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Rebeca Peacock and Jill Wurm, eds., *The New Academic Librarian: Essays on Changing Roles and Responsibilities*

The New Academic Librarian: Essays on Changing Roles and Responsibilities by Rebeca Peacock; Jill Wurm

Review by: Elizabeth DeCoster

*The Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy*, Vol. 84, No. 4, Special Issue in Honor of John Carlo Bertot (October 2014), pp. 517-520

Published by: [The University of Chicago Press](http://www.uchicago.edu)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/677794>

Accessed: 21/06/2015 15:28

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Shumaker, among others, have embraced and discussed the whole notion of the Participatory Library. Creation and creativity in the Participatory Library is at least as important as collection building, plus the library will provide a set of tools that will allow people to build and engage with the community (reviews, tags, ratings, comments, remixing content, etc.).

*Planning Our Future Libraries: Blueprints for 2025* is highly recommended without reservation to librarians in all types of libraries and those interested in learning more about the future of the library.

Joseph R. Matthews, Carlsbad, California

*The New Academic Librarian: Essays on Changing Roles and Responsibilities*. Edited by Rebeca Peacock and Jill Wurm. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2013. Pp. viii+202. \$55.00 (paper). ISBN 978-0-7864-7153-9.

The editors of *The New Academic Librarian* open the book with a short history of American librarianship, outlining traditional tasks and roles. They then provide examples of contemporary changes to these roles, focusing on technological elements of modern-day library work. In the preface, Peacock and Wurm explain, “‘Librarian’ no longer means reference, bibliographies, or cataloging. ‘Librarian’ today means teacher, marketing professional, information technologist, web developer, and administrator” (1), laying out for the reader which elements of “new” librarianship they will be focusing upon. The authors have broken the book into four parts, each a collection of essays on different areas of librarianship.

The first section of the book focuses on public services and outward-facing roles in the library world. Melissa Aho describes the work she does as an evening circulation supervisor at the Bio-Medical Library of the University of Minnesota, contrasting traditional circulation duties with the cross-training many circulation staff now undergo. She also describes the results of an informal survey she conducted on perspectives of the circulation desk, the results of which generally emphasize the importance of the circulation desk as a frequent—and often the first—point of contact that users have with their library. Katy Kelly and Gwen Glazer, from the University of Dayton and Cornell University, respectively, describe how they came to their current positions and how they use social media to support their outreach efforts. They share a few best practices for social media outreach and discuss their experiences with a few popular tools, including Facebook and Twitter. They conclude that social media is merely a new tool and technology for an age-old library goal: to help “users where they are, at their point and place of need” (26).

Theresa McDevitt at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania provides information on the outreach element of her job, which includes planning events and partnering with other on-

campus departments to engage students and bring the library to other spaces on campus, such as residence halls. Editor Rebeca Peacock describes in detail her job as a first-year experience librarian at Wayne State University, a position she essentially created from scratch, and the activities she's developed to support this role. Jane la Plante of Minot State University discusses her responsibilities as an information literacy librarian and her path toward creating a more engaging classroom experience for her students. The stories she shares include successes and challenges of her partnerships with faculty and the impact of implementing a discovery service in the library. At Rollins College, as Susan E. Montgomery describes, the goal was to develop the library as the "third place" (61), a space on campus that would meet multiple student needs simultaneously. For example, the library changed their "no food and drink" policy and created more group and collaborative study spaces, responding to student needs and making the library a more welcoming space.

In the second section, the essays focus on librarians as producers and information mediators. Jonathan McGlone provides a thorough look at the lives of digital projects librarians, those librarians who are responsible for "stewardship . . . of digital materials" (68). He describes a variety of existing digital collections and exhibits, explains the skills and abilities commonly required for digital librarians, and provides four appendices with specific additional information. Similarly, Sue Ann Gardner describes the role of scholarly communications librarians, who need a variety of knowledge and skills: not only technological skills to support institutional repositories but the ability to engage in outreach and work collaboratively with faculty and knowledge of copyright and permissions to facilitate legal dissemination of the information they collect. Copyright and permissions are also the focus of Julia Frankosky and Amy Blair's essay on the increasing frequency of having a librarian serve as the campus-wide point person for copyright "issues and education" (99). They highlight two distinct elements of a copyright librarian job—the need to educate a variety of users on many elements of copyright and the need to work with other campus entities, such as legal counsel, to keep the campus in compliance overall. Finally for this section, James E. Van Loon describes the responsibilities of a librarian supporting "data-intensive research" (106), including the role of data in academic research and the skills required of a librarian to curate and manage a variety of data-specific resources.

The third section is something of a hodgepodge and focuses on "specialties," meaning both special libraries and specialization within libraries. Joseph A. Williams discusses librarianship at sea and writes about his experiences working as the librarian for the training ship of Maritime College. He writes about the unique needs of students who are training to join the Merchant Marines, the various groups he served while aboard the ship, and the service challenges of being a solo librarian with only an Intranet for support. He also discusses other examples of ship librarians, such as librarians who work with cruise companies and research vessels. Kelly Robinson gives a similar treatment to the roles of librarians who work in hospitality libraries and discusses how the growth in postsecondary education has led to specialization within the

academic library sphere. Another essay in this section discusses GIS librarianship at Texas A&M University, a Federal Depository Library. The authors discuss the in-depth assistance and training users of GIS data require and the collaboration often required between GIS librarians and government document librarians to provide such information to students. Suzan Alteri describes how the roles of special collections curators have changed from acquiring and cataloging items to include “promoting their collection” (133). She describes the importance of promotion and outreach to building useful special collections and explains the importance of digitization in supporting these endeavors. Grants librarianship is the focus of the final essay in this section, which author Linda Galloway defines as “us[ing] traditional library research skills to identify and disseminate relevant funding opportunities to the campus community” (153). She provides some best practices and describes the collaborative opportunities she sees in her work with stakeholders across campus. She also suggests other organizations that might benefit from a grants librarian or similar position.

The final section is a catchall of more formally technology-based positions. Brendan Quinn at Northwestern University’s Digital Collections Training Lab provides technology training and support for “the teaching and research needs of faculty, graduate students and staff” (161). Junior Tidal describes the various elements of web librarianship, including explanations of information architecture, content management systems, and usability testing. Juleah Swanson examines the challenges of taking on a new role in libraries—in her case, an e-resource librarian position—and describes how nonlibrary work experience can be transferable to librarianship. She provides practical information on purchasing and licensing and highlights the skills needed in a position such as hers. In the final essay, Meghan Finch examines the evolving responsibilities and range of competencies required by metadata librarians.

A few themes recur throughout *The New Academic Librarian*. The editors are explicit in their focus on new technologies and innovations and do not spend much time on innovations in “traditional” libraries services—very little discussion is given to reference or collection management, and only two essays substantively discuss instruction or training. The essays are a mix of styles, with some authors giving detailed descriptions or overviews of their specific positions, other authors providing an in-depth look at the skills and abilities necessary for a particular type of position (e.g., digital projects), and some authors providing a more personal narrative of their job experiences. The importance of continuing education and professional involvement is illustrated throughout the book, as many contributors describe their participation in professional organizations, trainings such as Association of College and Research Libraries’ Immersion Programs or the Council on Library and Information Resources’ ethnographic study workshops.

For these reasons, many of the essays in this book seem most appropriate and useful for librarians who are going through a change of some kind, such as graduate students planning their careers or librarians making a job change or facing a reworking of their job description.

For many readers in established positions, this collection will not add much to their understanding or abilities pertinent to their specific job unless it happens to be one of the ones described. The heavy focus on technology is useful for librarians who are adding technology to their job but makes it difficult to distinguish the various purposes or focuses of the essays in different sections of the book.

Elizabeth DeCoster, *Goucher College*

*Books as History*. By David Pearson. Rev. ed. New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2012. Pp. 208. \$29.95 (paper). ISBN 978-1-58456-315-0.

**B**ooks as History, by David Pearson, is a wonderful book that should be owned by every book lover and every library with a basic collection of books about books. In seven chapters and one appendix, Pearson presents his case that books are valuable not only as the containers of texts but as “unique artifacts in the fabric of cultural heritage” (25). Each book, with its own distinctive history, has the potential to provide us with an understanding of our history and ourselves.

In his chapter entitled “Books beyond Texts,” Pearson discusses the affect that book design has on a reader’s experience of the text, focusing on the book’s format, type fonts, and illustrations. Here, and throughout the work, images of books are included and help to deepen the reader’s experience. By showing pages from different publications of the same work, Pearson admirably establishes the importance of each of these elements in creating different experiences for the reader.

Pearson reiterates throughout the work that books containing the same text are not interchangeable; each individual copy (even within the same print edition) presents different characteristics to the reader. In “Individuality within Mass Production,” Pearson describes intentional and unintentional variations within editions. While it is an unsurprising finding in handmade books, it is surprising to see how irregularities between individual copies show up even in the modern mass-production processes.

While variations are made during production (especially modern printings), much more significant variations in individual books are made by a book’s owner. Pearson’s “Variety through Ownership” explores the relationship between the text and the reader. Books commonly include an owner’s signature and/or annotations. Annotations reveal the reader’s response to a text and, if written by a historical figure, will establish a particular copy of a book as “history.”

Perhaps the most picturesque chapter is “Variety through Binding,” which covers the history of bookbinding. As late as the nineteenth century, printing and binding were completed separately, which resulted in great variation in bindings from copy to copy. Bindings can say a great deal about where, by whom, and when books were made. Anyone who has had the dubious