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From the Reference Desk from page 48

M. Keith Booker and his contributors provide fans and researchers alike an informative and fascinating overview of the most influential works, characters, writers, and artists in the history of comic book and graphic novel publishing. They also point to the cultural influence of these genres by discussing numerous films and television spinoffs and adaptations. It will vary depending on need and patron interest, but there should be demand for the *Encyclopedia* in academic, public, and high school libraries. This set could also find its way into the circulating collections of larger libraries. Readers and collection development librarians needing more suggestions for specific graphic novel titles might also be interested in *Libraries Unlimited/ABC-CLIO's Graphic Novels: A Genre Guide to Comic Books, Manga, and More* (2007, 1-59158-132-X, \$65).

Information about the online version of this title can be obtained by calling 800-368-6868 ext. 4 or emailing <suborder@abc-clio.com>.

Sage Reference offers readers another authoritative and scholarly resource with the recent release of the *Encyclopedia of African American Education* (2010, 9781412940504, \$325). Edited by Kofi Lomotey, chancellor and professor of education at Southern University and A&M College, these two

volumes consist of nearly 250 entries ranging in length from 1,000-4,000 words contributed by 212 authors.

A sense of the overall coverage in the *Encyclopedia* is provided by examining the Reader's Guide in the first volume. It groups articles that range in broad categories from curriculum to gender, biographies to legal cases, psychology and human development to public policy, religious institutions to collegian education, and segregation to alternative education models. In addition, there are articles that discuss influential organizations like the National Council for Black Studies and the National Urban League, as well as historic and seminal publications like *The Crisis* and *Negro Digest*. Each article is factual and well researched, and controversial topics like Ebonics, white flight, reparations, busing, and vouchers are tackled head on. All entries have lists of further readings and they are linked by "see also" references. A major added value feature is an appendix that contains a complete bibliography of the articles published in the *Journal of Negro Education*, providing "an overview of more than seven decades of work in this field." In addition, a number of articles published in this prestigious journal from 1935 through 2004 and dealing with the cornerstone issues of segregation, desegregation, and equality are reprinted in full.

African Americans have endured numerous barriers to education from segregationist "Jim Crow" laws and "black codes" to forms of more covert, everyday, individual discrimination. However, there have been a number of

hard fought victories from *Brown v. the Board of Education* to the success of the various TRIO programs to the continuing vitality of many historically black colleges.

The *Encyclopedia of African American Education* does readers a real service in providing a needed focus on the history and development of this unique story within the American education experience. With its thoughtful coverage and insights into key issues, it will be a valued resource for students, scholars, and policy makers. Most academic libraries will want it in their collections. (It also serves to update and enhance a useful earlier work published by Greenwood of the same title (1997, 978-0313289316, \$165 (also available used)).

Information about the electronic version of the *Encyclopedia of African American Education* can be found by emailing <librarysales@sagepub.com>.

A to Z: An Encyclopedic Dictionary of Media, Entertainment and Other Audiovisual Terms (2010, 978-0786444052, \$195) is another labor of love published by McFarland. Written and compiled by Richard W. Kroon, a senior project manager for Technicolor Digital Content Delivery with 15 years' experience in media and entertainment, this reference defines "more than 10,000 words and phrases from everyday slang to technical terms and concepts."

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What are these changes? There have been several major shifts in the way we acquire materials for libraries. One of the most obvious changes has to do with format. Tracking the purchase and receipt of physical entities has transformed into connecting with content. Reconceptualizing work flows to accommodate this shift is clearly important. Acquisitions work used to be focused on procurement, but **Holden** suggests that the concepts of access and service are just as important these days. The goals stated for this book are thus: 1) to serve as a comprehensive introduction to the topic for new acquisitions librarians and to help experienced acquisitions librarians understand and reconsider their roles; 2) to establish an approach that systemizes contemporary acquisitions work in a holistic fashion; 3) to serve as a basis for defining the continuing role of acquisitions practices.

Holden calls for a “radicalization” in our approach to library acquisitions, due to the overly complex environment in which we find ourselves. He states, “The time has passed when those practicing acquisitions can wait for a stack of paper orders and buy a bunch of books.” Being open and flexible is absolutely essential in today’s information universe. We must go beyond the old adages of “just in case” versus “just in time” to embrace a larger world view.

The author refers to “spheres of access” and how contemporary acquisitions work-flows must adjust to this approach. Materials that are born digital require a different mindset when attempting to gain access to them. The “monograph” as we know it now has a multiplicity of varieties. **Holden** does an adequate job covering vendor relations in this realm, although the vendor playing field continues to shrink and change at a rate that understandably makes the book a bit out-of-date when it was released (i.e., the Baker & Taylor takeover of Blackwell). He does a good job of weaving explanations of basic, old-fashioned concepts (encumbrance, for example) in with newer workplace tools (such as the need for an ERMS — electronic resources management system). He touches on the work we do today with consortia arrangements and how open access publications are having an impact on the acquisitions function.

One minor weakness of this work is that though the phrase “ethical practices” is part of the subtitle, there could be more depth to the discussion of ethics in this book. This is an aspect of acquisitions work that begs for more coverage. Also, the fact that the book itself was published using traditional methods of distribution while being focused on how these very methods are changing is a small irony — it would be great to be able to obtain this book as an eBook, for instance. All librarians start thinking about the new models of scholarly distribution as they themselves publish. **Holden** captures the changing nature of the acquisitions realm while it is indeed in the midst of upheaval.

Zabel, Diane. *Reference Reborn: Breathing New Life Into Public Services Librarianship*. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2011. 978-1-59158-828-3. 401 pages. \$55.00.

Reviewed by **Ralph Scott** (Assistant Head of Special Collections for Public Services and Curator of Printed Books and Maps, Joyner Library, East Carolina University) <scott@ecu.edu>

Will reference rise again like a Phoenix from ashes of **Wikipedia**, or will it evolve into the library social networking center of the 21st century, or into something else? *Reference Reborn* attempts to answer these and other contemporary issues surrounding the constant change that is the modern day reference service desk. Divided into seven sections, *Reference Reborn* covers topics diverse as: the new user base, improved service models, new reference librarian role models, new reference tools, collection development, staffing the desk, and education and training of reference practitioners.

POTS refers to Plain Old Telephone Service, which still exists for many folks throughout the world in an age of digital phones. We also have PORS or, Plain Old Reference Service. This is the service that I grew up with at the feet of **Constant Mabel Winchell**, Head of Reference at **Columbia University** and author of *The Guide to Reference Books* 7th edition (ALA, 1951). PORS has been around for a long time and still forms the basis of reference service in many libraries. It is what scholars around the world have come to expect from their librarian. However, like telephone service, reference service has been transformed by the digital age. This work attempts as the subtitle says to bring “new life into public services librarianship.” The world of the Internet has truly transformed the way in which information is delivered to readers. This book refers to the vast forests of unused reference tomes languishing on bookshelves, while lightning fast reference service is delivered via texting on seamless Web connections that never fail. A new generation of Web savvy information providers are springing forth from rejuvenated library schools to serve the twittering masses. Former reference “tools” which were actually

removed from shelves, opened, consulted, and analyzed to answer reference questions, are now replaced by comprehensively indexed Web search engines that spew out relevant documents reflecting a variety of viewpoints on any topic. Readers’ Advisory Services of the past have been replaced by the **Oprah Winfrey** show and other talk shows that help the reader “find themselves through literature.” Why would any information provider actually want to suggest a client read anything beside the latest **Lisbeth Salander** adventure anyway? Instead of being a reference librarian waiting quietly (it’s a library remember) behind a tall counter for the next patron, the new model “trend tracking, data analyst, IT troubleshooter, staffing and marketing specialist” will blast forth from the library portal seeking new worlds to enlighten.

The truth of course is that the new information world will be a mix of Plain Old Reference Service and newer technologies. People will still need to be taught the skills of reading and writing. This is still largely done through the use of the codex book. Reference questions are still answered by going to the stacks and looking up “information.” One, however, cannot locate every piece of information in the book stacks, nor on the World Wide Web. Both research methods will exist for the foreseeable future. *Reference Reborn* provides an excellent insight into where some aspects of “public service librarianship” are headed in the 21st century. Plain Old Reference Librarians will enjoy reading about these new initiatives, and this book may in fact inspire a few to introduce new technologies into their workplace. For the “trend tracking, data analyst, IT troubleshooter, staffing and marketing specialist,” *Reference Reborn* will become the Pilgrims’ Progress of a new generation of public service librarians. ☞

From the Reference Desk from page 49

A/V A to Z differs from other similar works in that it covers far more than technical terms. In fact, its great strength is that it provides definitions of words and phrases “unique to the distribution, exhibition, and business of entertainment.” Explanations of film and video techniques stand side-by-side with definitions of multimedia platforms, legal concepts, and trade association practices. The definitions and explanations are understandable, straightforward, and as jargon-free as possible. **Kroon** mixes his crisp, precise definitions with longer, encyclopedic entries that require multiple definitions and fuller explanations. And as he notes in his introduction, this dictionary is both descriptive of the way terms are being used,

as well as prescriptive in discussing how the words should be used. In addition, there are etymologies for 1,600 of the terms covered. This single volume is nicely produced with numerous black and white photos that break up the somewhat dense text.

A/V A to Z: An Encyclopedic Dictionary of Media, Entertainment and Other Audiovisual Terms is a serious special-purpose dictionary that is inclusive and thorough. It will appeal to academic libraries supporting communication as well as media and film studies programs. Larger public libraries with patrons needing a comprehensive but reader-friendly dictionary of audiovisual terms will also do well to consider it.

Questions about **McFarland** eBook availability may be directed to **Beth H. Cox** at <bcox@mcfarlandpub.com>. ☞