

# Applying Library Values to Emerging Technology: Decision Making in the Age of Open Access, Maker Spaces and the Ever-changing Library

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## Abstract:

Review of Fernandez, P. D., & Tilton, K. (Eds.). (2018). *Applying library values to emerging technology: Decision making in the age of open access, maker spaces, and the ever-changing library*. Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries.

**Keywords:** *library values, technologies, social media, privacy, open access*



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This collection of articles are designed to tie the values of a library with the emerging technologies. It is important to recognize that neither the values nor the technologies are static but change with the needs of the community the library serves. This means that the examples provided may not work within another library but provides a launch pad for ideas to incorporate technology into another library.

The first essay, *The New Technocracy: Positioning Librarianship's Core Values in Relationship to Technology is a Much Taller Order Than We Think* by John Buschman, tries to outline the issues in incorporating technology though it quickly gets muddy. The notes are as long as the article itself which makes it extremely hard to follow. One of the biggest issues mentioned is privacy in the library, which is directly associated with technology. While a great deal of research is involved in this chapter, it would have been better to synthesize or perhaps chart the details to make it easier to understand the core values.

While the first half of the book is under the overall title of *Contemplating Library Values*, in general I found many of the articles about a specific technology and how they view the technology. Issues with specific technologies such as the Tor browser, Twitter, and others were discussed. Even if these specific technologies do not last long, the issues in terms of use, needs, training, privacy, and more are at the heart of this book. I was personally fascinated by Chapter 4 on *The Twitter Archive at the Library of Congress, Seven Years Later: Challenges for Supporting the Core Values of Librarianship* by Michael Zimmer. I did not remember the original announcement about archiving Twitter. And it was incredibly interesting to read about the rules and restrictions and issues with hosting a history of Twitter tweets. The *Journal of New Librarianship*, 4(2019) pp. 133-136 10.21173/newlibs/6/6

implications for the challenge of providing access to historical tweets while ensuring privacy reverberate throughout the Core Values of Librarianship.

David Orenstein writes in Chapter 9, *Information as an Essential Human Right: How the World Becomes Kinder and More Democratic When We Are All Informed*, “librarians and archivists are the gatekeepers to freedom and democracy because their very livelihoods depend on ensuring access to information and cultural history” (p. 144). He goes on to explore various censorship including in the higher education. I appreciate the list he provides at the end of positive examples of hope and open access. It is incumbent on each of us to maintain an ethical open access for society.

The second half of the book is entitled Applying Library Values. The focus is on privacy of the users and issues that arise with new technologies. Chapter 15, *Not All Information Wants to Be Free: The Case Study of On Our Backs* by Tara Robinson, is painful but necessary to read. In this chapter, Ms. Robinson shares personal information and very valid reasons to control digitization of all things. The fact that digitization takes away rights from people in original print material is horrifying. It reminds us that in the race to protect history and sources, the decisions made must meet ethical standards too.

This book is a compilation surrounding the ALA’s Core Values of Librarianship. What is missing, strangely enough, is the Core Values. Before reading this book, print out the Core Values at <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/corevalues>. Chapter 16, *Effective Technology Management: Importance of Policies and User Agreements to Advance and Sustain Emerging Technology Use in Libraries* by A. Miller, made me smile because the author *Journal of New Librarianship*, 4 (2019) pp. 133-136 10.21173/newlibs/6/6

claims that based on the Core Values, 'Access' is most important because it is at the top of the list. While that is true, the fact is that list of values is alphabetized. This article has a number of interesting statements including definitions of emerging technologies as those technologies new to a person – not necessarily new to the world. But it has a failed image of the Continuous Cycle Approach which merely shows arrows circling each other. The image adds no value to the article at all. However, the concept of doing a continuous review cycle is important. In general, the article provides an amazing array of resources, but a little more editing would have helped.

As a teacher-librarian, I carefully read Chapter 17, *Librarians as Leaders of Open Educational Practice* by L. Petrids, C. Jimes and A. Godwin. The problem is that everyone seems to want to codify what school librarians do. There have been all sorts of standards and frameworks and rubrics provided, each with the goal of highlighting the most important task of the school librarian. While I understand the need for using open educational resources (OER), creating a rubric and evaluation tool around it is taking the system too far. Instead, I recommend reviewing the 2017 American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Standards Framework that connects learners, school librarians and school librarian standards together in a practical manner (<https://standards.aasl.org/>).

Chapter 18, *Building Bridges with No Trolls: The Practice Ethics of Open Access Institutional Repositories and Digital Archives* by L. Kenderes and J. Morrissey, perhaps belongs closer to Chapter 15. This begins with an excellent description of the word “free” with easy to follow examples. The ethical considerations of “free” may require too many additional

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resources to implement. Open resources may be “free” initially but have hidden costs in terms of maintenance and also responsibilities by librarians. It costs to provide free access including physical and digital items along with equipment to access these items. The authors make an important point that smaller libraries are not really isolated in their smaller towns with limited budgets, but are a part of the larger library community. When they partner with other libraries, they can limit the “trolls,” which are “artificial obstacles that limit information access unnecessarily” (p. 290). Trolls can be licensing rules or limitations that are not technologically necessary but imposed from outside. One example is limiting an electronic book to only one reader at a time, despite the fact that technology can easily overcome this. Library partnerships help support each other in having open access and continuing to maintain it over time.

Overall, the book provides some thoughtful considerations of emerging technologies and how they affect libraries. Tying the technologies to the ALA Core Values allows librarians to explore the possibilities while maintaining their services.