

A user-friendly source, *Less Is More* helps the reader understand the necessary role of weeding in a school library by offering general weeding guidelines. Additionally, the authors describe various weeding models found in previous published manuals on the subject. Librarians also will benefit from the chapter on automation and its helpful impact on weeding. Sidebars, quotes, checklists, and comical lists of titles that should be weeded keep this book's tone light and right for busy school library media center personnel.

The backbone of this publication, however, is found in chapter 4, in which the authors present weeding topics in Dewey number order. Each topic includes a rationale for weeding, Dewey numbers to check, specific criteria for the topic, tips for replacing titles, and lists of titles to consider when weeding. Nonfiction, fiction, and reference books all are covered in this indispensable portion of the book.

Less Is More: A Practical Guide to Weeding School Library Collections is an accessible, practical, easy-to-read resource for busy school library professionals. Collection development educators would do well to avail themselves of the useful examples found in this volume.—*Laverne Simoneaux, School Library Media Center Director, University Terrace Elementary School, Baton Rouge, Louisiana*

Read the High Country: Guide to Western Books and Films. John Mort. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2006. 508p. \$60 (ISBN 1-59158-134-6).

John Mort's latest title is the usual informative fare from Libraries Unlimited: a guide for readers' advisors and for selection librarians in a specific genre. Mort lists four other titles (xiv) that treat Westerns in some capacity, the primary one being Dale Walker's *What Western Do I Read Next?* (Gale, 1998). Obviously, this title is already becoming outdated, and the need for a new title is evident.

For anyone not familiar with the Western, *Read the High Country* is a treasure trove, informing not only about the genre in books and film but also about the history of the American West. In fact, Mort includes in the appendix a "Western Time Line," from 28,000 BC to 1929 AD. One category in the "Traditional Westerns" section is "The Business of the West," revealing the importance of buffalo, railways, and mining to the commercial health of the American West. And, given the importance of the Native American in this time and place, the book is a great source for titles involving First Nations.

The reader will be amazed to see some of the authors included here. In his introductory "Short History of the Western," Mort cites such writers as James Fenimore Cooper, Mark Twain, and Bret Harte. He includes in the "Traditional Westerns" section annotations for Jack London, Paulette Jiles, and Cormac McCarthy, authors one does not normally associate with writers like Max Brand and Zane Grey.

The look at "Nontraditional Westerns" reflects the great changes that have occurred in the Western genre in the latter part of the twentieth century and into the current century. The categories are "The Contemporary West," "Contemporary

Western Mysteries," "Western Romances," "Short Stories," and "Young Adult," and they cover such authors as Barbara Kingsolver, E. Annie Proulx, and Kent Haruf. Cross-blending has become an integral part of this genre.

In the annotations, Mort provides icons to indicate whether the title is woman-friendly, suitable for young adults, Christian-themed, or considered a classic. He indicates setting and time, which are also reflected in the Settings index, and if the book is of exceptional note, an asterisk appears beside the title.

With a conversational tone, Mort wonderfully succeeds in guiding the readers' advisor to a much greater knowledge and understanding of the Western book and film. This book is likely to attract an entirely new readership to the genre.—*Maureen O'Connor, Public Services Librarian, Brampton Library, Ontario*

Recommended Reference Books for Small and Medium-Sized Libraries and Media Centers. Shannon Graff Hysell, ed. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2006. 376p. \$70 (ISBN 1-59158-380-2).

Recognizing that the *American Reference Books Annual* (ARBA) includes many entries for works irrelevant to smaller libraries, the editors have designed this title to "assist smaller libraries in the systematic selection of suitable reference materials for their collections" (xi). By reducing the number of entries from the more than 1,500 included in ARBA to a more manageable 554, they have created a work that should prove of value to many smaller libraries.

Each of the entries is taken directly from ARBA, which in turn takes most of its entries from review journals. Thus, there is little in the way of original material outside of the introduction. The entries are divided into thirty-seven chapters, each conveniently divided into four major categories: general works, social sciences, humanities, and science and technology. Both the categories and their subdivisions work well in allowing users easily to locate materials relevant to the topic for which they are searching. In addition to the breakdown in the table of contents, there is an author/title index and a subject index at the back of the book, enabling easy access.

Included at the beginning of each entry is a designation indicating where this material might prove useful—at a college, public, or school library. In many cases, titles are recommended for more than one type of institution. The entries themselves are quite thorough, ranging from about two hundred to five hundred words in length, and they tend to be very descriptive. Bibliographic information is included for each entry, and the journal citation is included where applicable.

Those using this book should exercise some judgment when it comes to the currency of included titles. For example, the 2005 *Official Major League Baseball Fact Book* will clearly be outdated by the time the review is included in such a publication. However, a librarian should be able to conclude that perhaps the 2007 edition would still be a worthwhile purchase, given that the authority and value of the title are

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unlikely to have changed. In most areas, currency should not prove to be an issue, but it is something to keep in mind for areas like sports or medicine.

One concern that some public libraries might have is the lack of public librarians represented among the contributors to this book. Fewer than ten percent of the two hundred contributors are employed at public libraries, so it might be with some skepticism that public librarians regard the opinion of an academic librarian that a certain title is necessary for all libraries. More input from their peers would probably make this more relevant to, and more easily accepted by, those in public libraries.

It is often difficult to keep up with all reference reviews during any given period, due to both time and budget constraints, so a title like this can certainly be appreciated. Most small and medium-sized libraries have limited reference budgets, which makes this title an excellent purchase when compared with the all-encompassing ARBA publication.—*Craig Shufelt, Director, Fort McMurray Public Library, Alberta*

Reference Librarianship: Notes from the Trenches. Charles R. Anderson and Peter Sprenkle. Binghamton, N.Y.: Haworth Information Pr., 2006. 258p. \$24.95 (ISBN 0-7890-2948-0).

It is difficult to capture and convey accurately the sheer diversity of queries, requests, suggestions, and complaints a librarian may field on any given day at the reference desk, but Anderson and Sprenkle do an admirable job in *Reference Librarianship: Notes from the Trenches*. The themes presented in this book should resonate with librarians currently engaged in reference work as well as reacquaint administrators with the realities of public service. Best of all, the book is funny.

It is not necessary for the authors to go out of their way to amuse; public service in any environment is fertile ground for comedy, and the sections titled “A Grunt’s Diary,” double-spaced entries representing a substantial portion of this work, are no exception. The concept of “A Grunt’s Diary” is simple: it provides a very brief account of each and every reference desk interaction. These include basic requests (e.g., *ASVAB books. Antique prices. Che Guevara*), nebulous queries (e.g., *She saw it on TV: a police chief murders his wife. She has forgotten the name of the police chief, the show, and what channel it was on*), and personal reflections (e.g., *A customer who is so damn nice you want to throttle her, or at least find her book quickly so she’ll go smile at someone else*). Interspersed among these entries are twelve brief chapters exploring critical issues in reference service, including patron expectations, impacts of emerging technologies on service, responsible advocacy, and perspectives on tomorrow’s library.

At slightly more than 250 pages (including index), *Reference Librarianship: Notes from the Trenches* is a short, engaging read. And while Anderson and Sprenkle do not presume to have all of the answers to the critical library service issues raised, they present them in a thought-provoking manner conducive to further discussion. This work is recommended

for librarians in public services, particularly those not averse to a bit of levity in their professional readings.—*James Bierman, Engineering Librarian, University of Oklahoma, Norman*

Teams in Library Technical Services. Rosann Bazirjian and Rebecca Mugridge, eds. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow, 2006. 230p. \$40 (ISBN 0-8108-5294-2).

This edited collection brings together case studies, historical and theoretical perspectives, and descriptions of the implementation and analysis process behind team management in academic libraries. The editors’ established purposes for the book are exploring the history and theory behind team-style management, discussing the application of teams in a library technical services setting, and evaluating their effectiveness. The organization of the book supports these purposes and examines the role of special teams in libraries. The contributors selected for the book provide well-written and varying perspectives with minimal duplication. The theoretical perspectives provided in section one are well presented, offering an effective framework for understanding how teams may or may not fit into a library’s organizational culture. In addition, these first chapters help readers reflect on the potential flexibility of their own library environments in adapting to team structures.

The case studies presented throughout the book range from personal reflections on team management to descriptions of team implementations with analysis of team effectiveness using survey instruments. Intensive quantitative research assessing team-based management is not provided. The case study selections focus on a variety of issues, including strategic planning, comprehensive program review, and team training. Additional focus on training strategies or information on training resources for implementing teams would be useful. Even though the focus of the book is team-based management in technical services, the resulting discussions effectively highlight the workflow analysis required to create a flexible library environment that can evolve with technological innovations. The strategies provided for improving workflow processes are beneficial for any librarian dealing with changes in a digital library, not just librarians faced with implementing team concepts.

In addition, the final section on special teams effectively reveals flexible options for utilizing teams on a smaller scale. For libraries with organizational cultures or political structures that may not support systematic implementation of teams, these last two chapters are useful examples of possible applications of team concepts. Overall, this collection of writings provides useful correlations between theory and practice, a balanced perspective between successful and unsuccessful team implementations, and practical advice for workflow analysis.—*Maria Collins, Serials Librarian and Interim Assistant Head of Acquisitions, North Carolina State University Libraries, Cary*