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**Book Review**

Li, Bin, [\*American libraries and the Internet: The social construction of Web appropriation and use\*](#). Published by [Cambria Press](#), Cambria Press, PO Box 350, Youngstown, NY 14174-0350. 2008, xviii, 295 p., Hardback ISBN 978-1-924043-87-5 \$ 109.95.

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One can hardly find any aspect of human life that has not been affected one way or another by the Internet. Most of the Internet's impact is because of the changes it has brought about in the areas of communication and availability of information. Facilitating information availability and information communication are among core activities of libraries.

Since the advent of the Internet, libraries have tried to adopt this technology and make the best of it for their services. The Internet has been considered by librarians both as a source of concern and as a gate to fascinating opportunities. It is of much interest to see how librarians have reacted to this technology in its early days and how they have perceived it and made effort to apply it in their libraries.

The book '*American Libraries and the Internet*' by Bin Li, a research-based book, aims to answer questions such as: how do librarians define their roles in the changing environment? How do they understand and appropriate the Web in their profession and workplace? How have they perceived the World Wide Web from its early period of its implementation? And finally how the Web is appropriated and used in libraries?

The book has seven chapters and two appendices. It technically presents a qualitative research study that has used content analysis techniques and the social construction of technology (SCOT) as a theoretical framework to answer the abovementioned questions. After a short introduction about the book and the study, the first chapter is an introduction to the Web, preferably from librarians' perspective. Chapter Two discusses SCOT, the theoretical model used in the study. The next chapter is on the research method and Chapter Four describes the Sample of the study which consists of journal articles and Listserv postings.

The next two chapters delineate the findings of the study. Chapter Five presents the findings of the study with regard to 'Perceptions of the Web' by librarians. It covers both positive perceptions includes the Web as a new technology, as a popular tool, as an information source, and as a communication tool; and negative perceptions such as the Web as a chaotic and unreliable source. Chapter Six discusses the relevant social groups identified in the study. The final chapter 'Conclusions' consists of an overview of the findings and implications of the study for the SCOT model; and it ends with some propositions for future research.

The book is valuable as it is based on a well-structured research study that has been enriched by the appropriate use of a suitable theoretical framework. The book is useful for those who are interested in the historical and social aspects of the application of new

technologies, specifically the Internet, in libraries. It is also a source of inspiration for graduate students and those librarians and information professionals who are interested in doing qualitative studies on the related subjects. The discussion sections added to the end of results chapters (chapters 4-6) have added value to the book. Research-based texts sometimes tend to be dense. However, the author of this book has succeeded in presenting a book which is an easy and informative read.

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