

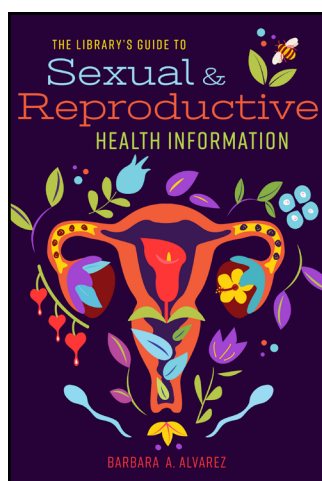
culture. Looking at the approach of Arte Programmata artists to information theory and cybernetic environments is an opportunity to think with them: how might they inspire us to design interfaces or service points differently?

In chapter 3, Caplan develops earlier threads on information theory, situating the Italian artists of Arte Programmata among examples of computer art from elsewhere in Europe and the United States. Caplan argues that Arte Programmata artists reacted negatively to the political implications and understanding of information espoused by other computer artists. Arte Programmata's work--and Caplan's interpretations of it--shine light on *information as system* as opposed to information as meaningful message or content. This distinction makes this book a wonderful complement to writings on information from other disciplines, such as Sianne Ngai's fascinating work on the aesthetic category of the interesting, read through the lens of the material forms of bureaucracy like documents in her book *Our Aesthetic Categories*. For librarians and archivists, mathematical information theory can feel removed from our everyday concerns, which often understand information as content--individual, meaningful messages. As Caplan writes, Arte Programmata's focus on information theory's description of "the conditions, possibilities, and limits of communication of any signal--that is, the situation as a whole...took the Italians to a unique place politically, since to them, the 'situation' included the relationships between people, the composition of their audience, and the networks and codes that connect them" (133). Such a sociotechnical lens on interaction is a complement to ideas about media, misinformation, and other salient topics that emerge from analysis of document and evidence-interested conceptual art.

In chapter 4, we see how the work of Arte Programmata artists inspired by information theory continued as they turned to design. A main point is that the Arte Programmata artists understood their position inside of social and political environments. They thought through not just how to oppose dominating systems such as capitalism, but also how to envision alternatives from within. This view prompts a library studies question: How can systems of constraint and control such as library catalogs be sites for change? Caplan offers the politics of form, which contrasts understanding of the political nature of artworks as "external referent, subject matter, or content" (5). Through form, she contends, we can "recognize the social nature of Arte Programmata's artistic experiments and how their interest in new media is correctly understood as a commitment to understanding people as both subjected to their environment and as agents capable of shaping it" (5). Like the works of Arte Programmata artists, the forms we generate as information professionals can be (and already are) analyzed for such political implications. Within discussions of inclusive and critical cataloging, the potential harms of authority control and the rigidity of our data structures are rightly problematized and contested. Caplan's idea that control and "programmed" environments might in some ways "enable and encourage subjective agency" is worth considering. — *Alexandra Provo, New York University*

The Library's Guide to Sexual & Reproductive Health Information. Barbara A. Alvarez. Chicago, IL: ALA Editions, 2023. 136p.

Barbara A. Alvarez's *The Library's Guide to Sexual & Reproductive Health Information* comes at a time when libraries across the United States are, quite literally, under attack for providing to our various patrons' materials and resources related to these issues. This handy resource offers strategies for meeting these information needs. The book is divided into three parts:



“Foundation,” “Education,” and “Implementation.” Though largely intended for public library workers, key concepts can be applied to a variety of library settings, including school and academic libraries.

Part 1 provides relevant background information on sexually transmitted infections, sexuality, contraception, etc. Chapter 1, “Introduction to Sexual and Reproductive Health,” offers crucial definitions of terms used throughout the book. For example, the author outlines the scope of sexual and reproductive health as “people [having] bodily autonomy, are empowered to make choices that are best for them, and are equipped with credible information, resources, and tools to make those choices” (4). This breakdown is simple yet useful, as it comprehensively lays out *this* author’s definition and interpretation so that it will not be misconstrued throughout the text.

In chapter 3, “Sexuality,” Alvarez offers basic, real-world tips for library workers who want to provide a more gender-inclusive environment for their patrons in a section titled “Gender Inclusivity at the Public Library.” Recommendations include refraining from exclusive “Mommy & Me”-type programs, instead opting for inclusive, general caregiver language. Alvarez also makes a case against requiring staff to include their pronouns in emails or lanyards, as some may feel unsafe doing so. Alvarez is persistent in noting the importance of keeping staff safe.

Alvarez tackles sexual health in the second section, “Education.” Diving into existing legislation targeting sex education in schools, the author boldly states that public library workers have “opportunities to fill in the gaps or to complement the existing curricula in our libraries’ school districts” (40). This isn’t new information for library workers, as I’m sure most of us have been tuned in to the news and have seen attacks on libraries for the materials we provide. However, Alvarez makes a point to include statistics on harmful “Don’t Say Gay” legislation, driving home the need for library workers to, at the very least, be aware of and remain informed about developments in their own states.

To this reviewer, the book would have been lacking if the author hadn’t included information on abortion. Dedicating several pages to this topic, Alvarez gives library workers an overview of the different types of abortion procedures. In addition, she provides statistics about abortion from organizations, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and the *Journal of Adolescent Health*. Alvarez notes that while library workers may hold various feelings and viewpoints about abortions, it is “necessary to provide comprehensive information about sexual and reproductive health, including abortion care” (61). Though this might be considered common sense, it is worth reiterating.

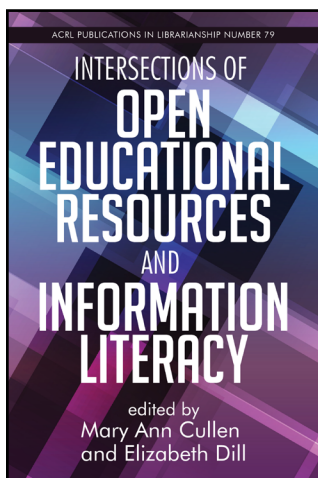
The final section, “Implementation,” gives real-world examples of ways library workers can incorporate themes at their own libraries. Alvarez breaks up the tips by topic: Reference, Collection Development, and Programs and Community Collaborations. The tutorials section can be applied to multiple library settings. Here, Alvarez reminds readers to ask themselves questions like “What do you wish that you had known about this topic?” and “What gaps do you see in the community or school curriculum, and how can a tutorial close those gaps?” when developing tutorials (95). Regarding sexual and reproductive health, tutorials can be extremely helpful, especially for patrons who are uncomfortable speaking to library staff about their inquiries.

There is also real value in the reflective questions Alvarez poses at the end of each chapter. These questions force the reader to think critically, not only about their own understanding of the various topics but how library workers might address patrons and their various sexual and reproductive health information needs. Among the best questions Alvarez asks readers are “What different types of community groups does your library serve?” and “How can you ensure that sexual and reproductive health resources are inclusive to those groups?” (27). While these questions are primarily posed to public library workers, academic librarians will also benefit from reflecting on the question in the context of their own institutions, brainstorming potential campus partnerships for resource sharing.

Not to be overlooked, the appendix serves almost as its own resource guide for readers. Organized by themes such as Sexual Pleasure and Consent and Reproductive Justice, Alvarez supplies readers with books, articles, and organizations, encouraging readers to go beyond this pivotal text.

Alvarez, a 2022 *Library Journal* Mover & Shaker award recipient, will continue to make waves with this timely volume. Serving as a resource guide sprinkled with applicable tips, her book does not shy away from diving into topics currently under fire in libraries. Librarians looking for a title that will challenge and expand their knowledge of sexual and reproductive health information should add *The Library's Guide to Sexual & Reproductive Health Information* to their to-be-read list. — *Jasmine Shumaker, University of Maryland, Baltimore County*

Intersections of Open Educational Resources and Information Literacy. Mary Ann Cullen and Elizabeth Dill, eds. Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries, 2002. 386p. Paper, \$112.00 (ISBN 978-0-8389-3673-3).



Open educational resources (OER), open pedagogy, and information literacy are increasingly important topics in academic libraries. This book connects these trends together in an approachable and inspiring volume that will be useful for both novices and those with years of experience. The book includes practical takeaways that can be implemented on a small scale, such as a one-shot library instruction session, or in larger projects that use open pedagogy in a semester-long course, or that advocate for OER use across campus.

The editors provide an excellent introduction and first chapter. Elizabeth Dill, Director of University Libraries at the University of Hartford, describes her personal experience as an “accidental OER practitioner.” She details her experience of teaching an introduction to theater course with very little advance notice or preparation. She used open pedagogical practices as well as OER texts to successfully engage her students. Mary Ann Cullen, Associate Department Head at Georgia State University’s Alpharetta Campus, also became involved with OER as a response to an immediate need on campus. She discusses her experience of volunteering to help with a campus-wide project to replace expensive course textbooks with OER. She not only helped faculty find OER but also advised on topics such as Creative Commons licenses and electronic publishing formats. These personal experiences frame a pragmatic and relevant approach to the subject matter. Chapter authors work in a wide variety of positions at institutions ranging from community colleges to research universities and