

community” (16). This is important because it enables those in marginal positions to challenge dominant stories. While the book encourages the use of counterstories, it does offer much guidance around the tensions that may emerge when members of the majority work with marginalized stories.

In her chapter “Call and Response: Delicate Conversations in Collection Development,” Alexis L. Pavenick gets closest to doing this when she tells the story of inviting members of the LGBTQIA+ community to make book purchase recommendations on LGBTQIA+-related content. She shares her thought process when considering the recommendation to purchase the book *Leathersex: A Guide for the Curious Outsider and the Serious Player* by Joseph W. Bean, “a well-known figure in the gay bondage scene and its related communities in the US” (107). Concerned about the book’s tone, approach, and fit for the general collection, she chose not to buy it.

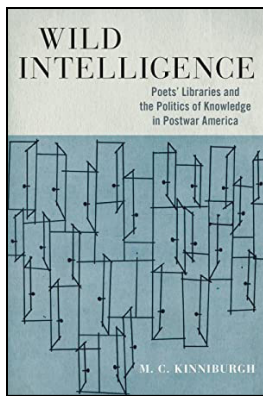
Pavenick does not inform us if she is or is not a member of the LGBTQIA+ community. If she is not, what reasons does she have in rejecting the request, especially after she invited members of that marginalized community to suggest purchases? When she reveals “at the end of the day, I’m in charge of the collection,” (109) it appears to be a professional right that is ultimately tied to institutional power rather than a marginalized lived experience. Her concern about the book’s alignment with the general collection is based on criteria produced by dominant institutions. In this way, selections based on established traditions reinforce the stories of the majority and can prevent the addition of counterstories because they are not like the books already in the collection.

The editors and authors of this book, who appear to be largely from the majority, do not consider the possibility that minority students may not want or welcome the use of their counterstories to teach information literacy or to promote libraries. Nor do they seem to consider the possibility that librarians may have to prepare for conflict, controversy, and argument if they increasingly weave race, gender, sexuality, indigeneity, privilege, and other potentially emotional issues into their lessons. What right and expertise do white librarians, for instance, have for using or developing stories about indigenous people? The point of this objection is not to discourage librarians from seeking out ignored stories, but that doing so may be more complicated than *Once Upon a Time in the Academic Library* suggests. The book would benefit from more attention to the complexity and tensions that may emerge when librarians work with stories that are not their own.

Despite these problems, *Once Upon a Time in the Academic Library* provides readers with a nice introduction to librarians using stories in their everyday work. Ideally, the book will spread the awareness of storytelling in libraries and inspire librarians to try it. If every librarian has a story to tell, we can look forward to a lot more stories.—David J. Brier, *University of Hawai’i at Mānoa*

M.C. Kinniburgh. *Wild Intelligence: Poets’ Libraries and the Politics of Knowledge in Postwar America.* Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2022. 224p. Paper, \$28.95 (ISBN: 978-1625346551).

The poet’s reading is integral to the poet’s writing. Yet the relative importance any particular subject material may hold in the poet’s work may appear elusive, often only to be revealed by way of keen-eyed archival digging. Thus, as M.C. Kinniburgh argues in *Wild Intelligence: Poets’ Libraries and the Politics of Knowledge in Postwar America*, “The poet’s library as an ar-



chival genre is just as significant a historical tool as literary papers” (48). Kinniburgh has multifaceted experience with such matters. As a former archivist and rare book librarian at New York Public Library, and now rare book dealer and small press publisher with Granary Books, she has witnessed how “institutional practices shape our expectations of the use and value of poets’ libraries, just as they shape our understanding of the archival materials and research collections that they house.” (151) Firmly believing re-envisioning the relationship between institutional policies and private collections holds possibilities for redefining broader cultural values (that is to say that better understanding and acceptance of the fringe areas—Anarchist/occult leanings—at which these poets and their work

operate might lead to direct societal change across-the-board—away from current capitalist, neoliberal global hegemony), Kinniburgh doesn’t shy away from acknowledging her commitment to elevating the political and social aspects at play within her research:

the crux of my argument: that poets’ libraries are not just book collections but are rather a distinctive type of archival collection that reflects a *poetics* of information. And that in the twentieth century, this task of collecting and organizing has specific political valence for poets who worked outside of mainstream contexts: who were harassed by government organizations, denied the resources of traditional institutions, or otherwise registered on a scale of unfashionable to dangerous in an era of conformity. In this sense, poets’ libraries offer us an alternative history of information management during the same century that saw this practice rise to the prominence of an accredited profession in the United States. (x)

Kinniburgh’s intriguing, reader-friendly take looks at the libraries of four poets: Charles Olson, Audre Lorde, Diane di Prima, and Gerrit Lansing, expanding the conversation around current approaches to archival practice. Her work opens up fresh, incisive lines for inquiry. She focuses her attention upon “libraries that are wild in their intelligence, and have thus far evaded the legibility of being ingested into a formal institution or offered to the literary marketplace” (xi). In part, Kinniburgh is attracted by the way “the libraries of these poets still exist on the peripheries, because that’s where they were created” (xi).

Kinniburgh’s accounts are for the most part first-hand. While she was of course unable to meet with long-deceased poets Lorde and Olson, she spent significant time in Gloucester, MA at the Maud/Olson Library (a recreation of Olson’s book collection created by Olson scholar Ralph Maud now housed in the poet’s longtime adopted hometown). And, describing her role as being “to help, and be of service,” she met extensively in person with di Prima, paying several visits to the poet’s San Francisco home to go through her library of occult books and ephemera. She also met multiple times with Lansing at his home in Gloucester, MA, prior to each poet’s recent passing.

Wild Intelligence provides a descriptive guide to these poets’ libraries while also meditating upon the problematic nature of any institutional incorporation of such collections. Particularly in relation to how institutional bias, intentional as well as perhaps not, has neglected and outright shunned marginal groups with which these poets are affiliated. Kinniburgh draws attention to the paradox of how these “very same institutions” now embrace these collections.

Drawing direct ties to “antiracist practices at institutions that interrogate the ways in which materials created by Black or Indigenous people, as well as people of color, exist at institutions that historically marginalized or excluded these same voices.”

Kinniburgh’s discussion of Lorde, who worked as a librarian, and much of whose personal library was destroyed by a hurricane on St. Croix, explores the racial prejudice that shaped her work as a Black librarian and her path to becoming a full-time poet. Lorde immersed herself within the “information infrastructure of libraries,” but took the full-time “turn to poetry to augment the aspects of professional library infrastructure that she found inadequate to her work” (54). While still using tools of librarianship, she actualized a different calling in her life: “For Lorde, ‘information’ is a basic unit of observation or sensation that can be acknowledged and filed for future use, and is deeply tied to both verbal and nonverbal forms of communication. ... Lorde’s definition of ‘information’ is acquired through distinctly intuitive means” (68).

Looking to the sensibilities of these poets, Kinniburgh highlights opportunities for rethinking common understandings and practices. She points to the meaning of bibliography for Olson, suggesting that it “functions not as evidence of reading that has been accomplished but rather as mapping the contours of what can be known ... based on textual evidence at a certain point in time” (34). Mapping the rough thematic contours of books arranged on the numerous bookshelves sprawling throughout Lansing’s home, Kinniburgh describes a spiral-like path entering from the kitchen’s back door swooping through the front rooms to wind up the central staircase to the upper floor’s office and bedroom: “Lansing’s careful placement of books in particular rooms adds to the specific tension that gives shape to the library on the whole” (126). And she emphasizes the necessity of understanding the preoccupations underlining di Prima’s reading and gathering, describing the ways that “questions of sources and research are essential to contextualizing di Prima’s intellectual genealogy and the importance of her library, particularly in relation to her reworking of ‘the progression of European thought’ as a means of answering the question of how historical knowledge can be activated in the present moment” (90–91).

For Kinniburgh, libraries, archives, and other memory institutions play a role in preserving the “wild intelligence” of collections *as* collections. She adventurously suggests that there is value in “initial encounters and unmediated approaches” (112) alongside the selected and curated presentation of the poet’s papers. Beyond merely engaging devoted fans of the poets, *Wild Intelligence* provides a critical lens by which to measure and continue to reshape the manner in which the library-as-institution engages with collections such as these.—Patrick James Dunagan, *University of San Francisco*

Jo Angela Oehrli. *Practical Academic Library Instruction: Learner-Centered Techniques*. Chicago, IL: American Library Association, 2022. 124p. Paper, \$64.99 (ALA members) (ISBN: 978-0-8389-3642-9).

Jo Angela Oehrli has distilled much of her experience, practical advice, and wisdom into this easy-to-use and well-organized library instruction manual. Her passion and enthusiasm for teaching, information literacy, and student-centered learning come through loud and clear. Recent research addresses the lack of preparation and guidance for teaching faced by many librarians whose responsibilities include instruction, especially those at the beginning of their careers. With a growing focus on information literacy and the teaching role of librarians, this practical volume fills an important niche for both new and experienced librarians.