



Pop Goes the Library: Using Pop Culture to Connect With Your Whole Community

Sophie Brookover and Elizabeth Burns. Medford, NJ: Information Today, 2008. 298 pp. ISBN: 978-1-57387-336-9. \$39.50.

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Brookover and Burns are the masterminds behind the Pop Goes the Library website <<http://www.popgoesthelibrary.com/>>. As the subtitle suggests, the purpose of this book is to provide resources, background, and ideas for incorporating pop culture into your library's collections, programs, and services. The primary audience is public and school librarians, but academic librarians will also find ideas they can employ. The book begins with a discussion of pop culture, defining what it is and is not. As the authors suggest, depending on the definition employed, pop culture can be a very large tent indeed. The opening chapter goes on to justify why pop culture is important to libraries and how it can be a successful means of reaching out to the user community by maintaining relevance and excitement. The remaining chapters cover a complete range of nuts-and-bolts topics, including conducting user surveys about pop culture interests, building collections, marketing the library, keeping up with (and anticipating) popular trends, using new technologies to stay current with your users, and tips on creating programming that "pops." Examples used throughout the book cover television, movies, sports, music, comic books, video games, and more. Although these examples seem to emphasize children and young-adult interests, many programming ideas can work for adult patrons as well. As the authors point out, popular trends can be geared toward any age group, including seniors. Specific examples of such all-ages topics include cooking, hunting, fishing, travel, and needlework.

In addition to its highly practical approach, the book utilizes three features that readers will find helpful: core resources, including magazines, websites, books, and articles; a year-round events calendar with thematic suggestions for pop culture tie-ins; and, at the end of every chapter, comments and suggestions from readers of the website, including ideas for specific events and programs. Personally, I found the reader comments tended toward overkill, with many responses that were repetitive. But such honest feedback helps to relate the book's suggestions to real-world constraints and to emphasize the methods that readers found most useful. The authors should be commended for including many comments from readers who said they didn't have time to undertake ideal textbook methods.

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