Hobson contribute a wonderful article describing their experience with faith communities in the Puget Sound area. They offer some very critical insights to the key to success in the community, suggesting that, while librarians might be the best people to determine information need and the ways to fulfill that need, others might be better at interfacing with the individual or the community. They propose a codified cultural competence for librarians.

An article written by Alpi and Bibel and one by Allen et al. illustrate the importance of community assessment and the value of developing a target audience profile to serve their health information needs better. These authors offer wonderful suggestions for developing and maintaining partnerships and emphasize the value of community empowerment. This information is all the more valuable because it stems from their own experiences in the field. These articles are nicely complemented by Detlefsen's discussion of the characteristics of desirable Web-based consumer health information for two vulnerable communities: the elderly and African Americans. She provides valuable information for librarians working with these audiences and identifies a process that can be used to profile other information-seeking audiences.

Public librarians and their role as disseminators of health information are addressed from three different perspectives. Kouame et al. describe the public library as a provider of health information both from the perspective of the patron and the public librarian. The authors identify barriers to information exchange due to misperceptions and unrealistic expectations, which might not be limited to the public library. Perhaps this article will generate further dialogue among librarians and help to inform interactions with patrons. Gillaspy identifies factors affecting the provision of consumer health information in public libraries during the last five years. She describes the challenges facing public libraries and proposes strategic partnerships and carefully built collections to meet the consumer health information needs of their customer base. An actual example of a public library consumer health project initiated at the Iowa City Public Library offers a step-by-step description of their expansion of consumer health electronic resources.

Other ideas discussed in this compilation include sources for funding, marketing, and evaluation. Many of the articles offer extensive references, helpful charts, and historical overviews. Overall

these two issues are well worth reading. They increase the reader's knowledge of the trends in consumer health information practice and research and offer many practical suggestions. The collective body of authors encourage, while at the same time challenge, readers to understand and face the challenges that consumer health information professionals must be prepared to address.

Andrea Kenyon
kenyon@collphyphil.org
Library-Administration
College of Physicians of Philadelphia
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

CURTIS, DONNELYN AND SCHESCHY, VIRGINIA. **E-journals: A How-to-Do-It Manual for Building, Managing, and Supporting Electronic Journal Collections.** New York, NY: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2005. 421 p. $75.00. ISBN: 978-1-55570-465-4. (How-to-Do-It Manuals for Librarians no. 134).⊗

Providing access to the contents of the journal literature has been a central facet of the librarian's role in health sciences libraries for many years. Today, this literature has undergone a striking transformation to electronic format, presenting the profession with myriad new challenges. Curtis's latest book provides help for those trying to come to grips with the electronic journal medium. This is not a new edition of the 2000 *Developing and Managing Electronic Journal Collections*, but an entirely new work on the topic.

Those who are concerned that such a work will quickly become outdated can get some reassurance from Curtis's Website companion. The Website provides access to information that becomes available after the book was published and is organized by reference to the printed text. This excellent feature provides added value to the text.

This book is written for a general professional audience, not specifically for health sciences librarians, but it has uses for practitioners in

health sciences settings. Curtis and Scheschy explain the nature of the electronic journal and its users in a variety of (non–health sciences) settings. They review impacts on library operations and their implications for library managers. Acquisitions policies appropriate for new formats are examined, with attention to the varieties of new vendor types and package deals that have emerged.

Intellectual property issues are a hugely complex aspect of the electronic setting that have no equivalent in the print world but which are well explained here. The explanation of different authentication methods is very helpful. The purchasing process is also more complex than that found with printed journals.

Licensed e-journals must be made available to library users, and a variety of access tools are available for this purpose. The discussion of context-sensitive linking is brief, but the supplementary Website helps remedy this. Users who access e-journals through a variety of Web-based portals—on and off campus and often subject to authentication procedures and the vagaries of Internet service providers, firewalls, and proxy servers—need a very different type of support. Curtis and Scheschy cover all of these areas and finish their presentation with a discussion of evaluating collections and services.

This book balances concise presentation with detailed coverage of the topic. Numerous practical examples are provided, as are several useful appendixes. This book will be especially useful to specialists in electronic resources management. It will also be helpful to the one-person librarian who needs a quick way to conquer the learning curve. However, the one-person librarian will probably find it more useful to identify the needed data and skip the information that is applicable mainly to larger library settings. This book can be recommended to every librarian who must contend with the complexities that the e-journal has brought.

Richard J. Harris
harrisrj@evms.edu
Brickell Medical Sciences Library
Eastern Virginia Medical School
Norfolk, Virginia

Managing Digital Resources in Libraries. Edited by Audrey Fenner. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press, 2003. 202 p. $19.95. Softcover. ISBN: 978-0-7890-2403-9. Copublished as **The Acquisitions Librarian,** v.17, nos.33/34, 2005.⊗

Library patrons in today's environment expect access to electronic items as well as physical materials. In fact, publishers are abandoning the traditional print model in favor of electronic formats that can be substantially less expensive for them to deliver. Physical and electronic versions of scholarly resources serve different purposes: the former may be preferred for embedded graphic objects, whereas electronic versions are easier to access, often in varying combinations of portable document format (PDF), hypertext markup language (HTML), MS Word, extensible markup language (XML), and text.

Copublished simultaneously as *The Acquisitions Librarian,* number 33/34, 2005, *Managing Digital Resources in Libraries* offers practical advice from experts who collect and manage the often digital-born resources becoming an increasingly important feature of twenty-first century librarianship. In this edited volume, working librarians share their expertise, addressing questions of licensing, funding, and access. The contributors also examine innovative projects and systems, such as the integration of resources that are personal digital assistant (PDA)–accessible into a library's electronic collection and the development of all-digital libraries.

The chapters of the book are divided into four major sections, the first of which is licensing. This topic includes discussion of the impact of licenses on library collections and licensing issues in an integrated collection. The authors address

the reality that restrictions imposed by licensing agreements result in a bifurcation of library resources for those resources that are owned and/or leased. The authors claim that, given the restrictive climate, libraries must support the first sale and fair use doctrines to thrive in the digital environment.

The second topic of opinions, research, and analysis concerns open archives and the role of academic libraries and the electronic librarian in acquiring online journals and solutions to providing access. The authors discuss the open access movement and conclude that an electronic prints archive would complement traditional means of scholarly communication and publishing. Several timely questions are posed, including provision of article-level access to journals, effect on collection management of purchasing from journal aggregators, and MARC as an appropriate, let alone relevant, format for cataloging.

The third topic is systems and software, which addresses choices in cataloging electronic journals, the use of the electronic library information navigator ELIN@, an ''electronic journal finder,'' integration of print and electronic resources, and electronic journals in aggregated collections. The authors describe various formats used to provide access to and fully integrate collections of journals in all formats. A summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each option is discussed. Also reviewed is a solution to the problem of providing access to e-journals using e-journal management software. Various e-journal management systems in different libraries are described. The section concludes with a discussion of a twofold solution to providing access to the content of full-text aggregators and collections: access through the online public access catalog (OPAC) and a database available from the library's Website.

The final topic of special projects and histories covers integrating resources for PDA users, issues in developing an all-digital public health library in Michigan, and two

case studies of electronic collection management. The authors describe the steps necessary to successfully integrate PDA-accessible resources into a library collection that necessitate novel solutions to the issues of licensing, cataloging, processing, and storing of such materials. Also discussed are the unavoidable problems of collecting and jointly managing print and e-resources with decreasing budgets.

Addressing the challenges of and barriers to the preservation and dissemination of electronic information, *Managing Digital Resources in Libraries* provides a compendium of working knowledge addressing the aforementioned central issues. Each chapter concludes with references, including relevant Websites. Moreover, the book is thoroughly indexed and many chapters conclude with references and useful appendixes.

This anthology outlines what librarians are thinking, doing, and planning in the new world of digital resources, in a time of shrinking budgets and increasingly complex access and purchasing arrangements. The contributions range from the theoretical to the eminently practical. Major emphasis is on the management of e-journals, although a chapter on the use of PDA technology gives the collection greater breadth in terms of formats addressed.

An interesting and important compilation of reflections on today's issues in managing digital resources, *Managing Digital Resources in Libraries* also has a global reach, addressing projects outside the United States. The range of solutions offered for accessing and managing digital resources illustrates that no one method will achieve management of digital materials in all libraries because, as many authors maintain, one size cannot fit all.

Finally, the chapters address copyright issues, licensing concepts, and issues surrounding bibliographic control. The case studies inclusively cover situations found in a variety of libraries, such as academic, health sciences, and public

libraries. These vary from the ways librarians cope with digital resources, questions about how different formats and titles are selected, ways limited funds are allocated to lease or purchase electronic resources, to the effects consortial arrangements have on funding problems and the extent such relationships require libraries to purchase content that is out of scope. The book will serve as a very useful resource for all collection development librarians as well as for digital resources librarians.

Mark Spasser, PhD, AHIP
mspasser@mail.mcg.edu
Robert B. Greenblatt, MD, Library
Medical College of Georgia
Augusta, Georgia

SCHOTT, MICHAEL J. **Medical Library Downsizing: Administrative, Professional and Personal Strategies for Coping with Change.** Binghamton, NY: Haworth Information Press, 2005. 153 p. $19.95. ISBN: 978-0-7890-0420-8.

With humor, Schott delivers practical advice for coping through his bemused reminiscences on what started out as health care–specific downsizing experiences. But, as the reader quickly learns, the phenomenon of downsizing has spread far and wide in the public, education, and for-profit sectors and may even be generalized to any and all bad company-wide events. Schott relies heavily on the business literature for background, and a quick search reveals a dearth of articles or monographs dealing with medical library downsizing. Schott weaves history, business, philosophy, and comic strips into a concise handbook for preparing for and dealing with inevitable change related to downsizing activities.

This small, easy-to-read volume has just nine chapters. It includes an annotated literature list in chapter 2. Although some obvious references are lacking, the list is a good selection of recent defense articles on library and librarian value. Very useful arguments to the ''it's

all on the Internet and it's free'' philosophy are presented with references on pages 34 to 35. Six of the nine chapters follow a sequential series of downsizing stages with anecdotes, strategies, and role-playing scenarios. Each chapter or stage has at least one good idea to implement for the library or librarian in those circumstances. For the most part, these stages are from the view of the librarian as manager who must plan and implement a downsizing strategy. These coping strategies are not only in the realm of managers. Recommended reading throughout the volume is diverse, varying from war stories to baseball coaching, Rudy Giuliani to Martha Stewart to Charles Schulz. Each recommendation is intended to build the librarian's toolkit, suggest strategies, plan communications, spread humor, and offer support.

Page for page, this book has the highest density of good ideas this reviewer has seen in the professional library literature. If you are doing all of them, you probably will not be a victim of downsizing or need to read this book. But there is always room for improvement, and readers should find at least one new idea. Ultimately, the book even reminds you to look out for number one and shows what to do if you are the one who gets downsized. The book ends with a reminder that downsizings tend to fail and survivors tend to suffer, and the author's aspiration to science fiction writing is seen in the cautionary tale presented in the last chapter. The final message is that librarians may in the long run, and after all, be ultimately responsible for our own fate and need to work now toward building a body of evidence of our worth. Then we should spend time telling the tales to those who need to hear it.

The author at times seems supercilious, speaking as if everyone's experience will be just as he has described it. Subsequent readings reduced that impression, and the suggestions he makes provide the best, most workable strategies. The humor and variety of social refer-

ences do reveal the author's sincere intent to inform and assist his colleagues.

Eileen H. Stanley, AHIP
eileen.stanley@allina.com
Library Services
Allina Hospitals & Clinics
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Supporting E-learning: A Guide for Library and Information Managers. Edited by Maxine Melling. London, UK: Facet Publishing, 2003. 192 p. £39.95. ISBN: 978-1-85604-535-8.⊗

Melling defines electronic learning broadly and inclusively as ''learning facilitated and supported through the use of information and communication technologies.'' These essays address strategic and operational issues that library and information services managers must consider to support and effectively manage e-learning. This collection shares common themes that underlie the successful support of e-learning. A recurring theme is that one size does not fit all institutions; e-learning needs to be more focused and relevant in the library and information world for useful contribution. The most basic conclusion of all the chapters collectively is that a ''one-size-doesn't-fit-all'' approach is necessary to successfully manage e-learning by integrating interactions between libraries and e-learning environments.

It is essential to understand the main areas of interdependence among aspects of e-learning and learning support infrastructure, including pedagogy, learning methodologies, and technology. Another common theme is that e-learning requires a process-based approach rather one constrained by structural boundaries. Accordingly, faculty, information technology staff, administrative staff, and librarians all have roles and responsibilities in content management, meaning that collaboration and cooperation are crucial.

In the digital environment, the

question of ownership becomes blurred because libraries provide access to digital materials whose access is only purchased on a time-limited basis from a vendor, while they are also creating metadata and access to learning objects created by, and possibly repurposed by, colleagues in a variety of disciplines and subjects. Finally, in such a fluid environment, successful support for e-learning requires flexibility and creativity.

Key areas in the book focus on the importance of mainstreaming integrated systems and the increasing needs of multidisciplinary teams to be more proactive, particularly in terms of framing e-learning programs with respect to the veritable ubiquity of Web-based applications. Another area emphasizes the need for information managers to scan and analyze the environment to develop locally contextualized support processes. Also underscored is the need to embed e-learning into staffing and workflow considerations.

A third theme discusses the increased need to be flexible and proactive for creative purposes. Guidelines for best practice include not considering technology an end in itself and being honest about the time, effort, and commitment required to ensure the successful introduction and management of e-learning. Contributors strongly advocate cooperation between librarians and academics. Librarians and information managers must create new partnerships with academics to create relevant e-learning programs and to fully integrate e-learning into curricula. A final essay describes how awareness of electronic resources must be an integral, if not essential, component of all information literacy programs.

E-learning is becoming more common in academic institutions as a delivery mechanism for information content. However, successfully deploying e-learning technologies requires cooperation and exchange among professors, educational coordinators, systems librarians, education librarians, and

information technology professionals. Increasingly librarians and information managers are directly involved in developing e-content and delivering services to support e-learning. It is vital that information managers appreciate the realities of e-learning and, more importantly, exploit its full potential as an information literacy platform. The contributors of this volume help readers understand how e-learning theory can be translated into practice.

This book will be useful for all managers of library and information services, as well as for any librarians involved in establishing policies for implementing and managing e-learning services. It will also be valuable for new professionals and as a text for advanced library and information science students.

Mark Spasser, PhD, AHIP
mspasser@mail.mcg.edu
Robert B. Greenblatt, MD, Library
Medical College of Georgia
Augusta, Georgia