

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*

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has several qualities to recommend it. Serchay's definition of graphic novels is far broader than most and includes comic strip collections, anthologies, bound reprints of comic books, and fan fiction comics. The book is so thorough that if a librarian were to drop down from Mars having never seen a comic in her life, Serchay's descriptions and background information would allow her to understand them well. Depending upon one's point of view, this thoroughness is either a virtue or an annoyance. Those who do have some familiarity with the format may want to skim part 1, "Understanding the Value and Types of Graphic Novels." Likewise, librarians who do not plan to collect comic books retrospectively may find the author's exhaustive coverage of single-issue series' changes of title, publisher imprints, crossover characters, and so on to be merely exhausting.

On the other hand, there is always something new to learn. Serchay's section on manga in its many forms greatly increased this reviewer's knowledge of the subject. A list of popular manga storylines was enlightening. Who knew there was a manga title about the 7-Eleven chain coming to Japan? Unfortunately, other parts of the world receive very little attention. Serchay devotes only three pages to comics traditions outside of the United States or Japan. That hardly seems fair to countries such as France and Belgium, where *bande dessinée* has long been a legitimate and well-respected art form.

Half of the book is given to three useful appendixes. Appendix A is an annotated list of recommended graphic novels (and again, this includes volumes of collected Superman comics and the like), with ratings to indicate appropriate age levels. Appendix B is a bibliography of comics-related books for librarians and patrons. Appendix C provides URLs for several publishers, vendors, and news and reviews sites. There is also a general bibliography and two indexes.

The Librarian's Guide to Graphic Novels for Adults does not contribute much that is new to the literature, although some may appreciate having the subject covered in one place. Francisca Goldsmith's *Graphic Novels Now: Building, Managing, and Marketing a Dynamic Collection* (ALA, 2005) covers practical issues such as storage, cataloging, and preservation in a more organized and thorough fashion. Steve Miller's *Developing and Promoting Graphic Novel Collections* (Neal-Schuman, 2005) also covers some of the same ground as Serchay. For selection, one could hardly do better than Gene Kannenberg's 2008 guide, *500 Essential Graphic Novels: The Ultimate Guide* (Collins Design). And Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* (Harper Paperbacks, 1994) is still the most accessible and thorough work available on how we read and intellectually process comics.

Librarians with little knowledge about collecting comics and who do not already own other titles on the subject will find Serchay's book worthwhile, as will librarians who are interested in a good overview of the history of the comics industry.—Liorah Golomb, *Humanities Librarian, The University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma*

Marketing Today's Academic Library: A Bold New Approach to Communicating with Students. Brian Mathews. Chicago: ALA, 2009. 171p. \$48 (ISBN 978-0-8389-0984-3).

Most libraries engage in activities intended to promote services, attract users, and garner support. Academic librarians increasingly recognize the importance and benefits of marketing their libraries both on and off campus. *Marketing Today's Academic Library*, by Brian Mathews, is a recent addition to the growing literature in this field. Readers likely will expect to find in this book guidance in developing advertising or outreach strategies for academic libraries, and Mathews certainly attends to such aspects of marketing. Fundamentally, though, the book is about building and maintaining genuine relationships with students. In Mathews's view, that is the basis for effective marketing.

This book differs from most library marketing literature in its strong emphasis on what Mathews calls "the lifestyle of the user." One of the lessons of this book is that academic libraries should not operate on presumptions or generalizations of what students are about or what they need. Instead, they must engage students in the world in which they live and consider their point of view. To do so, Mathews suggests libraries must adopt the approach of those in the professional marketing community. Throughout the book, he demonstrates that marketing and service should be viewed and practiced together by everyone in the library. He introduces ideas and gives examples and then puts them together with suggestions for practice. The discussion of marketing research techniques is straightforward. Collecting and using data to understand user needs and library performance is complex and riddled with potential pitfalls. Mathews acknowledges this with appropriate warnings about problems encountered in research.

Mathews is known widely for his distinct perspectives on library user experience. He authors the popular Ubiquitous Librarian blog and writes a column in *American Libraries*. Many of the ideas he advances elsewhere coalesce in this book. At the core of Mathews's views on marketing is empathy for library users. He advocates what he calls a "user-sensitive" approach. This call for user-centeredness is not unique in the library literature, and in many respects this book overlaps with literature on customer service and satisfaction. A particular value of Mathews's book is its integration of user-centered librarianship with a holistic view of marketing. A surprising drawback of this book is that its language is not gender neutral. Besides exclusive use of male pronouns (which may be the publisher's editorial policy), virtually all examples, actual and hypothetical, refer to males. Given common practice and the book's focus on user sensitivity, this is conspicuous enough to detract from, or even undermine, central themes of the book.

By and large, this book is a significant contribution to the literature of academic library marketing. Readers who enjoy Mathews's writings are certain to welcome the book. Academic libraries, and individuals involved in library marketing, should purchase this book.—Anthony Stamatoplos, *Associate Librarian, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis*