

virtually the only forum at all—for librarians in the field. The network this fosters is of fundamental importance in my doing what I do. (Indeed, it's why I'm writing this review.) Because the book was assembled from essentially anonymous opinions from a rather brief questionnaire, *Reading and the Reference Librarian* raises more questions than it answers, especially for librarians pondering professional development for themselves and their colleagues.

It should go without saying that we all should spend free time reading, even when time is precious. When "so many books to read, so little time" forces choices, however; there are many more books worth reading than this one.—Gregory A. Finnegan, *Harvard University*.

Magazines for Libraries: For the General Reader and School, Junior College, College, University, and Public Libraries, 12 ed. Ed. Cheryl LaGuardia, with Bill Katz and Linda Sternberg Katz. New Providence, N.J.: Bowker, 2003. 1,120p. \$225 (ISBN 0835245411).

Magazines for Libraries, now in its twelfth edition, continues to evolve in order to keep up with the massive changes in how serials are published. This print edition may be the last of its kind. The first question this reviewer had when examining the volume was, When will this resource move to a Web format? According to sources at Bowker, subsequent editions may indeed be redesigned in order to become Web based. Time will tell.

Bowker conducted focus groups to find out what publishers and users needed and wanted from this publication. The twelfth edition includes new features that address a number of trends, including a listing of journal aggregators and the inclusion of abundant statistics that break down the contents in new and useful ways. Retained from earlier volumes is the listing of titles deleted since the last

edition, and it continues to be useful. As in past editions, all previously published entries were reviewed thoroughly and revised, if necessary.

However, I do have a few minor complaints. The "How to Use This Book" pages are buried between the statistics and the abbreviations; it would be more useful up front, after the preface. Electronic-only publications are segregated at the end of each subject listing, even though in the preface it is acknowledged that "the novelty of electronic journals has worn off, and they are now considered to be simply essential." If this is so, then why not list the essential e-publications along with the print without segregating them, especially as so many of the print journals are also now available online (and when that is the case, it is duly noted)? This, of course, leads back to the compelling case for this reference work itself to become Web based because many print-only journals are rapidly adding an online component or else are ceasing in print altogether. A print reference work such as *Magazines for Libraries*, by its very nature, is out-of-date before even going to press. One last, small complaint is, Why are the publications listed under the topic of "Serials" separate from, rather than included with, Library and Information Science? It seems that subtopics within library and information science should be listed in a similar fashion as they are for other broad subjects such as Business and Medicine.

Cheryl LaGuardia and the many individuals (and it is nice to see the Katzes retaining a consulting role) that comprised the team of reviewers certainly had their work cut out for them and they completed their task admirably. This volume is most useful to reference staff who assist library users in the identification of the best journals in a field and to collection development selectors, regardless of whether they are trying to justify the

purchase of a new title or retention of an existing one. All types of libraries should consider including *Magazine for Libraries* as a core reference tool. —*Eleanor I. Cook, Appalachian State University.*

Reading Sites: Social Difference and Reader Response. Eds. Patrocínio P. Schweickart and Elizabeth A. Flynn. New York: MLA, 2004. 357p. \$22 (ISBN 0873529855). LC 2003-022482.

The “reading sites” of this book’s title are not libraries but, rather, locations in the imaginary space populated by readers, texts, and authors where, at least in the view of reader-response theories of literature, the meaning of texts is constituted. For humanities librarians who studied literature in the 1970s and 1980s, the essays collected here will transport them back to the exciting debates and discoveries of their apprentice years, the theoretical breakthroughs of Iser, Jauss, Fish, Bleich, and Holland that shattered the classical view of the reader as the dispassionate receptacle of incontrovertible meanings placed in literary works by sagacious authors. Until then, literary education had been in the hands of positivists who approached the understanding of the literary work as if it were a problem in physics, a goal of elucidation and not of socially, historically aware debate. The student learned literary interpretation as a type of exegesis and accepted that his or her subjectivity figured “mainly as a source of error” (I. A. Richards) in the reading experience. Reader-response theory, by contrast, elevated the reader to a co-constituent of textual meaning—in its more extreme expressions, in fact, as the principal or sole producer of meaning. Reader-response “monists” argued that because the message of a literary work has no objective reality, it is produced entirely by the will and the intellect of the reading subject.

For a reviewer in a library science journal, an examination of this work leads to several questions. First of all, what do the essays in this volume offer today’s selector of a library literature collection beyond, say, what an earlier collaboration of these same two editors, *Gender and Reading: Essays on Readers, Texts, and Contexts*, did in 1986? And second, more relevant perhaps in a library science context, why even review this book here at all, rather than in a journal directed at readers in English departments?

To answer the first question, both the 38-page introduction that the editors provide and the highly diverse scope of this volume’s eleven essays document beyond a doubt that reader-response theory has moved significantly beyond its beginnings twenty and thirty years ago. The erstwhile theoretical construct of the monodimensional reader has been diversified, gendered, racialized, and chronicized. Where early theorists such as Jauss looked at the “reader” in reader-response theory as a “generalized other,” the essays collected here seek out a far more *personal* other, rejecting “homogenization” of manifoldly disparate readers and attending to “the specificities of persons and situations ... differentiated, among other things, by race, ethnicity, and class.” These specificities overlay and conflict with one another. If, for example, a white feminist might be inclined to reduce everything in a work of literature to issues of gender difference, for black feminists—such as Angeletta K M Gourdine, represented in this volume with an essay entitled “Colored Readings; or, Interpretation and the Raciogendered Body”—race melds complexly with gender in the context of “multiple systems of social and cultural domination.”

Even individual readers are revealed by these essays as internally conflicted, contradictory, often moody constructors of meaning—and this is where the book