

where to go next. The book closes with chapter 16 from James Neal about the future of assessment.

*Reviewing the Academic Library* is a well-organized and well-written discussion of the role assessment can play in a variety of library situations, whether that is accreditation or self-study. It demonstrates that a variety of methods can be used to achieve this goal. The challenge for this book is really one of scope. It is difficult to fit the entire nuance of accreditation and self-study into a single text. The editors and authors likely grappled with this challenge. The book begins with a very good discussion of accreditation then accelerates in the last two sections toward more of an assessment discussion. I do not think that these two topics are adequately addressed, and I am not convinced in reading the book that the methods for each are that similar. The final question I am left with is one of forward thinking as it applies to academic libraries in general. Collecting and reporting data, no matter how or why, is becoming an antiquated notion. Think about major companies like Google or Amazon who use collected data to provide real-time adaptive decision-making. Libraries should consider these concepts of anticipatory commerce or predictive analytics to be the next frontier rather than have discussions of how we can collect data better. We should be asking ourselves how we could build a system that responds and adapts immediately to the data that are collected every day.—*Ryan Litsey, Texas Tech University*

***Critical Literacy for Information Professionals.*** Sarah McNicol, ed. London: Facet Publishing, 2016. 172p. Paper, \$95.00 (ISBN 978-1-78330-082-2).

*Critical Literacy for Information Professionals*, edited by Sarah McNicol, is a diverse and informative book that introduces the reader to the concept of critical literacy while also demonstrating its value for a variety of library and information science settings. The first seven chapters are collected under the heading “Part 1: Theories of Critical Literacy.” These chapters bring different theoretical lenses to bear on literacy studies and information literacy. In many cases, the theories from part 1 are explored in relationship to specific types of libraries and user groups, ranging from college students writing research papers to professionals sharing their expertise in the workplace. Part 2 of the book, “Critical Literacy in Practice,” offers case studies with a similar variety of approaches and settings. The reader will walk away from *Critical Literacy for Information Professionals* with a multifaceted definition of critical literacy, exposure to its theoretical roots, and several ideas for directions she or he could take in exploring the topic further.

The Introduction to the book begins with a section helpfully titled, “What Is Critical Literacy?” McNicol uses Shorr’s 1999 definition from a journal article of the same name, stating that it is a process that “challenges the status quo in an effort to discover alternative pathways for self and social development” (xi). Critical literacy, like Paulo Freire’s critical pedagogy, is focused on practical action, community engagement, and the empowerment of traditionally marginalized voices. It is concerned with the contexts in which a “text,” broadly defined, is created and read.

Parts 1 and 2 of *Critical Literacy for Information Professionals* provide an introductory look at the theories covered, from andragogy to reader response theory, and the approaches to developing a critical stance in literacy education. Just as important, the book serves as a helpful jumping-off point for further study. The robust reference lists for each chapter are supplemented by a “Further Information” section in the back of the book that features resources organized by topic and an index that adequately guides the reader.

At first glance, an academic librarian may look at the table of contents and wonder if chapters on critical literacy in the workplace, in secondary schools, or in public libraries will have any value or relationship to her or his own practice. The reader should

not be concerned about the usefulness of these chapters. There's a strong resonance between the content in part 1 and academic librarianship regardless of the chapter's setting because of the depth with which the theoretical approaches are explored.

The best example of this is Andrew Whitworth's chapter on critical literacy in the workplace. His consideration of information practices, decision making, and the importance of tacit knowledge in the workplace is easily connected to librarianship as practiced in other settings. To what extent, he asks, is a given community of practice able to determine what types of information are the most useful in decision making? Are there political limitations placed on how much authority practitioners themselves are given to shape the transformation of their processes through information practices? Whitworth plainly states that a critical workplace information practice would distribute the power to make information judgments between the information professional and the information seeker. For academic librarians providing information literacy instruction, there could be deep connections between Whitworth's ideas and the academic library's role in being a perceived arbiter of information credibility or authority.

Many chapters deal with the tension between critical literacy and the librarians' traditional concern with "establishing authorial intent and determining expertise," as Jessica Critten states in her chapter, "The Death of the Author(ity)" (19). Using the work of Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault as a springboard, Critten explores ways in which information literacy might move from an author-focused understanding of a text to one that places more separation between how a text is read and its author's intents. A text-centered approach might allow for more flexibility in determining the truth of a text and "allows for authors to be shown to be wrong, especially as time passes" (22). McNicol echoes these themes, that the meaning of a text is constructed and should not be considered fixed, in her chapter on reader response theory and the promotion of fiction reading in libraries. Central to many of the chapters in *Critical Literacy for Information Professionals* is an assertion that texts and other media are not static, nor were they created or consumed in isolation. "A basic notion of critical literacy is that all texts are constructed and serve particular interests," states McNicol (6). Therefore, the idea that a librarian can be "neutral" when helping someone in the course of reader's advisory or bibliographic instruction is rejected by theorists of critical literacy.

The overall effect of part 1 is to create grids of communities, whose information practices are examined through a range of related, overlapping theories. It can be a bit overwhelming to read part 1 straight through, but many of the chapters are individually very useful. Because the major backdrop for this book is Freire's critical pedagogy, which emphasizes the need for learning to be tied to direct action, even the nominally "theoretical" chapters in part 1 incorporate case studies or examples that typify praxis for librarians or information professionals.

Part 2, "Critical Literacy in Practice," also comprises seven chapters, which range from six to twelve pages in length. The activities presented bring many of the ideas from part 1 to life with a greater degree of specificity, but the utility of some of part 2's chapters may be more dependent on how closely the library setting in a given case study matches the readers' circumstances. Nevertheless, there are many useful takeaways, especially in relation to media literacy and "new media" platforms, like YouTube. As was true of part 1, the chapters in part 2 have excellent bibliographies for further reading.

*Critical Literacy for Information Professionals* is a well-organized book and is equally suited to either being read whole or in selected chapters. The layout is clean and the chapter subheadings are marked in a straightforward manner for easy skimming or browsing. There are a few misspellings and irregularities in some of the bibliographies, but no other errors were discovered in the text. *Critical Literacy for Information Profession-*

als, and especially part 1 of the book, provides a great introduction to critical literacy and offers the reader several directions she or he could take for further study on this topic.—*Michael R. Mitchell, Bethel University*

**Lesley S.J. Farmer and Alan M. Safer.** *Library Improvement through Data Analysis*. Chicago: ALA Neal-Schuman, 2016. 184p. Paper, \$75.00 (ISBN 978-0-8389-1425-0). LCCN 2015046382.

Over recent years, there seems to be an increase in the number of books that tackle the subject of library analysis, metrics, assessment, evaluation, and altmetrics. And clearly there is a need on the part of academic libraries to better understand their processes, their outputs and impacts, and the value they bring to their institutions. Setting up assessment projects can be a challenge; and when you add statistical analysis to the mix, it can be very daunting. So it is exciting to see a book come out that merges library evaluation with statistics written in a much more digestible format. *Library Improvement Through Data Analytics* tries to be just that kind of book. The book is coauthored by Dr. Lesley Farmer, a highly respected academician and researcher, prolific author, and educator in the field of librarianship from California State University at Long Beach, and by Dr. Alan Safer, a professor of statistics also at Long Beach whose research examines the application of statistics within multiple fields.

Considering the topic, the authors put a lot of material in a relatively short 157 pages of text. Part of the way that they achieve this is through the use of many different charts as examples of the concepts they are discussing and lists of various concepts, issues, metrics, and think points. These two items, the charts and lists, will be invaluable to anyone taking on a project that aligns with what is covered in the book. They can almost be used as templates and outlines that can facilitate your own thinking. Readers may discover that the table in chapter 4 on processes and matching data is the part of the book that they will want to share most widely with their colleagues.

The book is broken up into four parts: Overview, Six Sigma Steps, A Statistics Primer, and Case Studies. With 25 chapters spread out across them, it is clear that the chapters are relatively short. Having short chapters when dealing with such a broad topic, one would be correct that many of the chapters take a high-level view of what is covered. A good introduction chapter is followed by a chapter on planning Six Sigma, which prepares the reader for the part of the book focused on Six Sigma. Strangely enough, the planning chapter discusses two Six Sigma models, yet it gives the DMADV model short shrift including replacing most of the discussion on DMADV with information on the other DMAIC model. Even in the second part of the book, which focuses just on Six Sigma, the entire discussion is on the DMAIC model with no indication as to why the DMADV model, which is more future focused, was excluded altogether. This part of the book does do a very nice job of explaining the DMAIC (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control) model of Six Sigma and poses lots of questions someone doing this work should think about. The reader might now think, given that so much of the book is dedicated to Six Sigma, that it would be employed in the remainder of the chapters. In this case, it is not. The examples used to illustrate Six Sigma in the chapters in Part II are the only items that the reader has to draw from.

Part III of the book, which is the Statistics Primer section, has four chapters. These are fast and succinct chapters that provide more high-level review of statistics. It acts as a crib sheet of some of the core methods and processes around statistics. Those charts mentioned before again play a vital role in helping to understand the concepts covered. Chapter 10, which deals with matching analytic methods to data, is not only the longest chapter in the book at twenty pages; it is probably the most thorough. It goes through many different statistics methods and gives examples of the research