

in science, and history of scientific theories on gender. This resource weaves all of these strands into an enlightening picture of the effect of gender in the field of science. Highly recommended.—*Lisa Roberts, Catalog Librarian, California State University, Sacramento.*

Professional Materials

Karen Antell

Editor

Answering Consumer Health Questions: The Medical Library Association Guide for Reference Librarians. By Michele Spatz. New York: Neal-Schuman, 2008. 142p. \$65 (ISBN 1-55570-632-0).

Answering consumer health questions is a more complex process than medical librarians may immediately recognize. In this book, Michele Spatz clearly demonstrates the numerous facets of this task. In attempting to address this process, Spatz calls to mind the varied aspects integral to understanding and working with consumer-oriented health questions.

Comprising seven chapters, this book shifts its focus logically between the information provider and information receiver. It invites the reader to view the consumer health information transaction through a varied lens. This can be seen clearly in the author's preface: "In addition to possessing the skills needed to provide the appropriate informational resource, librarians must have an understanding of the psychology of health and medical consumers" (ix).

The book's chapters are laid out in an intuitive way. The author covers all of the important considerations that are unique to medical questions, including ethical and legal implications. Taking it one step further, Spatz draws on broad resources in her discussion of the psychological factors that affect the relationship between patron and librarian when obtaining and disseminating consumer health information. Understanding the diverse needs and backgrounds of health information consumers is examined, along with useful resources to help guide practice.

Answering Consumer Health Questions boasts several features that make it a wonderful reference resource. Dispersed throughout the book are vignettes that provide context and frame the reality and complexity of everyday reference scenarios. Another practical feature is the book's "exhibits." These sections provide links to useful resources that every medical library needs to be aware of to be an effective information provider.

As a reference book, this work reaches a broad audience. Perfect for library school students, graduate assistants (especially in medical libraries), and professional librarians, the material and scope of this book allows it to be read in its entirety or sampled and referenced as needed.

The author's evident delight in helping diverse patrons with personal and often complex needs demonstrates the

consistent struggle and reward of being a medical librarian. This book is a must-have for any medical library.—*Mark Hopkins, Library Technology Manager, Bird Library, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, Oklahoma City*

Crash Course in Reference. By Charlotte Ford. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2008. 143p. \$30 (ISBN: 978-1-59158-463-6).

One in a series of Crash Course titles from Libraries Unlimited, *Crash Course in Reference* fulfills the promise implied in its title. Ford has crafted a succinct, well-designed manual for all things reference in public library settings.

In natural progression, the book covers the definition and standards for reference service, general reference collection development, specific types of resources, ethical considerations, and service policies. In addition, the importance of networking with other librarians is discussed. A list of additional information resources for learning about reference work is provided. Each chapter includes a set of review questions that could serve as assignment questions for students in MLS or LSTA programs. This reviewer was able to test drive the book with a library practicum student and found it beneficial as a teaching and learning tool; in addition, the student found it helpful in shaping her practicum questions.

Crash Course in Reference outlines the reference interview process and stresses its importance in providing high-caliber service to library patrons. The book provides a response to the customary interview question for reference librarian positions: "If you only had seven resources you could have with you on a desert island, which would you take?" The response helps make new librarians aware of the wealth of information that can be found with a few well-selected tools. Ford also places well-deserved emphasis on the importance of excellent customer service in reference transactions and includes RUSA's *Behavioral Guidelines for Performance*. Her presentation of ethical dilemmas in reference work serves as a reminder that patron confidentiality and privacy are of utmost importance. Ford presents questions for consideration when working on inquiries that appear controversial, acknowledging that while textbook responses may provide the framework for answers to reference questions, it is not always easy to discern one right way to respond.

More contemporary and accessible than Bill Katz's *Introduction to Reference*, which has long been a standard text in library school curricula, *Crash Course in Reference* is an affordable, must-have resource for public libraries of all sizes and is of particular interest for training new staff.—*Lisa Powell Williams, Adult Services Coordinator, Moline (Ill.) Public Library*

Gotcha Good! Nonfiction Books to Get Kids Excited About Reading. By Kathleen A. Baxter and Marcia Agness Kochel. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2008. 259p. \$35 (ISBN 978-1-59158-654-8).

Gotcha Good! is written for the public or school librarian who wants to purchase or promote nonfiction titles for