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Book Review

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Chan, L. et al 2002. *Budapest Open Access Initiative.* New York: Open Society Institute. Available at: http://www.soros.org/openaccess/read.shtml [Retrieved 22 January 2007].

Woodward, H. and Estelle, L. eds. 2010. Digital information : order or anarchy? London : Facet Publishing. 208 pp. ISBN.978-1-85604-680-0 £44.95. Hbk.

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The current recession makes this book extremely topical. At first sight, it might appear that this might have all been said before. Indeed I expect it has, but seldom in such a condensed form and never at such a likely crunch time. Libraries are fearing for their existence; librarians are searching for a role; financial cutbacks are in the offing and no-one quite knows where it is all going. So is this book going to tell you?

The distinguished editors, Hazel Woodward (University Librarian, Cranfield University) and Lorraine Estelle (Chief Executive, JISC Collections) have assembled a formidable small team of contributors. They have chosen to approach the digital revolution from the point of view of: the library; the journal publisher; e-books; digitising the past; resource discovery systems; and copyright in the digital environment. It provides a good summary of the major issues "for all library and information professionals, as well as for researchers and library students", and would also be useful for academic publishers who want to predict the future.

The first chapter, written by the editors, provides an excellent overview of the digital information landscape, which could almost stand on its own. Rick Anderson (University of Utah) charts the two major crises for the library: searching and finding, where Google has "effectively taken over the document-finding role from libraries"; and the crisis of collection with Google digitising massively and creating Google Book Search. The publishers' big problem is the huge price crisis, which may come to a head with the world recession. Ian Russell (Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers) sketches the various options for scholarly communication, and believes that whatever happens it will be orderly. Colin Steele (Emeritus Fellow, Australian National University) considers the place of e-books in scholarly communication. I was particularly interested in the Espresso Book Machine, until a quick Google Image search revealed its size and profile as more akin to an old mainframe computer! Alastair Dunning (Digitisation Programme Manager, JISC) describes the dramatic successes of the JISC digitisation projects and the barriers that often prevent digital content from being visible or fully utilised. Graham Stone (Electronic Resources Manager, University of Huddersfield) covers the way libraries have developed their resource discovery systems by managing and exposing their data in trying to wean users from Google. Finally, Wilma Mossink (SURF Foundation) and Lorraine Estelle consider copyright and, in particular, the crucial issues around open content.

This is all fine as far as it goes, but the elephant in the room with this treatment seems to me to be the users and their expectations. While this does keep creeping into the chapters I would have preferred a focused chapter on what the various users think about digitisation. This would have given a more balanced picture of the present and led to consideration of issues around information literacy in the digital world. The book would also have been enlivened by more about anarchy, with a suitable author taking a radical look at what digitisation could mean for us all, and ignoring all the sacred cows around libraries, publishers, and copyright. I wonder if we shall be publishing and reading books like this in five years time?

On balance, this is a good summary of where we are now, and the book's great strength is that it has stimulated me to look again at the issues. It may do the same for you.