



Rethinking Library Technical Services: Redefining Our Profession for the Future

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Will library technical services exist thirty years from now? If so, what do leading experts see as the direction of the field?

In this visionary look at the future of technical services, Mary Beth Weber, Head of Central Technical Services at Rutgers and editor of *Library Resources and Technical Services* (LRTS), the official journal of ALA's Association for Library Collections and Technical Services and one of the top peer-reviewed scholarly technical services journals has compiled a veritable who's who of the field to answer just these questions.

Experts including Amy K. Weiss, Sylvia Hall-Ellis, and Sherri L. Vellucci answer vital questions like:

- Is there a future for traditional cataloging, acquisitions, and technical services?
- How can librarians influence the outcome of vendor-provided resources such as e-books, licensing, records sets, and authority control?
- Will RDA live up to its promise?
- Are approval plans and subject profiles relics of the past?
- Is there a need to curate data through its lifecycle?
- What skills will be needed in the future in technical services jobs?

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Rethinking Library Technical Services: Redefining Our Profession for the Future From Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1949186 in eBooks
- Published on: 2015-04-09
- Released on: 2015-04-09
- Format: Kindle eBook



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Editorial Review

Review

The roller coaster of technology-driven change continues to challenge 21st-century librarians. Weber provides an overview of technical services and the impact electronic resources are having on this aspect of librarianship. Contributors are drawn from academic and public libraries to discuss technical services' contributions to the profession and suggest ways in which the often behind-the-scenes staff may continue to lead the way in developing user-friendly access to a growing variety of digital resources. Collaboration, refocusing, advocacy, and ongoing professional development are recurring themes for coping with profound transitions currently underway in resource management and data curation. Interviews of six practitioners address career advice, speculation about the Resource Description and Access (RDA) standard, and skills needed for technical services workers. This collection provides thoughtful, in-depth analyses of technical services, going beyond the basics provided by John Sandstrom's and Liz Miller's *Fundamentals of Technical Services*. While the climate of perpetual change may sometimes seem daunting, these experts attest to the rewards of engagement in rising to the challenge. VERDICT Recommended for administrators, technical services staff, and information technology faculty. (*Library Journal*)

Rethinking Library Technical Services is perfect for an analytical approach to technical services and would work well as a resource for an analysis or as the assigned text in a technical services course. (VOYA)

While each chapter centers on a different topic relating to technical services, they are all worth a read, and I would recommend this book to any technical services librarians whose positions are focused on a specific skill but who are looking to step outside of that skill. I also recommend the book to library directors interested in gaining a better understanding of technical services or who want to reconfigure the department to better fit the library's overall mission. . . . [T]he book offers good examples of what libraries have done with their technical services departments, conveys the truth of the statement 'that librarians [today], technical services librarians in particular, are standing on shifting sands,' and emphasizes that following old standards can be detrimental to the library as a whole. (*Law Library Journal*)

The authors are experienced librarians with a wide variety of specialties. The collection is a largely successful discussion of current and future trends, which concludes with interviews with working professionals discussing the skills necessary for technical services work in the future. . . . In addition to being a thorough review of the state of technical functions in academic libraries, the essays provide a good description of what these jobs will be like for library professionals and paraprofessionals. (*Technical Services Quarterly*)

Weber's *Rethinking Library Technical Services* is thoughtful and focused on the big picture, furnishing context and background that make for good understanding of its subject.... If you are reading to know where technical services is now and might be headed, Weber's book is... thorough....[This book] merit[s] a serious reader's attention. (*Technicalities*)

Rethinking Library Technical Services offers positive outlooks originating from the technical services profession itself. It provides an extensive and detailed picture of the current states of affairs and complex functions found in the many aspects of current technical services departments, but best of all it provides positive suggestions, and hopeful advocacy for the profession rather than dismal forecasts of doom, or continuing the folly of policies that blindly propose cutbacks and downsizing.... [T]his book is useful for

librarians in all types of libraries, and especially for students in library and information science considering a career in technical services. (*Library Resources & Technical Services (LRTS)*)

About the Author

Mary Beth Weber is the Head of Central Technical Services at Rutgers University. She began at Rutgers as the Special Formats Catalog Librarian, progressed to Head of Cataloging and Metadata Services, and assumed her current role when Acquisitions and Cataloging/Metadata Services merged. The department has undergone numerous changes under her leadership, including switching the library's primary monographs and approval vendor, instituting two patron driven acquisitions plans for e-books, establishing cross-functional virtual teams with other departments to coordinate the acquisition and cataloging of e-books and media.

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