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# Sources

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Karen Antell, Editor

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Individuals interested in reviewing professional materials should contact the "Professional Materials" editor, Karen Antell, Head of Reference and Outreach Services, Bizzell Memorial Library, University of Oklahoma, 401 West Brooks St., Room 146, Norman, OK 73019; e-mail: kantell@ou.edu.

*Becoming Confident Teachers: A Guide for Academic Librarians*. Claire McGuinness. Oxford: Chandos, 2011. 227p. Paper \$85 (ISBN: 978-1-84334-629-6).

Recognizing that most academic librarians receive virtually no pre-professional training on how to teach information literacy, McGuinness aims to provide the context, knowledge, and tools necessary to orient new academic librarians, or academic librarians new to teaching, to this ever-evolving and increasingly central role. Each of the book's six chapters familiarizes readers with the teaching librarian's various duties and provides guidance, suggestions, and strategies for how to approach them. The overarching message is that confidence is built by carefully examining one's own teacher identity, and practice improves by internalizing this reflective habit. Examples, scenarios, and exercises woven throughout each chapter stimulate the imagination, helping the reader become more aware of her teacher identity and more intentional in honing it.

McGuinness rightly observes that "there is no model, no prototype, of a typical teaching librarian to guide us" (8) and is aware that most teaching librarians lack not only teaching expertise but also role models. In other words, one reason that instruction is bewildering to so many librarians is that they lack a frame of reference, a point of comparison; they have no way of conceptualizing a lesson plan, writing a learning outcome, or assessing their success or failure in the classroom because they have never, or rarely, seen information literacy instruction in action. *Becoming Confident Teachers* helps to fill in this gap. By providing a framework for thinking about and approaching instruction, McGuinness offers the committed teaching librarian a means of assessing herself and ways to help her realize and address her own strengths and weaknesses so that she can rely less on external feedback and instead build confidence from within.

The book's discussions will thus be germane to new academic librarians and library school students who are interested in academic librarianship—that is, to anyone unclear about the role of a teaching librarian. Indeed, this book would perfectly complement library and information science courses focused on either library instruction or academic library services. The strength of this book lies not in the newness of the material—a great deal has already been written about theories of teaching and classroom assessment strategies. Rather, McGuinness's essential contribution lies in the fact that this book is so well tailored to its audience of academic librarians. McGuinness is mindful of their unique instruction challenges and personality traits, and she does an admirable job of addressing these problems and concerns.—Meagan Lacy, Assistant Librarian, Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis, Indianapolis, Indiana

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*The Frugal Librarian: Thriving in Tough Economic Times*. Ed. by Carol Smallwood. Chicago: ALA, 2011. 277 p. Paper \$42 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-1075-7).

With thirty-four chapters detailing the varied money-saving strategies for libraries and librarians that the respective

authors have implemented, *The Frugal Librarian's* primary value lies in its timeliness. As many of these chapters point out, we are all currently struggling through a bad time for library budgets while seeing increased demand for library services from our patrons. It can be difficult to cope with such a situation. Although seeing this fact restated so often can be depressing and demoralizing for the reader, *Frugal Librarian* actually contains much hope. The book encourages brainstorming and heavily underscores the value of innovation and of positive thinking. It is therefore ultimately very much an encouraging light in otherwise dreary times.

It is worth emphasizing this latter point, for it is as a whole that the book works best. Some of the chapters address such specific topics that their examples are perhaps not applicable to any other institution. Other chapters occasionally contain advice that at first glance can seem to be rather self-evident. These chapters are not necessarily real weaknesses in the book, however. Because each chapter is written by authors who have the voice of experience, it is easy for readers to realize that they also might be capable of managing important, necessary changes at their own institutions or addressing difficult challenges. Taken all together, the book serves as great fodder for inspiration and reassurance.

In fact, the bulk of *Frugal Librarian* is actually practical, useful advice that is relatively easy to implement. Likewise, some of the chapters are quite sagacious, for example, Kacy Vega and Kim Becnel's chapter "Bringing the Outside Back In: Creative and Cost-Effective Outreach Strategies," Colleen S. Harris and Mary Chimato's "Managing Staff Stress During Budget Crises," and Tom Cooper's "Bidding Service Contracts in Public Libraries."

These and several other chapters are to be especially commended for blending practical advice with pithiness, since one weakness of this book is that many chapters waste words reminding the reader that money is tight in libraries nowadays. Carol Smallwood's preface indicates that conciseness is one of the book's objectives; to be truly succinct, the preface might also have stated plainly that libraries today face financial constraints, so that the authors of each chapter could discuss potential solutions without having to restate the problem dozens of times.

An additional shortcoming is that, although the book is divided into sections, those sections and their titles seem rather arbitrary or ill-defined. For example, most chapters outline a successful or otherwise interesting project or innovation that the respective authors implemented in their own institutions. Therefore, the section "On-the-Job Success" could theoretically encompass the majority of the book.

Despite a few minor flaws, however, *The Frugal Librarian* is to be recommended. Taken as a whole, the book is a solid, robust work that provides encouragement and support to its readers. The book engenders a sense of resiliency and creativity that will serve its readers well as they make tough decisions for themselves and their institutions in these hard economic times.—*Sarah McHone-Chase, Information Delivery Services Library, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois*

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***Going Mobile: Developing Apps for Your Library Using Basic HTML Programming.*** Scott La Counte. Chicago: ALA, 2012. 64 p. Paper \$45 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-1129-7).

*Going Mobile* is all about the fundamentals of app development. The only requisite knowledge needed before picking up this book is elementary HTML. The author has a straightforward and thorough style that walks readers through everything: how to understand the basic terminology (for example, "mobile app" vs. "native app"), how to create one's first native app, and how to test it on users. Throughout the book, the author focuses on the guiding principle of mobile app development: simplicity. He continuously reinforces the importance of simplicity when formatting content to increase navigation and interactivity for mobile users.

Beyond the very basics, the book gives a crash course in cascading style sheets (CSS) and introduces readers to JavaScript. Importantly, the author also gives some caveats for working with JavaScript: although it has some powerful features, such as the ability to detect the size of a user's mobile screen and change the style sheet accordingly, JavaScript is not supported by all phones, so libraries should consider this before adding such code to their mobile apps.

The most helpful chapter of the book walks the reader through the process of building a "bare-bones" native app by using tools such as PhoneGap to "bridge the gap" between programmers and non-programmers with regard to mobile web development. Such tools allow a developer to create a page as they would for the mobile web, using HTML (and potentially CSS and JavaScript), and then converts that page into a language supported by a native app.

Many books, articles, and even YouTube videos have been produced on the topic of mobile web and app development, but the vast majority of these do not focus on libraries. Additionally, none are nearly as straightforward and concise as La Counte's book. This readability, combined with numerous helpful screenshots, create an accessible how-to book perfect for tech-knowledgeable librarians who want to create a basic mobile app for their library.—*Heather R. Williams, Strategist for Content Processes & Services, Robert W. Woodruff Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia*

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***A Librarian's Guide to an Uncertain Job Market.*** Jeannette Woodward. Chicago: ALA, 2011. 112 p. Paper \$45 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-1105-1).

This 2011 ALA Editions Special Report is a timely, uplifting resource chock-full of helpful tips for librarians nervous about current employment prospects. Aimed at an audience ranging from LIS students and newly minted librarians to seasoned information professionals, author Jeannette Woodward provides confident encouragement and practical guidance on every aspect of job hunting and career building—all with a subtle wit that keeps the reader engaged.

While pointedly not a comprehensive guide to resume-building or interviewing (libraries already hold many such