States. Her years at the Midwest Genealogy Center in Independence, Kansas, more than prepared her to write Helping Patrons Find Their Roots: A Genealogy Handbook for Librarians. Schultz focuses on all areas of genealogy research and her coverage is exhaustive. She begins with the purposes and methods of research, followed by a detailed consideration of all kinds of records useful to genealogists. She ably explains the importance of the proof and reliability of resources standards used by expert genealogists.

Schultz describes the choices necessary in hiring new staff, describing the dilemma of choosing between an experienced librarian with no knowledge of genealogy or an experienced genealogist who needs training in library procedures. Schultz also offers guidelines for developing genealogy collections. She encourages collecting in-depth local history materials, local vital records, cemetery inventories, church records, and county records of all kinds.

Most public librarians, however, are general information specialists. Their task in serving genealogy researchers is limited to helping them get started by providing resources and teaching basic skills in searching, including both print materials and online databases. Also, Schultz’s extensive “core collection” would require dedication of significant resources. Most local public libraries have broader missions.

This handbook is a perfect resource for experienced librarians with limited knowledge of serious genealogy research who wish to work in genealogical libraries. The information covered is meticulously discussed and could prove to be a valuable resource for a librarian working in this field. However, most of the language in this handbook seems to assume an audience of researchers rather than librarians. Given that, perhaps, its real usefulness would be as part of a basic genealogy collection for customer use.—Kathryn Ramsay, Local History and Genealogy Resources Librarian, Pioneer Library System, Norman, Oklahoma


The refrain that reappears throughout Leveraging Wikipedia is that Wikipedia and GLAM (galleries, libraries, archives, museums) are natural allies and a fair amount of text is dedicated to convincing the reader of this. It promises practical strategies for putting this alliance to work and ultimately delivers on that promise, if in a circuitous and somewhat repetitive way. After the first few chapters it becomes clear that there are only so many established ways for library professionals to harness the audience and infrastructure of Wikipedia for the benefit of their library. The authors offer a wide array of examples for how they tailored these tried and true methods for the specific niche of their work. The task of building on this existing foundation with innovative new partnerships between Wikipedia and libraries rests on the shoulders of the reader.

This book is not an introduction to Wikipedia. The authors write for an audience of their peers, GLAM professionals of all kinds who use Wikipedia every day. Nevertheless, most of the essays introduce parts of the broader Wikipedia media empire that may be less familiar, such as Wikidata, Wikiprojects, or the Wikipedia Library Project. A veteran Wikipedian may find the explanations of these different projects tedious. Reading this collection of essays cover-to-cover will mean that even a novice is in for the occasional slog through a chapter that is barely relevant to their day-to-day work. Eventually, academic and public librarians alike will find at least one strategy described in this volume that will work well in their own library.

Although each chapter offers a unique perspective, the authors largely offer the same few suggestions: host a Wikipedia edit-a-thon, establish a Wikipedian in Residence, or use Wikipedia to teach information literacy. Leveraging Wikipedia is less a handy toolkit for the library professional who is ready to begin implementing these programs in their own library and more a source of encouraging testimonials.—Natalie Mahan, Undergraduate Learning Specialist, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas


Although the concept of “sustainability” has many possible meanings, its connection to environmental issues is perhaps the most familiar. Thus, a reader coming across Rebekkah Smith Aldrich’s new book might assume that it is primarily about how libraries can best demonstrate stewardship of environmental resources. While this is certainly one important piece of the discussion, Sustainable Thinking has a much larger goal: advocating the capacity of libraries to build communities, whether it be through environmental, financial, leadership, political, or other initiatives.

As a long-time advocate for libraries and sustainability, Aldrich has a wealth of experience in library advocacy and communicates her message well. This book is comprised of several easy-to-read and brief chapters (no more than five pages), with a thought-provoking exercise at the end of each reading. Section One, “Situation Report,” sets the stage: use of public libraries is down, although people still have generally favorable opinions of them. It’s necessary for librarians to be aware of the many disruptions—political, economic, technological, environmental, and societal—surrounding them and their institutions to develop effective strategies for survival.

Section Two, “The Strategy,” outlines ways that libraries can inventory themselves, their communities, and their values. Particularly interesting in this section is Aldrich’s construct of the Three E’s of Sustainable Libraries: Empower, Engage, and Energize, which serves as a focal point around which libraries can self-inventory their connection to their communities. Section Three, “The Tactics,” builds on the
preceding discussions of environment and mission to help libraries develop their own action plan to connect with and build their communities.

Aldrich has an engaging, conversational writing style, and packs quite a lot of useful information into a few pages. The worksheets, checklists, questions for discussion, and other supplementary material are useful exercises for individual and group discussion. Sustainable Thinking is a thoughtful, well-written workbook for anyone interested in library sustainability on an individual and institutional level.—Jennifer A. Bartlett, Interim Associate Dean of Teaching, Learning, & Research, University of Kentucky Libraries, Lexington, Kentucky