Book Review
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Craven, J. (ed.) 2008. *Web Accessibility: practical advice for the library and information professional.* London: Facet Publishing. 168pp ISBN: 978-1-85604-625-1. £39.95

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Web accessibility is an area that anyone involved with the creation of web content knows is of vital importance as both a legal requirement and - as mentioned on the back cover of this book - a moral duty. As more and more of our resources are moving online, ensuring that they can be used by everyone is a challenge that an increasing number of library and information professional staff are facing. The official guidelines from the Web Accessibility Initiative can be bewilderingly complicated and inaccessible (in their language!) to those without a technical background in web design. This book helps to de-mystify the issues that surround web accessibility at a number of levels and provides practical guidance on how to make it work in our libraries.

This is a relatively slim volume but packs in a lot of information. The list of contributors is very impressive, including some of the most renowned experts in web accessibility and design. There are comprehensive bibliographies for each chapter, together with lists of web resources that illustrate the points and examples given in the text.

There are a number of main themes which emerge. The first five chapters cover the broad theme of how to widen access through technology and accessible design and the factors that influence this. Some particular highlights are in Chapter 3 where Simon Ball discusses the challenges of the "Design for all" concept and, Chapter 4 in which David Sloan emphasises the importance of institutional buy-in and the dangers of reliance of an individual "access champion" - an important area to bring to managers' attention!

Chapter 6 looks at the importance of evaluating accessibility and the value of a hybrid approach to assessing a site's accessibility, which is then used to help make the necessary changes happen.

Chapters 7, 8 and 9 shift the emphasis from web accessibility principles in general to provide specific guidance for library and information professional staff. Peter Brophy suggests a useful seven-step strategy towards developing a web presence which is as accessible as possible. Chapter 8 explores how these issues could be incorporated within the curriculum of LIS courses and Jenny Craven brings together some excellent examples of best practice in Chapter 9.

Finally, Brian Kelly provides a view of the future and suggests new ways of looking at accessibility to ensure a more holistic approach, and how new emerging guidelines will help to ensure that accessibility is addressed in a Library 2.0 environment.

Although this book could be dipped into, there is a benefit in reading it in full to get an overall picture of web accessibility, particularly if this is a new area for you. If you take this approach you may appreciate that the whole book is particularly cohesive for a multi-author book; the individual chapters link and flow together very well, often referencing another chapter at appropriate points. Jenny Craven is to be congratulated for the excellent job she has done as an editor in bringing this book together, as well as for the valuable chapters she has contributed.

This book really does live up to its title and provides sound practical advice, much of which can be implemented by those of us involved in making content available through the web. Following

the guidance given should lead to an overall improvement in the quality of our websites, not just for those visitors who are disabled, but for all users. A copy should be on the desk of everyone involved in making resources available on the web, but there is also important information for managers, so if you get hold of this book then try to make sure that your manager gets to see it as well!