intuition," (138) which means it cannot be learned without hands-on practice. But this text offers a comprehensive introduction to put any new collections librarian on the right path.—*Annette Day (annette.day@unlv.edu), University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

Reference

1. Robert. P. Holley, *Review of* Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management, *by Peggy Johnson*, Library Resources & Technical Services 49, no. 1 (2005): 57–58; Susan K. Kendall, Review of Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management, 2nd ed., by Peggy Johnson, Journal of the Medical Library Association 97, no. 4 (2009): 319–20.

Are Libraries Obsolete? An Argument for Relevance in the Digital Age. By Mark Y. Herring. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2014. 258 p. $25 softcover (ISBN: 978-0-7864-7356-4).

In 2001, a legislator told Mark Herring "everything was on the Internet, so why did our students need a new, big library building?" (7). Herring responded by publishing a brief and highly popular list, "10 Reasons Why the Internet is No Substitute for a Library."[1] Six years later, Herring transformed that list into a book, *Fool's Gold: Why the Internet is No Substitute for a Library* (McFarland 2007). Both the list and book outline in passionate detail Herring's view that the Internet's many flaws make it inferior to the library. "Not everything is on the Internet" writes Herring, and "quality control doesn't exist. . . . The Internet is ubiquitous but books are portable."[2] His latest book, *Are Libraries Obsolete? An Argument for Relevance in the Digital Age*, revisits points made in his earlier works. Thirteen years after Herring's original list was published, has the Internet made the library obsolete? Herring says no.

Are Libraries Obsolete is divided into three parts. The first part returns to Herring's 2001 list, updating each of his ten points. Part two outlines four areas that Herring believes have been made worse by the Internet: reading, literacy, privacy, and piracy. Part three describes the current state of the library and provides two possible scenarios for the future: one positive and one much more dismal.

Most of the book is devoted to part 1, which begins with the chapter "Everything Is Still Not on the Internet." This sets the tone for the rest of the book. Everything is still the way it was in 2001, according to Herring. The Internet is still too large and complicated for the average user to navigate. There is still no quality control. Some information found on the web might be misleading or incorrect. The average user, making their way through this bramble without the help of a librarian, is likely to stumble upon misinformation or distractions. They might sacrifice their right to privacy. Their eyes will hurt from staring at a screen for too long. They might find pornography. Herring paints the Internet as a dangerous place and tries to convince his readers that they would be much safer and more comfortable sticking to the familiar and trusted stacks of their libraries.

This is very much the same argument Herring made in his "10 Reasons" in 2001, a perspective that now appears dated. In part three, he describes what he sees as new challenges to the library. We are faced with staff who are unwilling to change and unable to keep up with technology. Our patrons are moving online, as are our collections, and our spaces and buildings are becoming "less about books and much more about social gathering places" (183). As for funding and politics, Herring writes that "libraries have for too long been the financial black holes at institutions, costing small and large fortunes, but not creating much in the form of a revenue stream" (182). Herring also sees a political climate that is turning against us. Disappointed with our lack of revenue, politicians are eliminating funding for public and academic libraries. For this, he blames librarians themselves. He urges us to "remain politically neutral" (208), so as not to anger our political leaders. "Ideas have consequences," he writes, "and if we carve out a niche that is strongly opposed to ruling parties, we have only ourselves to blame when those parties are in power" (208).

Overall, the book lacks focus and is written with the defensive tone of someone who perhaps worries that he is becoming obsolete. Herring refers to his age so often, and speaks so disparagingly of those younger than he, it becomes a distraction to his main points. He writes, "those who are under thirty will laugh at this and say this is only a function of my age" (27). His statistics are seemingly lifted from thin air, without citation. "In fact," he claims, "*libraries* account for almost 35 percent of all Internet access outside the home" (28). Throughout the book, he fixates on the amount of pornography available on the Internet. "The web," according to Herring, "is rich and deep, but also vulgar and rude" (115). His tone is riddled with sexist microaggression. "*YouTube* videos of young men acting the fool, or worse, young girls imitating what they think might be appealing at some level to someone, crowd the Internet" (49). A bit later he writes, "A founding principle of Americanism is abundance, or so it would seem. If one is good, one hundred is better. We apply this to almost everything: cars, boats, guns, dollars, Starbucks, wine, women . . ." (67).

With public and academic libraries across the country losing funding and often closing their doors, it is important to argue for relevance in the digital age. Herring may not be the right person to fight this fight. It would be more useful to offer a book on the use of technology to improve library services rather than one about a man disappointed with the way the world has changed around him. Issues of concern to librarians, such as net neutrality and its impact on the library, would have been a good addition to this book, but

Herring does not address it. Those who agree with Herring might find his meanderings amusing. Anyone who enjoyed his first book might also find value in *Are Libraries Obsolete*, as it reiterates many of the same points.—*Melissa De Fino (mdefino@rulmail.rutgers.edu), Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey*

References

1. Mark Y. Herring, "10 Reasons Why the Internet is No Substitute for a Library," *American Libraries* 32, no. 4 (2001): 76–78.
2. Ibid.

Floating Collections: A Collection Development Model for Long-Term Success. By Wendy K. Bartlett. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2014. 128 p. $55 paperback (ISBN: 978-1-59884-743-7).

In these uncertain economic times, library administrators are often faced with tough budget decisions. They are encouraged to "think outside the box" for creative strategies to help cut costs while not diminishing services to library patrons. Wendy Bartlett's *Floating Collections: A Collection Development Model for Long-Term Success* offers one such creative and thought-provoking strategy, particularly for public library systems. Bartlett defines a floating collection as "a system-wide collection wherein there is no owning branch designation" (xiii). She explains the history of floating collections and suggests floating as a cost-cutting measure for libraries facing budget challenges. Savings from floating accrue from the lack of expenses to process, ship, and reroute books and media back to their home branch. Moreover, shelving can be done promptly, and patrons are satisfied as material is available more quickly and not perpetually in transit. To help libraries decide whether floating is right for them, Bartlett offers the "Library Float Evaluation" checklist, which a library would complete only after reading about the advantages and disadvantages of floating. Bartlett has experienced these issues; she writes with a clear desire to make it easy for the next group of libraries to make informed decisions whether or not to float their collections.

Rather than a manifesto on the merits of floating, this book is written to illuminate the variables to be considered within a library system and to reinforce the concomitant need for good communications at all levels. Bartlett offers guidance about communicating with staff prior to implementing a floating collection. She encourages visits to library branches so staff understand what a floating collection will mean for their workflows. She discusses new and positive workflows for shelving, weeding, and running library system reports. Bartlett encourages teamwork, communication, and an open mind so that floating produces less surprise and more positive results for patrons and staff alike.

There is plenty in this book to interest collection development librarians. Floating may be easy to do from the library system point of view, but it changes the approach to purchasing for individual branch collections. She encourages collection development librarians to visit their branches and observe library workflows firsthand. Although Bartlett suggests that collection development librarians weed before floating begins to avoid creating imbalances in collection size across branches, a good portion of the book deals with resulting imbalances that may occur from floating.

Floating Collections includes helpful scenarios, charts, and worksheets spread throughout the book and gathered in the appendices. There is also a list of libraries organized by state that have moved to floating, useful for consulting with libraries of comparable type and size.

Bartlett has written the guide on how to float and live to tell the tale. She provides ample guidance for answering staff questions and helping libraries determine whether floating would be a positive initiative financially and for patron service. I recommend this book for large public libraries as well as academic libraries to whom floating appeals.—*Amy Lewontin (a.lewontin@neu.edu), Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts*

Rethinking Collection Development and Management. Eds. Becky Albitz, Christine Avery, and Diane Zabel. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2014. 402 p. $60 softcover (ISBN: 978-1-61069-305-9); e-book (ISBN: 978-1-61069-306-6).

Rethinking Collection Development and Management is an anthology of essays authored by professionals active in the field, broadly conceived. The treatment of each topic is highly contemporary and carries with it the distinct perspective of personal experience. This pronounced subjectivity distinguishes this volume from more directly instructive texts such as Peggy Johnson's *Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management*, 3rd ed. (ALA Editions, 2014). Indeed, the publisher recommends the volume as a supplement to its more traditional textbook counterparts.[1] Taken as a whole the volume seeks to situate contemporary collection development and management as a field evolving in many directions at once.

The volume is divided into four parts, beginning with "Selection and Assessment." This section opens with a chapter aptly titled "Forces Shaping Scholarly Publishing," written by Robert Boissy. The chapter serves to position the twin topics of selection and assessment within the dramatically shifting landscape of scholarly publishing. Following is a chapter by Mark Sandler, which problematizes the historical practice of collecting and collection management. Sandler strongly states that large research libraries function, or attempt to function, under the tyranny of an outmoded specter of assessment, which conflate collection size with