Although the content more than delivers on the title's promise, the text would have benefited from tighter copyediting. A number of fantastic resources are scattered throughout the notes and works cited. Future editions would profit from a collated appendix of useful websites.

Readers who work in settings without resident copyright advisors will especially appreciate this volume. Moreover, it will be invaluable for use in library and information studies coursework. In addition to print, this book is available as an open access publication through the Association of College and Research Libraries website (http://bit.ly/1ziN4ax). Highly recommended for all educators and researchers.—*George Gottschalk, Collection Development Librarian, Rogers State University Library, Claremore, Oklahoma*

The Personal Librarian: Enhancing the Student Experience. Edited by Richard Moniz and Jean Moats. Chicago: ALA, 2014. 152 p. Paper $58 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-1239-3).

The Personal Librarian: Enhancing the Student Experience champions the personal librarian concept as a revolutionary solution to many of the issues currently facing academic libraries, revealing what a personal library program can do for a library and how such a program should be built. The book is well crafted, flowing and connecting exceptionally well, despite the fact that each chapter embodies a completely separate essay. In particular, the book's organization provides readers with an easy transition from skeptical critic to enthusiastic participant, as each chapter transfers the energy and optimism of the authors to the reader.

Building on the evolving role of reference librarians as liaisons and educators, a personal librarian program seeks to go beyond reference interactions and library sessions to intentionally "build long-term one-on-one connections that allow students to have the confidence and resources to be successful in the skill sets that librarians particularly seek to instill in them" (9). The libraries that have already established personal librarian programs, such as Sam Houston State University, Yale University, and Drexel University, have used their programs as a means to further connect with their student population and remind them what librarians can do for them. In particular, the personal librarian program is meant to combat the issue of low student retention facing academic institutions by establishing strong relationships with students from their freshman year onwards. If a student can enter higher education with a personal librarian, who contacts the student before the academic year starts and who serves as someone the student can rely on for any assistance he or she may need throughout the year, Moniz and Moats believe that the often overwhelming stress of the transition to college can be reduced. More than anything else, the personal librarian "serve[s] as a point of contact for students" by keeping in constant communication with students, providing personal research assistance whenever needed, and connecting students with their subject specialist librarians once a major has been chosen (21).

In a world in which the librarian's role is in a state of transition, the concept of the personal librarian presents itself as an intriguing asset. Predominantly invaluable for librarians searching for the means to "make personal connections with students that can begin to stand outside the classroom" (47), such librarians will find all of the tools and encouragements they need within the pages of *The Personal Librarian: Enhancing the Student Experience.*—*Calantha Tillotson, Graduate Reference Assistant, Bizzell Memorial Library, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma*

Putting the User First: 30 Strategies for Transforming Library Services. By Courtney Greene McDonald. Chicago: ACRL, 2014. 104 p. Paper $30 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-8732-2).

User experience (UX) is serious business. Ultimately UX is what makes or breaks our success. This book, however isn't particularly serious, if by serious you mean academic and neutral in tone, narrated in the third person, and dispassionate. The best user experiences deeply impact both the agent of delivery and the customer; they are highly individualized, very specific to a place or situation, and (we hope) enjoyable.

This passage from the introduction sums up nicely the purpose of *Putting the User First*, a brief but densely packed book of workable strategies to improve the user experience of those served by libraries. The author is quick to point out that UX is not just for websites, but for in-person visitors to our libraries as well. The first strategy in the book is a real eye-opener: "You are not your user—so forget thinking that you are." The author makes a strong case that we information professionals, because of our knowledge and training, are impaired by it and will struggle to understand the approach to our services that the average user has. Unless, of course, we *admit* that we don't really understand and are willing to make changes *not* based on our perspective and training.

After reading the first strategy, I was drawn into the content, expecting to see some "recipes" for improving the user experience. Instead, I found stimulating commentary followed by short reading lists (including TED talks and blogs as well as journal articles and books) that provide valuable insight on new ways of looking at the issue being discussed. All of the strategies are handled in the same manner. This approach initially frustrated me since it offered insights, exercises, and suggestions on thirty different strategies, but didn't seem to have any concrete answers, just lots of food for thought for improving UX. The value of a book like this is that it is not meant to be read cover-to-cover and then just implemented. It is more of a "talk amongst yourselves" kind of work, with great topic suggestions. Each strategy could serve as a starting place for library staff discussions or as a concrete tool to help those implementing collaborations with faculty and students.

SOURCES

The book has thirty one-word strategies with (sometimes whimsical) names such as "Admit ('You are not your user')," "Obsess," "Pretend," "Stop," "Fail," "Raid," "Defuse," "Play," and "Leap." Each strategy chapter has an "Investigate" list of suggested readings, temptingly short and well-chosen. The full bibliography also appears at the end of the book in alphabetical order. Many of the chapters also have a "Contemplate" page, which offers exercises to help you think outside of your comfort zone. The author makes use of icons, explained in the introduction, which identify certain characteristics of the strategies. For example, a clock indicates a no-cost strategy, a dollar sign means low-cost, a gear icon specifies strategies that will involve technology support, and so forth.

This is an excellent resource for strategic planning, brainstorming, retreats or staff development. Recommended for all libraries and their staff and administration.—*Judy Gelzinis Donovan, Art Librarian, East Honickman Art Library, Philadelphia*

The Readers' Advisory Guide to Genre Blends. By Megan M. McArdle. Chicago: ALA, 2015. 232 p. Paper $55 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-1256-0).

Part of the ALA Readers' Advisory Series, *The Readers' Advisory Guide to Genre Blends* explores the dynamic world of books that combine characteristics of multiple genres. With more than fifteen years of experience in collection development and readers' advisory and her own website devoted to genre blending, author Megan McArdle has both the knowledge and the passion needed to tackle this amorphous topic. More than 420 different titles from adult fiction are listed, and some teen titles, graphic novels, films, and TV shows are also cited.

The majority of the guide comprises book annotations, and entries are coded into seven main genres: "Adrenaline Blends," "Fantasy Blends," "Historical Fiction Blends," "Horror Blends," "Mystery Blends," "Romance Blends," and "Science Fiction Blends." Each genre chapter is then further divided into more specific blends with the other six genres.

McArdle is able to distinguish the subtle nuances that differentiate a spine-tingling horror/romance from a more amorous romance/horror, and she organizes them as such. Each chapter begins with a brief description of the genre, followed by a discussion of its appeal, and its "blended" characteristics. Each annotated title is paired with two read-alikes that allow the reader to decide which genre path to follow. Chapters close with brief advice on working with the blends; however, these sections seem a bit repetitive and merely reinforce the earlier discussions.

The guide's latter part delves into the process of readers' advisory. One chapter provides advice on how to find blends outside of traditional fiction and explores media mixes; three TV shows, films, and graphic novels are summarized, and additional suggestions are included. The final chapter provides examples of readers' advisory interactions and offers suggestions for marketing genre blends, such as displays, booklists, book clubs, and tags within the library's catalog. An appendix deals with "Literary Fiction Blends," describing the blend of so-called literary fiction with the seven other genres. One annotation and several booklists are included for each genre. Another appendix profiles four authors considered to be "Genre Blending MVPs" and discusses their bodies of work. Additional authors are also given honorable mention. Finally, a bibliography of books and articles about genre as well as genre blending is included.

Although the single index is very thorough, separate indexes for title, author, and subject would have made the book a bit more user-friendly for quick readers' advisory. In addition, it is somewhat puzzling that full bibliographic citations are not included for each book, as these details can make it easier to track them down. Yet these small issues are outweighed by the great amount of content included within this volume. And, although the plethora of readers' advisory resources on the market would seem to make this book merely a supplemental purchase, it is essential for librarians looking for a greater understanding of a literary realm that continues to grow in popularity.—*Jackie Thornton, Children's Librarian, East Baton Rouge Parish Library, Baton Rouge*