Developing Library and Information Center Collections,
5th ed., by G. Edward Evans Margaret Zarnosky Saponaro.
Westport, Connecticut: Libraries Unlimited, 2005. 446 p.
$45.00. ISBN 1-59158-218-0.

Edward Evans and his co-author Margaret Zarnosky Saponaro are to be commended for continuing the challenging task of authoring another edition of the seminal textbook for the study of library collection development. The first edition of this project appeared in 1979 as *Developing Library Collections*. Subsequent editions extended the title to *Developing Library and Information Center Collections*, and were published in 1987 (2nd), 1995 (3rd), and 2000 (4th). In the fourth and this, the fifth, edition Evans was joined by his co-author Saponaro. The new edition contains a CD-ROM with extra chapter material and links to URLs mentioned in the book.

This familiar textbook brings back memories for many of us who were assigned an earlier edition of the book in library school. As you may expect, it continues its ambitious goal of covering all aspects of collection development practice in a single book. Of course, no one, not even practitioners who work in collection development daily, could be expected to provide a perfect snapshot of all the various aspects of collection development professional practice. There are too many rapid changes in systems, resources, and practice for one book to be completely current and in tune with the jargon and realities of daily field practice. Thus, I will not dwell on pointing out differences between what is described within this textbook and actual practice among collection development librarians. This is a textbook well suited to the task of introducing library science students to collection development from an academic perspective. Though the book seeks to bring into play some detail of collection development, its real value is in its function as an overview – describing and explaining general principles and concepts and tying together elements of collection development practice – drawing a general picture of this important area of librarianship for novice students in library science. Thus, the Evans/Saponaro text is an excellent starting place to be supplemented in the classroom by current articles, testimonials from practicing collection development librarians, and the students' own research and discussion.

Developing Library and Information Center Collections is composed of eighteen sections, with each subdivided into a number of subsections. Of these sections, some are stronger than others and some would have benefited from more input from practicing collection development librarians who could have brought more up-to-date examples and more focus on current issues. For example, in discussing users' need for depth and immediacy in information (p. 22), the authors give the example of users being satisfied with weather forecasts printed in newspapers while pilots need up to the hour forecasts. This may have been true in the early 1990s before the Web but today travelers and

parents concerned with school closures will naturally look to the Web rather than a newspaper. Also, the book seems to be very concerned with discussion of format – "We would also suggest that effective collection development has always been a balancing act of formats (p. 49)" – an issue that was more prominent back in the nineties. Even the inclusion of a CD-ROM for chapter Web links that readers can easily Google seems an anachronism of an earlier era.

Overall, some areas of collection development are more emphasized in the book than others. The second chapter on information needs assessment, for example, presents a thorough treatment of assessing collection and service needs for public libraries but its treatment of assessment for academic libraries is weak. Critical factors of basing academic library collection assessment on areas such as curricular and research needs, for example, are not addressed. Evans and Saponaro note that they chose to focus on public libraries in the chapter (p. 42) because "public libraries have a long history of assessing community needs." But regardless of the historical literature on the topic, we expect a general text on developing library collections to not give disproportionate attention to one type of library over the others.

The authors give a thorough grounding in basic areas of collection development such as the need for collection development policies, understanding essential selection tools, and the process for selection. They also clearly describe the fundamentals of publishing and types of publications, including entire sections on serials and audiovisuals. The book devotes strong sections to fiscal management, resource sharing, protecting the collection, legal issues, and censorship.

One concern this reviewer has is with the currency of references. Though many of the references are within the last five years, the bulk of citations are from the nineteen-eighties and nineties and some are decades old. For example, as the authors consider techniques for evaluating collections, they cite literature in this area from 1941, 1964, and 1967 (p. 334–335). Another example is the chapter on distributors and vendors, which relies primarily on references from the nineteen-eighties and nineties (p. 273). In Chapter 10, the authors recommend a 1984 book as "a useful publication for all aspiring collection development officers… (p. 239)," while in the same chapter they cite a research study critical of approval plans that dates from 1974 (p. 236).

This reviewer also questions the numerous personal opinions, "rules of thumb" and "shoulds" that, granted, may be inevitable in books about professional practice but often seem to close rather than open new ways of approaching professional practice. For example, the authors drift into strange territory in Chapter 11 when they begin preaching that librarians should be more supportive of their jobbers and not just try to use them for more difficult items (p. 258). In the chapter on deselection, the authors proclaim, "Lazy librarians, like lazy gardeners, will find that the weeding problem only gets larger the longer they wait to do the job (p. 297)." I have not known many lazy librarians but I have known a lot of overburdened ones. And in the chapter on collection development policies, they proclaim: "Do not add a gift unless it is something the library would buy (p.

61).” Sensible until you think about all the out-of-print gifts you would never buy but are thankful you have in the collection.

Regardless of some problems found in this book, our library science programs would be at a loss without good primers of the profession such as Evans and Saponaro's *Developing Library and Information Center Collections*. We can further build upon our students' understanding of the field of collection development by supplementing their reading of this standard text with articles in emerging areas such as open access and institutional repositories, alternative information delivery systems, new kinds of e-resources, and new ways of doing resource analysis. The students can then go beyond our tried and true wisdom to explore interesting frontiers in the field of collection development, management, and access. Recommended for academic libraries with library science programs.—**Allan Scherlen, Collection Development Librarian for the Social Sciences, Appalachian State University, 218 College Street, P.O. Box 32026, Boone, NC 28608-2026 scherlnag@appstate.edu**.