

Buschman, John E., and Leckie, Gloria J. *The Library as Place: History, Community, and Culture*. Connecticut: Libraries Unlimited, 2007. 260 p. \$50.00. (ISBN: 1-59158-382-9)

The Library as Place: History, Community, and Culture, is a collection of mostly accessible – and mostly readable – research essays about libraries as physical spaces that were submitted to *Library Quarterly* in 2003. The investigation of libraries as bricks-and-mortar places has been hot in academic circles since the rise of remote access by electronic means.

The essays most worthy of note discuss libraries of the past – from military libraries in the British Empire to the furnishing and design of “Social Libraries” in the period of 1800-1860 to the Greensboro Carnegie Negro Library, 1904-1964. English professor Ronald Tetreault writes that military libraries “offered an alternative to places of bad resort, and enforced norms of civility. Their club-like atmosphere and the recreational facilities commonly attached to them were a world away from the drinking, swearing, whoring, and gambling of the tavern and brothel.”

Especially insightful, and useful to public librarians, is the essay by information studies professor Paulette Rothbauer on spatial considerations – such as offering spaces that promote privacy – in regards to serving lesbian and gay patrons. And readers likely will be charmed by the final essay, “Going to Hell,” by assistant professor of English and American Studies Adriana Estill, who analyses the role of the library in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

Although all the essays were for peer-review, some clearly were written to be readable – and readable by a larger audience. These tended to limit research jargon and abbreviate descriptions intended solely for the academy. Other less-interesting essays, while describing worthwhile research, were penned by authors less concerned with appealing to audiences outside of the library profession.

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