

viduals who created famous toys.

A useful feature of the book is the inclusion of a for further reading section at the end of each article. If, for example, the article about the Mego Corporation leaves you wanting more information about the company, you'll be pleased to learn of two books devoted exclusively to the Mego company and its products. One possible weakness, however, is the scarcity of information on certain popular toys. Famous toy lines such as Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles are given very brief mentions in the "Action Figures" entry but are not given their own entries for further discussion.

Toys and American Culture differentiates toys from games on the grounds that games come with "specific instructions for play" while toys "pertain to imaginative play" (xviii). Since games are excluded from *Toys and American Culture*, libraries may also want to acquire *Dictionary of Toys and Games in American Popular Culture* by Frederick J. Augustyn Jr. (Haworth, 2004). Of the two, *Toys and American Culture* may be narrower in scope but provides more substantial information.

Toys and American Culture is a valuable source of information on an important aspect of American popular culture and would therefore be a worthy addition to both public and academic library collections.—Edward Whatley, *Instruction and Reference Librarian, Georgia College and State University, Milledgeville, Georgia*

Professional Materials

Karen Antell

Editor

Humanism and Libraries: An Essay on the Philosophy of Librarianship. André Cossette, edited and translated by Rory Litwin. Duluth, Minn.: Library Juice Press, 2009. 79p. \$15 (ISBN 978-1-936117-17-8).

Rory Litwin has rendered the Anglophone community of information professionals a great service through his excellent translation of a heretofore unknown work. Originally written in French in 1976 by Quebecois librarian André Cossette as *Humanisme et Bibliothèques: Essai sur la Philosophie de la Bibliothèque*, it has lain dormant outside the Montreal academic setting. In the introductory section, the translator comments upon the apparent paucity of a philosophical foundation for Anglo-American (and Australasian) librarianship. Cossette is a welcome corrective to this rejection apparently born of information pragmatism and, if his directives and prescriptions are followed, may prove to be as useful to library practice as Dewey and Ranganathan.

Cossette divides his essay into two parts, the first of which is entitled "Concepts and Problems in the Philosophy of Librarianship." These concepts and problems are elucidated by the two chapters that constitute this section; namely, "What is Meant by 'The Philosophy of Librarianship'" and a second chapter upon "The Lack of a Coherent Philosophy of Librarianship." It is in the latter chapter that Cossette's Francophone bias is revealed most clearly and can be most instructive to the Anglo-American librarian. Even at the middle of the last century when this essay was composed, Cossette reveals, information professionals were advancing an apologetic stance, rather than a proudly professional embrace of the library tradition, firmly rooted in theory. This deficiency, according to Cossette's interpretation, can be laid to the charge of logical positivism—in other words, the practical but philosophy-free approach that pervaded the English-speaking Dewey library tradition of the last century.

The second section of the book is entitled, "Elements in the Philosophy of Librarianship." This section is further divided into two chapters, "Definition of Librarianship" and "The Ultimate Aims of Libraries." For the latter, Cossette identifies three possible aims: preservation, education, and information. These need not compete; rather, the replete library and information center will include all three in varying ratios. As Litwin rightly observes in his introduction, these chapters are as valid today as when they were first penned. While technologies change, the need for the development of cogent, intentional information professionalism does not. Included in this book are several helpful tables that outline in contrast varying aspects of information epistemology. For example, he compares and contrasts various theories of information and their respective classification and illuminates the reader by demonstrating their links to the theories of knowledge that underlie them. As touching epistemology, the section concludes with a plea for what is known today as "embedded instruction"; that is, the librarian as an active partner in the educational and curricular components of secondary and higher education. These chapters should be read and absorbed by every professional librarian and knowledge management student seeking a regulative ideal to which to conform.

Finally, Litwin prefaces this translation with a brief introductory essay regarding the provenance of the original manuscript, followed by a carefully constructed set of translator's notes. These notes reflect the care and consistency that Litwin exerted in his translation and should please even the most discriminating of readers. Without qualification, this work should occupy pride of place on the shelves of every librarian, student, and professional.—Van Herd, M. Div., PhD, *University of Oklahoma Libraries, Norman, Oklahoma*

The Librarian's Guide to Graphic Novels for Adults. David S. Serchay. New York: Neal-Schuman, 2010. 320p. \$65 (ISBN 978-1-55570-662-3).

Adding to the quickly expanding body of literature on the subject, *The Librarian's Guide to Graphic Novels for Adults*