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Review of Developing Library and Information Center Collections

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DEVELOPING LIBRARY AND INFORMATION CENTER COLLECTIONS, 5th edition. G. Edward Evans and Margaret Zarnosky Saponaro. Westport, CN, 2005, 446 pp. ISBN: 1-59158-219-9 (pbk.)

When I received a review copy of *Developing Library and Information Center Collections*, 5th edition, I thought, “gee, it hasn’t been very long since the last edition came out.” Thus, initially I was inclined to pass on sending it off for a review. However, a few days later, a couple of acquisitions/collection development issues were passed on to me. Before making a decision, I thought, “hum, maybe I should check this latest edition of Evans and Saponaro to see if there is new information on the subject.” While what I found was not different than expected, it was very helpful, and suddenly I saw this fifth edition of this standard text in a new light.

The edition that I was most familiar with (having taught from it) was the third edition (1995) and here was the fifth. My first thought was “What could have changed so much since 1995 that would warrant two additional editions since then?” To find out, I pulled out my copy of the third edition and retrieved the fourth edition from the shelves and did a complete comparison. Indeed, I can verify much of Evans and Saponaro themselves write in the preface. First, there is one less chapter. They combined the former two chapters on print and electronic serials found in the fourth edition into one: Serials—Print and Electronic. An examination of the text of this chapter suggests that by the time another new edition is warranted, this chapter might once again be called only “Serials,” but unlike the third edition where the content is only about paper serials, in the future, the content of this chapter will probably be only about electronic serials!

The authors also tell us that the introductory chapter on the Information Age has been heavily edited and that the chapters on other electronic materials, government

information, and audiovisual materials have also been almost completely rewritten. It is true that this was absolutely necessary to reflect the speed at which the “containers” in which we collect such content, have changed over the years. And, as those containers have changed, so have the vendors and publishers selling this newly packed content. Thus, the negotiations completing the sale, the conditions of use, and the technological means by which the information is retrieved and used, have all changed, or at least grown more complex, in just a few short years.

Other subjects have been updated as well. New information is scattered throughout the text such as new information on audits, use of the ILS in evaluation, and changes in copyright and licensing issues. The chapter on Resource Sharing previously called Cooperative Collection Development and Resource Sharing has been substantially updated. Previously the authors expressed some skepticism about the success of cooperative collection development. The rewritten chapter suggests that rather than cooperative collection development, this activity might now be better-termed, “shared” collection development. In particular, the authors note the success of consortia that purchase electronic resources.

The authors did cut material in an effort to keep the length of the text down and, I think, to create a more accessible work for students. However, rather than this material being lost to the interested reader, it was captured on a CD accompanying the text. That material, too, has been updated.

All in all, this is a standard and well-respected text that covers all of the topics that one would expect. It is thorough almost to the point of being too much for beginning librarians to appreciate. However, it is a wonderful resource that every student should

keep in their professional library and refer to as issues pop up during their career. And, likewise, I recommend it as a tool for library administrators and librarians at all levels. Personally, I am going to keep my copy close by and continue to double-check my own understanding of issues. This profession is just changing too fast for one to rely solely upon the experiences of the past.

Highly recommended as a text and as a reference for practicing librarians.

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