their own personal characteristics. Each concept is treated with equal importance, and—as with most leadership theories—can be applied not just to one’s job but to one’s entire life. At the end of these chapters, the authors provide guided reflection tools for the reader, urging them to evaluate their own professional (and sometimes personal) lives. The questions are thought-provoking and prompt reader to do some higher-order thinking about how these concepts can be observed and emulated.

The authors provide two very practical chapters at the end—chapter 9, “Formalizing Service Leadership in Libraries,” and chapter 10, “Service Leadership in Libraries.” Chapter 9 provides exactly what its title promises: a way to formally introduce service leadership into the library setting. This is where the proverbial rubber meets the road, and the readers learn how and where service leadership can be implemented. Its main topics relate to personnel: recruitment, selection, evaluation, development, and rewards and compensation. Although much of the book is inwardly focused, encouraging readers to change themselves to become service leaders, this chapter discusses how to create service leadership throughout the library through careful curation of library employees. Chapter 10 provides more detailed information about how employees perceive their culture from the inside and how patrons perceive a service culture from the outside. It focuses on the daily tasks of a library that aims to communicate its service culture to its patrons.

One overarching theme of this book is the idea that leaders must practice what they preach. The reader will lose count how many times the authors insist that a service leader cannot simply say they want things to be a certain way—they must exemplify everything they hope their library and its employees to be. A leader must “walk the talk,” so to speak, because if leaders can’t change, neither will their libraries. This advice is repeated so often that it almost prompts eye-rolling, but the reminder is nonetheless important.

For those who already have some background in leadership theory, this book is an excellent choice for learning how some of those theories can be applied in a library setting. It certainly shouldn’t be the first or only book one reads on leadership, and some background and foundational reading would be necessary. However, Leading Libraries encourages the necessary metacognition and self-reflection that is helpful for understanding how to evaluate one’s own brand of leadership, as well as providing practical advice on how to truly embrace the service culture libraries are meant to exemplify.—Jennifer Tatum, Reference & Instruction Librarian, Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology, Okmulgee, Oklahoma


This book provides information and insight to help public libraries develop, maintain, and market local history reference collections (LHRCs). Public libraries frequently are given unpublished materials, and librarians may be reluctant to offend anyone by not accepting their gift. The authors explain how to develop an LHRC collection policy focused on published rather than unpublished material; such a policy provides a way to kindly reject materials that do not maintain the standards that are needed for developing a high-quality LHRC. The authors note that LHRC materials need not be archival or relegated to in-library use only, but can be made readily available to patrons. Librarians “can provide an invaluable resource to [their] patrons without taking on the additional expense, training, special housing, and staffing that an archival collection entails. It allows [them] to place the emphasis on ease of use, programming, and streamlined operation that makes sense in many public library environments” (xiv). This book can help librarians create collections of published materials that highlight local history and provide information about the area, community, and culture.

The book is grouped into nine chapters, the first of which covers current trends, practices, and concerns. Chapter 2 explains the difference between archival collections and LHRCs. The next three chapters discuss collection development, library mission statements, audience, and collaboration with other organizations. Chapters 6 and 7 explain what facilities are required to house an LHRC and how to preserve materials. The final three chapters discuss reference, access, marketing, outreach, and the virtual LHRC. Many chapters begin with a personal story related to the topic, followed by a concise yet thorough explanation of the topic, and conclude with a notes section that specifies resources for further reading. Additionally, this book explains how to coordinate, collaborate, and cooperate with other regional, university, and state libraries that maintain their own local history collections. This book includes a detailed bibliography, an index, and appendices that include a survey, ALA guidelines, templates for useful documents, a genealogy training worksheet, and items found in the public domain or creative commons.

This book is a great resource for public librarians, explaining how to develop, maintain, market, and access a LHRC. Well written and thoroughly researched, the authors have given us a simple and easy-to-use book. This reviewer, a history buff, thoroughly enjoyed reading this book and would recommend it for librarians who wants to learn how to develop an LHRC and understand how to serve their communities with the best their libraries have to offer.—Janet A. Tillotson, Library Director, Towanda Public Library, Towanda, Kansas


Many libraries offer some type of online research guides to their patrons, and large academic libraries in particular rely on online guides to make their holdings accessible to undergraduate students. In theory, online research guides