Kellam, Lynda and Thompson, Kristi. (Eds.). (2017). **Databrarianship**. Association of College and Research Libraries.

Databrarianship takes on the monumental task of trying to capture the vast, woolly scope of data librarianship in North America. It features 22 chapters from 37 contributors, hailing from nearly as many institutions—ranging from small, liberal arts colleges to the largest universities in Canada and large, state college systems in the US. In this sense, *Databrarianship* provides a comprehensive snapshot of what it means to be a data librarian circa 2016. The book is divided into four unequal sections: "Data Support Services for Researchers and Learners," "Data in the Disciplines," "Data Preservation and Access," and "Data: Past, Present, and Future."

As a one-person data service at an academic library, I find *Databrarianship* most interesting and useful as a reference of case studies. For those of us whose workloads don't allow for the same degree of in-depth program development as many of these authors, there is enormous value in being able to read about and adapt others' programs for our own reuse. Adam Beauchamp and Christine Murray's "Teaching Foundational Data Skills in the Library" particularly stands out in this respect, describing and discussing three different approaches for teaching data literacy—a topic about which, they note, "library literature is strangely silent" (p. 83). Harrison Dekker and Paula Lackie's "Technical Data Skills for Reproducible Research" is likewise useful. One notes that these two chapters are designated CC BY-NC 2.0 and CC BY 4.0, respectively, by the authors.

Databrarianship is also a handy reference for the less common queries, whose answers we don't necessarily need to have memorized but should have at hand in the eventuality that they come up. In this category I would put chapters such as Jane Fry and Amber Leahey's "Metadata for Social Science Data: Collaborative Best Practices" and Elizabeth Rolando et al.'s "Exploring Disciplinary Metadata and Documentation Practices to Strengthen Data Archiving Services."

A third category of chapters I found useful I would term "good ideas"—inspiration for new projects and partnerships. In particular, Bobray Bordelon's "Data Reference: Strategies for Subject Librarians" raises the tantalizing prospect of a world in which data

reference isn't the domain of a single data specialist who serves all disciplines, but of all liaison and subject librarians. In my experience, there seems to be a strong current of numerophobia in non-data or -systems librarians, which is only exacerbated by having a specialist on hand to whom they may flip any question that smells remotely quantitative. Distributing basic data reference responsibilities among all subject and reference librarians would then allow a specialist data librarian to focus on more complex issues, such as data management, curation, and rescue.

The expansive scope of *Databrarianship* is both an asset and a liability. As all the chapters take the form of articles, each one could stand alone and provide valuable information on their given topics. Taken as a whole, however, there is a lot to take in, and it's hard to imagine that there's anyone for whom everything in the book would be relevant. For example, Samantha Guss's "A Studio Model for Academic Data Services" describes the development of a well-funded and well-staffed studio data service with a dedicated space at New York University, whereas, further away on the spectrum, Ryan Clement's "The Data Librarian in the Liberal Arts College" describes how data services might be distributed among cross-functional staff and librarians at a less well-resourced institution.

The first and third sections on data support services and on preservation and access are fairly well developed, enough so that *Databrarianship* would still be valuable if it only consisted of these two. Unfortunately, the third section "Data in the Disciplines" is disappointingly scant and redundant to some of the content in the other sections. It also, in my opinion, misses the opportunity to take a deeper dive into disciplinary differences in data services (which could, admittedly, take up a whole book). Two chapters on Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) are inadequate to cover this huge field, which is less a scholarly discipline than a type of data and an approach which has multidisciplinary implications. GIS is often treated as distinct from, though overlapping with, data librarianship, and has also engendered its own substantial literature. The other two chapters in the section, on qualitative data and science data, might better belong to the section on data services.

The book lacks content synthesizing or summarizing the various strands in all the chapters, so it wouldn't, say, be useful for non-data librarian administrators trying to get a grasp on what data librarianship entails or how to support data services—although waving the book in front of them may well convince them that we can and *do* do a lot, details aside.

Databrarianship may be of interest to instructors and students in LIS programs to help explore the variegated world of data librarianship, although it isn't a textbook on the topic per se, and doesn't attempt to address the question of how one should do data librarianship. However, certain overview chapters such as Hailey Mooney's "Scholarly Communication and Data" and Elizabeth Hill and Vincent Gray's "The Academic Data Librarian Profession in Canada: History and Future Directions" would help LIS students and prospective data librarians understand some key issues at stake in this microcosm

of librarianship. LIS instructors may be interested to note that several chapters are reproducible under different forms of Creative Commons license.

However, *Databrarianship* is highly recommended to practicing data librarians, especially those who work in relative isolation, for the valuable information it shares on others' practices.

Tomasz Mrozewski
Assistant Librarian
Data, GIS, and Government Documents
Laurentian University Library & Archives
tmrozewski@laurentian.ca