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CRAWFORD, John. *The culture of evaluation in library and information services.* **Oxford: Chandos Publishing. 2006.**
192 pages. ISBN 1 84334 101 8. £39.00.

This is a thought provoking book; it is definitely not a 'How to…' manual, but then it does not set out to be one. Rather, this book gives a timely review of evaluation within the library and information services context.

The initial chapters set out the background and give a potted history of evaluation within UK libraries. The historical examples highlight how evaluation has changed over time, with customer satisfaction gaining prominence. The reasons for evaluating services are drawn out from these examples and are explained in more detail in Chapter 2.

The third chapter is largely descriptive and gives an overview of the different quantitative and qualitative methods used in evaluation. Specific instruments such as LibQUAL and Public Libraries PLUS surveys are reviewed in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 discusses the evaluation of student satisfaction within higher education institutions and explores how library services are evaluated in this wider context. It goes on to describe examples of best practice in this area and discusses some of the implications of these wider programmes on library services. Recent research in evaluation of library and information services is reviewed in Chapter 6, giving examples both of practitioner-led research as well as research undertaken by research agencies.

The last two chapters discuss the future challenges of evaluation within library and information services. Chapter 7 discusses the evaluation of electronic services and the challenges that this new environment brings to the evaluation process. The final chapter discusses the impact of information literacy on library services and how this will necessitate a change in the way services are evaluated.

This book places evaluation in context within libraries, but also within the communities which they serve. It makes frequent reference to the published literature in this field and describes some of these projects to illustrate wider points. I found the concentration on evaluation within the academic library sphere a little frustrating although understandable given the author's background. I was left with a sense that evaluation has developed from a library-originated wish to improve services, to a wider expectation from society that services justify their expenditure and ultimately prove their worth to the communities they serve. This seems to me to be a fundamental change in the reason for evaluation which was not explored in the book and yet this cultural shift is of no small consequence to the library and information services community. That said, I would recommend this book to anyone who, like me, is new to evaluating services and would like a readable guide to gain a solid grounding in this important subject.

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