

includes an "Informatics in Action!" section, which provides short case studies of how the concept being discussed could be implemented in real life situations. Each chapter also contains a brief summary statement and an extensive reference list. At the end of the text is a basic glossary of essential terms. Some of the chapters include paragraphs discussing the role of the librarian or library. This kind of insight is extremely helpful to someone entering the profession or trying to figure out how to apply health informatics to their current responsibilities. However, this important content was hard to find since it was not included in all chapters nor did not stand out due to inconsistencies in titling and length. The practical suggestions provided in these sections could have been more easily discoverable had it been highlighted in a way similar to "Informatics in Action!"

In part I, "*Understanding Health Informatics*," Cleveland and Cleveland open with an overview of the nature of health information, define health informatics as both a discipline and a profession, and describe the challenges of managing information in today's health care environment and infrastructure. The authors emphasize the ways in which informatics impacts decision making and the practice in the major health care application areas of primary care, nursing, dental, public health, veterinary, bioinformatics, and consumer health. Part I concludes with chapter 5, which addresses the question of the roles and opportunities for health sciences librarians in the scheme of health informatics. The important distinction is made that "health informatics and health sciences librarianship are two distinct disciplines with their own missions, skills, and place in the healthcare enterprise." This chapter is essential reading.

Part II, "*Mastering Health Informatics*," outlines specific aspects of health informatics. This part begins with a chapter covering the organization of medical knowledge, including fundamental medical terminology and an overview of

the types of medical literature. Chapters also discuss health information technology, the fundamentals of electronic health records, the types of health care information management systems and medical imaging. Other technology topics covered include data and information processing, database management, telecommunications, and networks. The book concludes with chapters covering ethical and legal issues in health informatics, and bioinformatics and genomic medicine.

This book is a worthwhile purchase, enabling both prospective and practicing medical librarians to both prepare for and navigate through the challenges of the profession. Any academic librarian who reads this text can also apply many of the concepts covered to informatics in their given discipline.—*Eric Schnell, The Ohio State University.*

**Ted Striphas.** *The Late Age of Print: Everyday Book Culture from Consumerism to Control.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2009. 242p. alk. paper, \$27.50 (ISBN 9780231148146). LC2008-039391.

Employing wide-ranging research, careful analysis, an impressive vocabulary, and a good sense of humor, Ted Striphas, an assistant professor in the Department of Communication and Culture and adjunct professor of American Studies and Cultural Studies at Indiana University, has crafted a thought-provoking commentary on trends in book culture from the early twentieth century to the present. In discussing the "late age of print," a phrase coined by Jay David Bolter, Striphas avoids the common tendency either to venerate the book or to proclaim its demise. Rather, the author uses facts and keen insight to explain or challenge commonly held beliefs about the production, distribution, and "controlled consumption" of books. This deft cultural study—part communication theory, part history, and part sociology—places the modern history and present state of the book in the context of the everyday lives of readers as a means of understanding a

period of transition characterized by both permanence and rapid change.

Control is a theme that permeates the book. In an effort to explain the advent of e-books as an attempt by publishers to regulate the consumption of their publications, Striphas lays interesting groundwork. The author describes how publishers around 1930 promoted the sale of books by encouraging the construction of built-in bookcases in homes. He tells the story of Edward L. Bernays, whom large publishing companies hired at this time to stimulate sales. Bernays not only touted the virtue of bookcases to a growing middle class but also devised a contest “to look for a pejorative word for the book borrower, the wretch who raised hell with book sales and deprived authors of earned royalties.” The winning term—“book sneak”—never gained traction. Striphas touches also on the Copyright Act of 1976 as a response to the emergence of widespread photocopying of published works and the failure in 1984 of national lending rights legislation.

The author describes the extraordinary efforts of J.K. Rowling and her publisher, Scholastic, to manipulate Harry Potter fans and to protect her intellectual property. They went to great lengths to control the release of the books, even tracking delivery trucks with GPS devices. This tactic created a false sense of scarcity and heightened demand, even as hundreds of thousands of copies awaited distribution. Foreign publishers who dared to mimic the world of Harry Potter attracted swift legal action. Although the Harry Potter phenomenon is atypical of publishing today, the author points to it as evidence of the enduring appeal of the book.

In describing three additional examples of the impact of late twentieth-century socioeconomic trends on book culture, Striphas demonstrates his impressive insights and objectivity. The author discusses the advent of big-box superstores, particularly Barnes and Noble, and the deleterious impact they have had on independent booksellers. He points out, however, that

other factors also have been involved in the demise of individual bookshops or small chains. In the case of a Barnes and Noble that opened in a mall between Durham and Chapel Hill, North Carolina, he tells how the City of Durham promoted this development in an effort to foster the revitalization of a section of the city dominated by minorities. In addition, the author frames the advent of large bookstores in the context of increased book production, expansion of the middle class, and proliferation of “mass higher education” after World War II.

Striphas explains how the adoption of the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) and Bookland European Article Number (EAN) bar code enabled the book industry to improve inventory control and distribution. They also abetted publishers’ efforts to track and influence readers’ preferences. Amazon.com found these devices indispensable in its rise as an important player in the book industry.

Striphas provides a balanced analysis of the considerable impact of Oprah’s Book Club on book culture. Although noting critics’ belief that the club has promoted books on the basis of length rather than literary merit, Striphas praises the club’s inclusiveness. In his view, Ms. Winfrey and her staff have made a concerted effort—unlike book publishers—to understand their viewers and to help them enjoy books that fit their tastes and time constraints, while encouraging them to attempt more challenging titles.

Librarians may regret that *The Late Age of Print* pays relatively little attention to the role of libraries in everyday book culture (approval plans appear to have placed some 463 copies of this title in libraries around the world), but the author’s lucid explanations of phenomena many of us take for granted more than compensate for this. Bibliographical references and an ample index add to the book’s usefulness. It is interesting to note that the Columbia University Press chose this book as the first of its list to offer as a free PDF download.—Maurice C. York, East Carolina University.