

Book Reviews



Frederick Stielow. *Reinventing the Library for Online Education.* Chicago: ALA Editions, American Library Association, 2014. 328p. Paper, \$75.00 (ISBN 978.-8389-1208-9). LC 2013-028022.

Fred Stielow is in charge of American Public University System's Classroom/Research Information Services (CRIS) and has a significant background in history and library science with over 100 scholarly articles and eleven books to his credit, including *Creating Virtual Libraries, Building Digital Archives*.

As a working professional with limited reading time, I really appreciated Dr. Stielow's "reader's advisory" throughout the book, with its suggestions of when to read each chapter. "Although interlaced," Stielow says, "the book's sections may be read independently." In chapter one he gives a brief history and state of the library before the introduction of the web and allied technologies. From there he describes the use of the web and technology within the library context. The third chapter introduces what Stielow calls "disruptions" such as textbooks, online education, and open access. Disruptions are new services that need to be provided by the library that may not necessarily fit with the services and tools currently being provided.

I see chapters 4-9 as the meat of the book and where you will learn how to reinvent your library for online education. Stielow provides an index of figures at the beginning of the book for those who would like to go back and review them. Stielow also has an extensive bibliography and webliography of references and websites that he used in the creation of this book.

The structure of the book allows individuals to choose the sections that pertain to them. In a job where time is often limited, this is a definite plus. One thing unique to Stielow's writing style is the information he calls out in grayed boxes. This boxed information draws the reader's attention and is pertinent and precise. Stielow also informs the reader if he thinks a certain chapter needs to be read in juxtaposition with other chapters. For example, he suggests reading chapter 2 alongside chapters 6 and 7. Chapters 5-7 include sections on different tools and services a library should provide. After each section he provides readers with suggestions of other chapters to read regarding specific tools and services.

Why is this a must read for an academic librarian? We are living in a world where it is essential for universities to look at adding online education as part of their services in order to meet the needs of their ever-changing student population. Therefore, libraries need to make sure that they can meet the needs of the off-campus student as well as the demands of the on-campus student. Our library at Oakwood University is heading in this direction by adding services such as LibGuides, online chat, and text your librarian. Our website is also mobile/tablet friendly. It was rewarding to see that some of the steps we have taken are in the direction that Stielow discusses in his "Redefinition Commentaries" chapter. This book would be beneficial for any library that is reinventing and revamping their services to accommodate online education.

My final advice is directed towards those who may not be lovers of history, but who are intrigued by the book title. Reading only part B of the book without the historical information in part A is beneficial enough. In fact, after reading part B, the reader may be interested enough to go back and read part A. The author states clearly that he does not consider this book a "how-to" guide for reinventing the library. He believes that there is no right or wrong way to make this happen. However, I would

definitely recommend this book as a beginning “how-to” guide. In Part B the reader will find clearly outlined steps, while part A provides a rich, historical perspective. I would recommend this valuable resource book to all librarians. —*Kieren Bailey, Oakwood University, Huntsville, Alabama*

Anthony Aycock. *The Accidental Law Librarian*. Medford, NJ: Information Today, Inc., 2013. 247p. \$39.50 (ISBN 9781573874779). LC 2013008051

The Accidental Law Librarian purports to be the “first comprehensive, non-scholarly book on law libraries in 20-plus years” written for those librarians who have been thrust into law librarianship. In satisfaction of this ambitious goal, the introduction promises to take the reader beyond the usual research basics to a discussion of a wide variety of topics that will help librarians develop and maintain appropriate collections and deliver high quality legal information services. The end result is a survey book that addresses the perceived educational gaps in graduate library and information programs for those librarians that “accidentally” end up working as law librarians in public, public law, and private firm libraries. Aycock’s writing is clever and his tone enlivening. He starts the work with an introductory overview of legal information resources. The chapter concludes with a historical discussion of modern legal publishing and the impact of rising publication costs on law library collections.

Chapter 2 is Aycock’s nod to legal research. The chapter opens with a *film noir* research scenario. He then details the primary law (*i.e.*, statutes, cases, and regulations) followed by a descriptive march through a variety of individual secondary research resources. The detail in this chapter would have benefited from some illustrations to break up the text. It is much easier to imagine a reader unfamiliar with the resources distinguishing and identifying the various sources if there were illustrations. He draws the chapter to a close by walking through the process necessary to research and resolve our sultry *film noir* heroine’s legal problem.

Patrons and the reference interview follow next. Among the usual stories about the varied patrons that come to our reference desks, the chapter does provide a useful reminder that regardless of context, the reference interview is a reference interview. Respecting your patrons and understanding their information needs is always the first step! Also included is a lengthy discussion of the unauthorized practice of law that should be of particular interest to those librarians in public settings. In Chapters 4 through 8, Aycock focuses on how the work of law librarians is done. These chapters take the reader through the world of legal looseleaves, online subscription databases, free websites that provide legal information and resources, and the ever-evolving world of mobile research apps. Although he notes that the resources discussed are but a fraction of those available, it does seem unusual that some of the more well-known resources are not included: Cornell University Law School’s Legal Information Institute (www.law.cornell.edu), Digital Commons Network (network.bepress.com), or Social Sciences Research Network (ssrn.com). This section concludes by noting that the work performed by law librarians will go well beyond the usual conception of legal research as librarians in firms seek personal and company information to support competitive intelligence as well as client-based legal work.

The two most valuable chapters for any librarian are the last two. In Chapter 9, Aycock provides an array of educational tools and an honest discussion of the role of the JD and MBA for purposes of career advancement. The educational tools include everything from blawgs (law blogs) to research guides to encouragement to join professional associations and networks. Chapter 10 is the call to innovate and reinvent law libraries, and by extension, law librarianship. Survival depends not only on the ability of those that manage libraries to develop and deliver high quality services, but