

SOURCES

easy access to information needed. This resource is an asset to any librarian who is attempting to get children interested in reading. Students in the third grade and above could use this resource to locate numerous books in a particular area of interest. This book also could be used creatively to initiate networking between teachers and school librarians, which could then lead to cooperative lesson planning.—*Jamie Johnson, Library Media Specialist, McKinley Elementary School, Norman, Oklahoma*

Creating Database-Backed Library Web Pages: Using Open Source Tools. Stephen R. Westman. Chicago: ALA, 2006. 288p. \$48 (ISBN 0-8389-0910-8).

In this book, Westman has made an admirable attempt to elucidate the arcane and mysterious world of the technology behind Web services. Geared toward librarians of all types who have a basic understanding of HTML and have the ability to create HTML forms, this book supplies a conceptual foundation for many terms often used regarding Web services and the steps involved in creating database-backed Web pages. The author indicates that this book by itself will not explain absolutely every detail of the technology under discussion, and the book's companion Web site provides a bibliography for further reading. However, in some places, more complete information would be useful in the book itself.

The book introduces the reader to a variety of technological concepts and activities, such as relational databases, basic programming, report building, and data maintenance applications. However, the extensive companion material for the work alone demonstrates that creating database-backed Web pages is not for everyone. A project of this type requires a level of technical understanding well beyond the HTML prerequisites mentioned. Advanced technical understanding is necessary even to begin to "program along" with the author. Adding to the difficulty (through no fault of the author), on the companion site, Web pages sometimes would not load, and, when this reviewer followed links to downloadable software, the instructions for downloading were sometimes confusing or unclear.

To maximize the intended utility of the book, downloading software and running a server on a machine is necessary. Unless a personal computer is used, there is also the issue of institutional security that could lead to uncomfortable encounters with library or campus IT departments. The thirty-two-page (!) set-up file found on the companion site even includes advice on dealing with potential complaints from network administrators.

The ability to put into practice or perform the activities one is reading about is, indeed, a powerful learning tool. This would be an ideal book for a class on building database-backed Web pages, but it would be quite ambitious for intelligent librarians without technological experience and training.—*Kathleen Fleming, Reference Coordinator, Science and Engineering Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan*

Information Literacy Assessment: Standards-Based Tools and Assignments. Teresa Y. Neely. Chicago: ALA, 2006. 218p. \$40 (ISBN 0-8389-0914-0).

Teresa Y. Neely, library director at the University of New Mexico and formerly at the University of Maryland (UM), and her colleagues from UM have written a useful, practical guide to information literacy assessment based on the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. In this ten-chapter book, chapters 3 through 7 each address one of the five standards, providing examples and recommending types of assessment queries and assignments for performance indicators and related outcomes (e.g., *Outcome 1.1.e: Identifies key concepts and terms that describe the information need*). Chapter 8 suggests other areas to assess that are not covered in the ACRL standards, such as the nature of the student/faculty relationship and the demographics of students. Chapters 9 and 10 focus on developing and automating an assessment survey instrument.

The real strength of the book is the work the authors have done for us in their literature review of more than seventy existing information literacy assessment instruments. Of the surveys reviewed by the authors, only a few (e.g., UM, Baltimore County Survey) were developed around the ACRL standards. For libraries that wish to develop a comprehensive information literacy assessment survey using the ACRL standards as a benchmark, this book is a valuable resource. On a smaller scale, for instruction librarians who want to measure student learning for one or two outcomes, many ideas can be found in the assessment queries and assignments sections throughout the book.

Some chapters exhibit greater readability than others. Several chapters would benefit from the use of bullet points or additional section headers. For example, in the section on "Do's and Don'ts of Writing Queries" in chapter 9, a numbered or bulleted list to follow from point to point would be helpful.

This book certainly provides a place to start the discussion on assessment. Both instruction librarians and library administrators will find the appendix listing all the survey instruments reviewed and the bibliography especially useful.—*Sherise Kimura, Reference/Electronic Resources Librarian, University of San Francisco*

Less Is More: A Practical Guide to Weeding School Library Collections. Donna J. Baumbach and Linda L. Miller. Chicago: ALA, 2006. 204p. \$32 (ISBN 0-8389-0919-1).

Baumbach and Miller have created a practical tool for school library media center directors and librarians to use in keeping their collections vibrant and relevant in the changing landscape of school libraries. Weeding is an integral part of collection development. This volume guides school library professionals through that process with criteria and models helpful to the unique type of library found in pre-K–12 educational institutions.

A user-friendly source, *Less Is More* helps the reader understand the necessary role of weeding in a school library by offering general weeding guidelines. Additionally, the authors describe various weeding models found in previous published manuals on the subject. Librarians also will benefit from the chapter on automation and its helpful impact on weeding. Sidebars, quotes, checklists, and comical lists of titles that should be weeded keep this book's tone light and right for busy school library media center personnel.

The backbone of this publication, however, is found in chapter 4, in which the authors present weeding topics in Dewey number order. Each topic includes a rationale for weeding, Dewey numbers to check, specific criteria for the topic, tips for replacing titles, and lists of titles to consider when weeding. Nonfiction, fiction, and reference books all are covered in this indispensable portion of the book.

Less Is More: A Practical Guide to Weeding School Library Collections is an accessible, practical, easy-to-read resource for busy school library professionals. Collection development educators would do well to avail themselves of the useful examples found in this volume.—*Laverne Simoneaux, School Library Media Center Director, University Terrace Elementary School, Baton Rouge, Louisiana*

Read the High Country: Guide to Western Books and Films. John Mort. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2006. 508p. \$60 (ISBN 1-59158-134-6).

John Mort's latest title is the usual informative fare from Libraries Unlimited: a guide for readers' advisors and for selection librarians in a specific genre. Mort lists four other titles (xiv) that treat Westerns in some capacity, the primary one being Dale Walker's *What Western Do I Read Next?* (Gale, 1998). Obviously, this title is already becoming outdated, and the need for a new title is evident.

For anyone not familiar with the Western, *Read the High Country* is a treasure trove, informing not only about the genre in books and film but also about the history of the American West. In fact, Mort includes in the appendix a "Western Time Line," from 28,000 BC to 1929 AD. One category in the "Traditional Westerns" section is "The Business of the West," revealing the importance of buffalo, railways, and mining to the commercial health of the American West. And, given the importance of the Native American in this time and place, the book is a great source for titles involving First Nations.

The reader will be amazed to see some of the authors included here. In his introductory "Short History of the Western," Mort cites such writers as James Fenimore Cooper, Mark Twain, and Bret Harte. He includes in the "Traditional Westerns" section annotations for Jack London, Paulette Jiles, and Cormac McCarthy, authors one does not normally associate with writers like Max Brand and Zane Grey.

The look at "Nontraditional Westerns" reflects the great changes that have occurred in the Western genre in the latter part of the twentieth century and into the current century. The categories are "The Contemporary West," "Contemporary

Western Mysteries," "Western Romances," "Short Stories," and "Young Adult," and they cover such authors as Barbara Kingsolver, E. Annie Proulx, and Kent Haruf. Cross-blending has become an integral part of this genre.

In the annotations, Mort provides icons to indicate whether the title is woman-friendly, suitable for young adults, Christian-themed, or considered a classic. He indicates setting and time, which are also reflected in the Settings index, and if the book is of exceptional note, an asterisk appears beside the title.

With a conversational tone, Mort wonderfully succeeds in guiding the readers' advisor to a much greater knowledge and understanding of the Western book and film. This book is likely to attract an entirely new readership to the genre.—*Maureen O'Connor, Public Services Librarian, Brampton Library, Ontario*

Recommended Reference Books for Small and Medium-Sized Libraries and Media Centers. Shannon Graff Hysell, ed. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2006. 376p. \$70 (ISBN 1-59158-380-2).

Recognizing that the *American Reference Books Annual* (ARBA) includes many entries for works irrelevant to smaller libraries, the editors have designed this title to "assist smaller libraries in the systematic selection of suitable reference materials for their collections" (xi). By reducing the number of entries from the more than 1,500 included in ARBA to a more manageable 554, they have created a work that should prove of value to many smaller libraries.

Each of the entries is taken directly from ARBA, which in turn takes most of its entries from review journals. Thus, there is little in the way of original material outside of the introduction. The entries are divided into thirty-seven chapters, each conveniently divided into four major categories: general works, social sciences, humanities, and science and technology. Both the categories and their subdivisions work well in allowing users easily to locate materials relevant to the topic for which they are searching. In addition to the breakdown in the table of contents, there is an author/title index and a subject index at the back of the book, enabling easy access.

Included at the beginning of each entry is a designation indicating where this material might prove useful—at a college, public, or school library. In many cases, titles are recommended for more than one type of institution. The entries themselves are quite thorough, ranging from about two hundred to five hundred words in length, and they tend to be very descriptive. Bibliographic information is included for each entry, and the journal citation is included where applicable.

Those using this book should exercise some judgment when it comes to the currency of included titles. For example, the 2005 *Official Major League Baseball Fact Book* will clearly be outdated by the time the review is included in such a publication. However, a librarian should be able to conclude that perhaps the 2007 edition would still be a worthwhile purchase, given that the authority and value of the title are