



Recent Publications

BOOK REVIEWS

Editor's note: Book reviews will continue to be an integral part of *College & Research Libraries*. Newly appointed book review editors Stephen J. Lehmann and Robert Walther comment on the importance of reviews and solicit participation in the process.—GStC.

As the incoming editors of *C&RL*'s book review section, we would like to present to the ACRL membership an explanation of what we intend and what you can expect. At the core of our activity is the conviction that the reviews we publish can offer academic librarians a forum for significant and challenging ideas and that the book review is a medium through which authors, reviewers, and readers participate in a process of intellectual engagement, a process critical to the vitality and even integrity of our profession.

Readers can expect first of all that the author's intentions will be conveyed as clearly as possible. This not only satisfies basic standards of intellectual honesty and professional responsibility, but also states the terms of the dialogue that the work initiates and to which the review is a first response. Only when authors have been taken seriously on their own terms can the reviewer position books appropriately in larger contexts, whether institutional, intellectual, historical, or political.

Much of our focus will be directed toward these larger contexts. Ours is one of very few journals directed to the whole of academic librarianship, and we have a serious obligation to review books on cataloging, collection development, reference, and other aspects of professional activity from the perspective of academic and research libraries. However, we also need to widen the frame and deepen the perspective in which we see ourselves and our profession by considering works on higher education, the institution of the academy, publishing, issues of gender and race, scholarship, technology, management, and organizational behavior. The ongoing challenge will be to integrate these kinds of issues into our day-to-day professional concerns.

Inclusiveness also characterizes the pool of reviewers we hope to attract. In addition to the participation of librarians from university and research libraries, we need reviewers from small colleges and, of course, the perspectives of women and minorities. Through the newsletters of ACRL's Women's Studies and College Libraries Sections, we have already put out a call for reviewers, and we would like to extend this invitation to all groups within the academic and research library community. And while reviews are recognized as an opportunity for younger librarians to write and publish, we also value the knowledge and seasoned talents of experienced professionals.

Too often book reviews are relegated to the periphery of scholarly communication, where they are perceived only as the "white noise" of academic discourse. We intend to do everything we can to ensure that this is not the case in our field and in this journal, and we look forward to your participation, whether as writers or readers, in this effort.

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