

Reviews

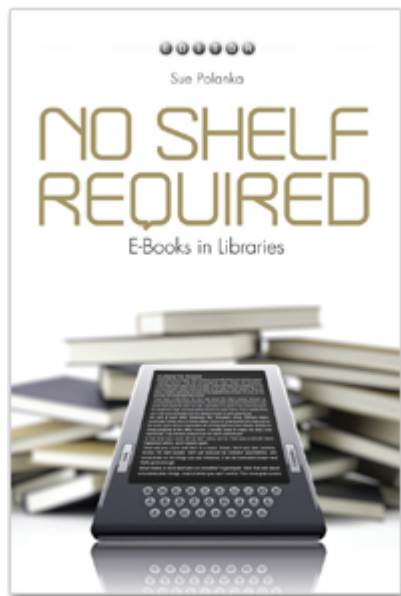
No Shelf Required: ebooks in Libraries

Polanka, Sue (Editor) (2011)

Chicago: American Library Association

ISBN 978-0-8389-1054-2

Available from: www.alastore.ala.org



E-books have been around for almost a decade but they have been seen as personal items, not library devices. This is now changing and libraries are beginning to come to terms with this form of the book. E-books, and how to best make use of what they offer, is not a topic for future discussion but part of the present state of affairs. There are many teacher-librarians, librarians and teachers looking at what they might offer their clientele. This book is therefore very timely and offers much to anyone who is still sorting through some of the issues surrounding this technology.

The editor, Sue Polanka, discusses all aspects of e-books and the technology that goes with this topic in her blog, *No Shelf Required* [<http://bit.ly/185jib>]. Polanka has gathered together a range of contributors who offer a comprehensive introduction to this technology. Brief biographies at the end of the text indicate that all the authors are well placed to offer their advice and ideas. After the introduction the book contains nine clearly written chapters, each on a different topic. These topics are all of interest and are practical in their outlook. Each author also includes a summary, or conclusion, that sums up the information given in the chapter. The index is comprehensive, as is the list of references.

The book can be read from start to finish but my staff read various chapters as they thought of questions and ideas.

Chapter 1. 'E-books on the Internet' by James Galbraith, outlines a history of e-books and the internet and it is a good overview of the topic.

Chapter 2. 'Student Learning and E-books', by Jackie Collier and Susan Berg, discusses the many opportunities that e-books offer for improving student learning. The advice also includes challenges that are still being faced.

Chapter 3. 'E-books in the School Library', by Shonda Brisco, discusses a number of ways teachers and librarians may overcome some of the practical challenges of using e-books in their schools and libraries. Some of these include cataloguing e-books, accessing e-books, marketing and how to cover the costs.

Chapter 4. 'E-books in the Public Library', by Amy Pawlowski, is a chapter that covers the basics about the e-book vendors and producers and the different formats and delivery methods. It also attempts to explain how you can be successful in implementing an e-books program in a library offering advice that would also be applicable to schools. There was also, in this chapter, a 'Case Study on the Amazon Kindle' by Blaise Dierks. This was especially interesting to me as we have introduced Kindles into our school. Some of the decisions we made, after agonising over them, were the very some solutions that were discussed in this study.

Chapter 5. 'The Academic Library E-book', by Lindsey Schell. In this chapter the author attempted to explain the myriad of issues obstacles for academic librarians. Things such as e-book vendors, licensing, funding, sharing, ADA compliance, and DRM are also issues relevant to those in school libraries. This chapter also includes a 'Case Study on the Sony Reader', by Anne Behler.

Chapter 6. 'Acquiring E-books', by Carolyn Morris and Lisa Sibert, is a long and comprehensive chapter that proves that the acquisition of e-books can be more complex than the print format but that each aspect can be overcome.

Chapter 7. 'The Use and Preservation of E-books', by Alice Crosetto, explains data associated with e-book use and preservation and how or what might be useful.

Chapter 8. 'E-book Standards', by Emilie Delquié and Sue Polanka, is a chapter devoted to the current situation, suggesting there are too many standards in the ways e-books are currently delivered, introduced, and hosted. This chapter explores what the various existing standards are and what changes need to be made to simplify and improve the technology.

Chapter 9. 'The Future of Academic Book Publishing: E-books and Beyond', by Rolf Janke. This book would be a valuable resource for teacher-librarians and other library staff involved with the acquisition, cataloguing, and the preservation of e-books. It is a well-presented, easy-to-read and well-documented publication that provides a good foundation for further investigation of this area. I would recommend it as a good primary resource for any school, public or academic library collection.

***Reviewed by Rhonda Powling,
Head of Library at Whitefriars College
and President of the School Library Association of Victoria***

I Found it on the Internet: Coming of Age Online

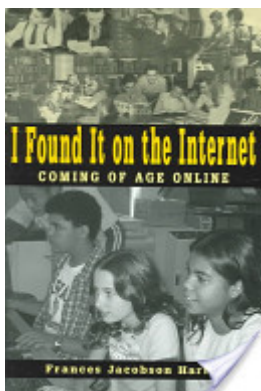
Harris, Frances Jacobson (2011)

(Second Edition)

Chicago, American Library Association.

ISBN 9780838910665

Orders: www.alastore.ala.org



Harris's background in teaching computer literacy in middle school, managing a high school library, and university professorship, is apparent in this broad work about teenagers, the Internet and libraries. The new edition emphasises the impact of social media, not mentioned in the 2005 version. Harris examines the impact

of ICTs on teenagers' lives, and the role libraries have in working with students to provide direction and structure. Though the work is directed at teacher-librarians working with teenagers, the content could be relevant to those working with younger children, who also access digital media. The American Library Association (ALA) publicity includes parents as a market, but the main thrust is towards library professionals. The use of recent and relevant research is a highlight of the book. The title is now also available on Kindle.

Teenagers' use of the Internet

Discussing the internet and information, Harris distinguishes between 'formal' and 'informal' systems. Formal systems are concerned with information seeking to support imposed query, such as assignments. Teenagers are immersed in the 'informal' systems of everyday life information and communication needs.

Teenagers do not separate information from communication. The drives for personal development and social competence are served by ICTs. Harris emphasises that socialising is teenagers' work, as play is children's work. Teenagers hang out online.

Generation Ys use the Internet for entertainment and communication, as well as creating content by uploading work or remixing. A 2007 study showed that 64 per cent of teenagers created online content, on sites like 'Deviant art' (www.deviantart.com), where works can be purchased, sold or commented on.

While parents and educators have been in 'techno panic' with fears of predators and stranger danger, research shows that teenagers generally communicate with people they already know. Cyber bullying from peers is a greater danger to young people.

Digital media is used to extend existing friendships, as well as peer-based self-directed learning. Through expanding access to personal computing, teenagers can access private space, apart from parents, to support socialising. The development of personal music playlists, as well as gaming, involves personal expression and collaboration and team-building. The picture of a lone teenager, isolated in their room, playing games is no longer accurate. Many multiplayer games now offer social experience through collaboration. Role playing games can help explore identity. Strategy games involve team-building. Reflection and interpretation can be built through cheats, forums and FAQs. Harris refers to the ALA's *The librarian's guide to gaming online toolkit* (<http://librarygamingtoolkit.org/>).

Much ICT use is based on the relationships rather than a task. Online communities become social networks. Socially generated information is part of the information web, e.g. Amazon show customers who bought this, also bought . . .

Teenagers and libraries

Young people's need to develop social competence is often frustrated in libraries, with many encounters enforcement related. Students' need for group work areas as well as individual study areas must be recognised and acted upon. Libraries are losing ground in provision for both formal and informal systems of information and communication technology needs. Research shows that teens use the internet, rather than the Library for research, preferring search engines to academic databases.

Library catalogues represent the formal system. Harris notes that library information structures are anachronistic legacy systems. Issues include:

- Structured searches use controlled vocabulary with subject headings not resembling key words. E.g. 'Homosexuality' rather than 'Gay teenagers';
- Studies show that students use catalogues last, after browsing and asking;
- DDC can result in anomalies, e.g. books on countries being shelved in three areas;
- Research shows that children have better recognition than recall abilities. This translates to difficulty generating a search term, but success in selecting from a list. Teenagers would be better supported by browsable displays, and subject hierarchies.

There are moves to reform subject catalogues, but progress is slow. Some libraries have abandoned DDC, preferring a bookstore presentation, to support browsing. Other moves include Library Thing's (www.librarything.com) development of the free, open-source 'Open shelves classification'. Initiatives like this will move classification closer to the way people think, and search for information. Next generation catalogues

will incorporate clustering, Web 2.0 enhancements, so that users can export, comment and tag. Results will include e books, databases, and search engines like 'Google scholar'.

Differences between the Internet and libraries:

The Internet lacks a central authority, such as the Anglo American cataloguing rules. Machines rather than people do selection and indexing, using algorithms. Thinking about credibility of information is changing. Young people are less inclined to an authority model. Judgment of the many is the new norm, e.g. Wikipedia. Crowd-sourcing is enabled by ICT. Blogs, professional learning networks, like our own OZTL-net and Bright Ideas are examples. Limitations are lack of editorial review and expertise.

The Internet does not categorise source types, making teenagers format agnostics. Library search tools are being developed to cover multiple databases and catalogues. The free web of open searching and the deep, invisible web of subscribed databases can be distinguished. The concept of 'original work' has changed. The contemporary world values the sharing of information. Hacking can be seen as morally correct, e.g. hackers' setting up of proxy servers to support Twitter communications during official communication lock down during the Iran election.

Opportunities for teacher-librarians:

Information and media literacy has not improved with more access to ICTs. Students have low understanding of information needs, are challenged to develop search strategies, and show little interest in evaluating information.

Effectiveness in searching is impacted by:

- Students have little knowledge of how internet works;
- Students show little resilience, changing topics if results are not found;
- The imposed query model limits students' searching to filling information gaps;
- Evaluation of information is low.

Teenagers do not immerse themselves in the richness of Internet environments. The art of searching the Invisible web (subscription databases) can be explored with the help of skilled staff. There is still a strong need for the teaching of media and information skills. Rubrics are needed to help decipher and evaluate information, so students can detect advocacy groups and commercialism. Students must learn deconstruction of persuasive techniques.

Another gap in teenager knowledge and practice is information evaluation. Traditional models to assess the credibility of websites abound, but studies show that students do not use these unless required, so they are not useful for everyday information usage. Instead of a checklist, teacher-librarians could show what high quality information resources are available and how to use these. Reviewed resources, such as FUSE, Sweet search, Study search can be introduced to students. Website information can be compared to other types, like news or journals.

Online issues include cheating and plagiarism, as well as Cyberbullying. Teacher-librarians must take lead roles in teaching information ethics and ICT literacy. Schools' responses have been regulatory (policies, agreements)' technological (security, viewing software) and pedagogical (teaching responsible use). Blocking of social media means students cannot be taught safe and responsible use. Studies have shown access to social media is not the cause of risk-taking online behaviour. Students who show such behaviours also show at risk off-line behaviours, related to family dynamics.

Consistent school policies must model ethical behaviour. Ethics can be embedded in curriculum, rather than taught overtly. For example, all subject areas using the same model for citing their use of online resources, thus combating plagiarism.

Pedagogy must incorporate the diversity of internet environments. Examples:

- Students investigate the same news story covered by different media outlets, including blogs and Twitter;

- Compare information on a disease in different sources, consumer-oriented site, medical professional, forums.

Teacher-librarians must become familiar with contemporary ICTs, especially those popular with teenagers. Such tools can support professional collaboration with teachers, and other teacher-librarians.

The impact of Web 2.0 must be recognised, understood and acted upon by teacher-librarians and educators. Harris's work offers valuable perspectives and insights into teenagers and their use of communication technology. Recent research and developments in next generation catalogues, shelving conventions, as well as the need to review library physical space are described. The teacher-librarian's role as technology mentor is vital to ensure students develop as critical users and creators of information. The teaching of ethics in digital media is another essential task for the library professional. With the movement towards one-to-one computing fast upon Australian schools, pedagogical planning is imperative. The analysis of school ICT practices provided by this book offers a guide for policy-makers.

**Reviewed by Pam Remington-Lane,
e Learning Coach and Library Co-ordinator,
Traralgon College**

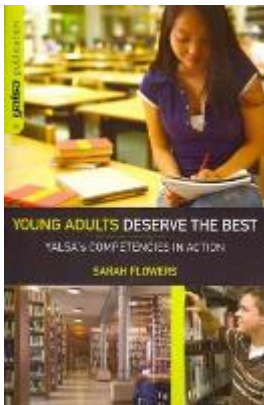
Young Adults Deserve the Best: YALSA's Competencies in Action

Flowers, Sarah (2011)

Chicago: American Library Association

ISBN 978083893873

Available from: www.alastore.ala.org



At first glance this little book may appear to be irrelevant to Australian school libraries. It is true that the target audience for this publication is the public library system in the United States. Also the title clearly states that the focus is on young adults; in fact, these are more clearly defined as children aged 12-18, so it will have little or no interest for our colleagues in the primary system. However, I found this to be a little treasure that gathers a great deal of information and advice and packages it very accessibly.

It is clearly stated in the introduction that this is a companion text to *YALSA's Young Adults Deserve the Best: Competencies for Librarians Serving Youth*. As a result it does not spend any time explaining the competencies under consideration. Each chapter simply provides a list of competencies at the very start and then launches into a series of great ideas about how these skills can be demonstrated to the benefit of young adults generally. Some of these ideas will not be directly applicable to the school library situation. For example, the first chapter on leadership and professionalism spends an extended time discussing the need for a young adult collection within the public library. But then many of the ideas will also be useful as a teacher-librarian works to extend the role of the library within the school.

Flowers is very skilful in summarising information simply and effectively. In the chapter on knowledge of the client group, she discusses current research into adolescent brain development in a paragraph with references to further information if required. Her background reading must have been incredible because each chapter has an extensive bibliography of print and online resources.

The book also contains samples of policy documentation, mission statements and anecdotal evidence from librarians specialising in working with young adults. These are clearly identified and separated from the main text so that it is very easy to locate what you need very quickly. Flowers may only choose the highlights from the complete documents, but you can be certain that the bibliography at the end of the chapter will get you to the complete text.

Amazingly there are nine appendices. Some of these may appear irrelevant at first, like the American Library Association Library Bill of Rights or the Code of Ethics for the American Library Association. However, some of the supporting documentation that attempts to provide practical explanations for the theoretical statements are very interesting and worth careful consideration.

In fact, that is this book in a nutshell. Grand statements and ideals are given practical application. As I was reading it, I kept thinking 'What a good idea! I could do that!'. Any book that can fire imagination and enthusiasm for improving school library services is worth reading. And I suspect that you will want to keep it as a handy reference as well.

***Reviewed by Cecilia Sutton
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