Book Reviews

Torras, Maria-Carme and Saetre, Tove Pemmer: *Information literacy education: a process approach Professionalising the Pedagogical role of academic libraries.* Oxford, U.K: Chandos Publishing, 2009, xiii, 112p. ISBN.13: 978-1-94334-386-8(pbk).

Information literacy goes much beyond librarianship. It is a tool to become an aware citizen, updated professional, and is a grass root process for continued education for empowering the citizens and consequently successful and responsible civic living. But it is not anything new for librarians who have been imparting user education to their clients since long. Much has been written on the need, purpose and techniques of information literacy. But this small book deals with the restricted aspect of information literacy education to be taken up by the academic librarians in higher educations institutions. Academic library is viewed as a learning centre with teaching role, and the librarian as an "information empowerment specialist". The authors aspire to "professionalize the educational role of academic librarians" (p.1), and endeavor to explore "practical ways in which library's pedagogical involvement in higher education can be strengthened". A big role! The book places equal emphasis on library as an institution and agency of higher education and the LIS professional as an individual educator. It is a high status role for the beleaguered librarians. Library is treated as an integral partner in higher education which is traditionally called the heart of an academic institution. In the backdrop are explained learning processes and theories. Author's perceptions are derived from a Norwegian didactic model given by L. L velie (1972, 1974) which visualizes how education theory can enrich and professionalize the practice of library education. Learning is a social practice and higher education is socializing into the academic culture. It is enriched by doing and experience.

There are four chapters including the introduction in addition to conclusion marked as chapter five. Introduction lays

bare the aim and organization of the book. The second chapter rehashes the process of information literacy and explains the updated role of academic library in higher education setup. The third chapter dwells on the nitty-gritty of, what the authors call, "process-oriented information literacy education". Here is explained and developed the role of LIS professionals as independent educators. The focus is on the didactic relations model (pp. 32-33) wherein categories, namely, learning activities, goals, contents, assessment and didactic conditions interact with one and all are interlinked in a pentagon. All these factors have been explained in depth. The fourth chapter brings out with many details the supervisory role of academic librarians to facilitate research conducted by the students. It explains the stages of information search and writing processes in view of the needs and challenges before the students from selecting, reading, noting, comprehending, using, citing and documenting the literature. The role of academic librarian as a counselor has been adequately highlighted. The book presents a process-oriented approach. "Professionalization of the information professionals is a key factor to give the academic library the status of the formal learning arena it struggles to obtain" (p. 95). It advocates the case for empowering the librarians so that they may empower the library users.

The presentation of the text is learning oriented. The book is lucid, illustrated with diagrams and cases of real-like situations in academic libraries. It is studded with diagrams, tables and boxed scenarios. All these add to its value as a learning tool -- learning without tears. Cumulated references in alphabetical sequences are helpful for further delving in the wider areas of learning theories, academic libraries, information literacy and higher education. This little book is worth reading by all those concerned which lives up to its stated aim in its lengthy title.

Webster, Perter M. Managing electronic resources: New and changing role for librarians. Oxford: Chandos Publishing, 2008.xvi, 236p ISBN: 978-1843-343684.
 U K PD 39.95

We have entered the wonderful .world of electronic information. This paradigm shift has been quick and pervasive. Transformation is always demanding to relearn and unlearn not only new techniques but also attitudes and approaches. We are overwhelmed with variety, pace, diversity and quantity of electronic information and its sources. Librarians have always adopted new technologies and have donned new rules to expand services to their users. Challenges of e-resources and IT have given new opportunities. In, fact the meaning of library collections have changed so have changed the methods to build and provide access to them. New models for varied e-materials have emerged, and we call them Electronic Resource Management Systems (ERM). Earlier e-journals made most of the collections, now full text databases, reference books and e-books and institutional repositories are also growing. There is unprecedented amount of information in varied forms and from different sources distributed all over the globe available at the click of the mouse. Google, Yahoo and others of the ilk provide universal access to and discovery of information. But everything cannot be accessed with a single web search. Webster discusses the unified information environment where all needed information can be comprehensively discovered and accessed using common search methods without any barrier of software needs, formats or e-vendors. The linking role of librarians is emphasized to provide universal discovery and access (UDA) "Librarians are making links from sources of citation to many available sources of content" (p.19).

He also discusses the technological, political, social and fragmented (silos) environment which pose barriers to universal access. Webster discusses all these issues with depth and details. His book has thirteen chapters including the introduction. He lays

threadbare the idea of universal access and discovery and the role of new electronic content tools such as link resolver, proxy servers and social networking tools for integrated library services (ILS) and the challenges they pose and opportunities they afford. Now OPACs and old search engines are being replaced with new information management tools with innovative interfaces and search services for a seamless user experience. The author discusses in detail open access sources and standards (and how these inhibit innovations). The author suggests close collaboration between librarians, e-publishers, vendors and aggregators to tie up and serve diverse e-resources. This book is very useful for librarians, publishers, content managers and knowledge management experts to build more powerful universal information resources than we have now.

Albitz, Becky. Licensing and managing electronic resources. Oxford: Chandos Publishing, 2008 .xxi, 182p ISBN: 978-1-843334-432-2 (Pbk) U K PD 39.95

Ms Albitz's book is almost complementary to the above book as it concentrates on the legal side of acquiring, accessioning sharing and servicing electronic resources. It begins with a brief history of US copyright law and how an ideal license agreement should inhere its essential provisions. No such agreement should violate any of its provision. Obviously, before negotiating a license to use and serve information sources the library manager must know the needs and goals of the institute. The third chapter with a crypt   crypt titles "The license" (pp.37-81) is the essence and soul of the book which explains it as a legal document and discusses the legal implications of its various standard clauses. It clearly mentions what it specifies and what not; what it allows and what it restricts or prohibits. It further dwells on negotiating on agreement in terms of business, differential pricing and its renewal. Advice to librarians is to be honest regarding the number of users. Then comes what titles to select and how database providers should be selected and titles should be managed. License agreement should be reviewed periodically

in light of experience. It is a new role that has fallen on librarians (p.15) and requires some knowledge of law and business. It explains the new role of librarians as negotiators. Some model licenses are given in the next chapter and alternatives to a license are discussed there. In the appendix is given a hypothetical model with ideal clauses in the US context. The author forewarns that she is not a lawyer and the book should not be taken as a legal interpretation or advice (p.xv).

Nevertheless the author speaks with a felicity who has a wide and close experience of copyright issues, and is still actively engaged in media and copyright related organizations within the American Library Association. This makes the book more reliable and indeed eminently readable.

Both the books enshrine and present the facts in a comfortable style characteristic of Chandos publications and exhibit high quality of manufacturing standards. Both the books are highly recommended to e-collection management librarians anywhere in the world.

Dr M. P. Satija
Professor, Guru Nanak Dev University,
Amritsar, India
satija_mp@yahoo.com