Cassell, Kay Ann and Uma Hiremath. **Reference and Information Services in the 21st Century: An Introduction**. 2nd Edition. New York, NY: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2009. xvii, 461 pp. 69.95 USD. ISBN-13: 978-1-55570-672-2. ∞

Cassell and Hiremath have produced a very well written, well researched introduction to reference and information services. This second edition is approximately 80 pages longer than the first edition (2006) and it deals with a number of technological changes in libraries in the last three years, notably the increasing prominence of Google and the enormous digitization projects that are now under way around the world.

The book is divided into four main sections: "Fundamental Concepts," in which the authors discuss the theory and practice of reference and information service; "Introduction to Major Reference Works," in which they discuss categories of reference sources; "Special Topics," which includes detailed information about reference sources in different subject areas or subject disciplines, and "Developing and Managing Reference Collections and Services," in which the authors deal with issues such as collection development, evaluating reference sources, managing reference departments, assessing the quality and adequacy of reference services, and includes the authors' reflections on the likely technological and social implications of reference services in the decades to come. They discuss topics such as Web 2.0, social networking, RSS feeds, and Virtual Reference and note (p. 390) that although these technological developments are in a state of constant change, it is possible to find patterns that make 2.0 such an attractive addition to the traditional reference arsenal.

It is particularly gratifying to see that the authors regularly refer to Canadian and British reference sources and institutions, rather than restricting themselves to those from the United States. There are also frequent references to the information services that are provided by sister institutions, reminding the reader that even though reference and information services may be provided at one institution, they may draw on the expertise and resources of many.

The authors deal with the ethical issues that reference librarians sometimes face. They provide a good discussion of the reference interview process and some of the pitfalls that librarians encounter, and they remind librarians that they may frequently be called upon to provide reference service in disciplines where they have no professional expertise, and that they should always be aware of this as they assist library users.

Occasionally, the authors trap themselves with definitions of terms or concepts. By stating that "dictionaries ... share one major characteristic: they provide definitions" (p. 125), the authors would appear to eliminate resources such as picture dictionaries, dictionaries of dates, or biographical dictionaries. It would be more helpful to recognize that the term "dictionary" is applied very widely, to many types of information resources, and to deal with the different categories of reference sources that include the word "dictionary" in the title, or are organized in a dictionary format. Many subject areas or disciplines, such as literature, music, political science and the social sciences, deal with complex terms or concepts that are arguably more than simply "words" that must be

defined. A broader understanding of "dictionary", together with examples from some of these disciplines, would strengthen this section.

Section 10, which deals with reference sources pertaining to Geography, starts out well, with an introductory sentence that describes both physical geography and social geography, but the discussion that follows pertains almost exclusively to physical geography: atlases, maps, and gazetteers. A brief description of the Mercator projection, the problems associated with it, and examples of atlases that do not use the Mercator projection would be useful. Equally useful would be a discussion of major reference sources that pertain to social geography. The list of "Recommended Resources Discussed in this Chapter" does not include any dictionaries of human or social geography, or indeed any resources pertaining to the concepts that are fundamental to either human or social geography. Similarly, Section 12, which deals with questions about governments, mentions "local municipal authorities" (p. 249) in the opening sentence, but deals almost exclusively with national governments and state or provincial governments.

Section 8, which deals with indexes and full-text databases, is comprehensive, but one might wish for a greater discussion of the issues pertaining to truncation, controlled vocabulary and the challenges that are posed by the confusing variety of search interfaces that confront librarians and library users. The rather brief paragraph entitled "Searching" (p. 171) could be expanded, in a revised edition of this book.

The authors discuss issues pertaining to both public and academic libraries, with sections on information literacy in academic libraries, reader's advisory, and reference service to children and young adults, among other topics. There are fewer examples taken from special libraries or corporate libraries. There is a brief section on understanding and respecting cultural differences, but no section that deals with service to users with hearing, mobility or vision restrictions. The section on "What to Assess" (p. 368-369), which mentions the reference collection, staff and services, could also include a discussion of the physical reference environment and the challenges that this environment may pose for users with these restrictions.

These minor complaints notwithstanding, this is a very comprehensive, thoughtful, well-written book that will be useful not only to library science students but also to practicing reference librarians and library administrators.

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