Title
Review -- **Linked Data for the Perplexed Librarian** by Scott Carlson, Cory Lampert, Darnelle Melvin and Anne Washington

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Linked Data for the Perplexed Librarian by Scott Carlson, Cory Lampert, Darnelle Melvin and Anne Washington. Chicago: ALA Editions, 2020, 164 pp., ISBN: 978-0-8389-4746-3, $59.99. An ALCTS Monograph.

The new *Linked Data for the Perplexed Librarian* succeeds in demonstrating the strength and potential of linked data without overwhelming the reader with technical jargon or confusingly out of touch examples. While starting with the stated aim of this book to 'smash the myth' "that linked data is too complex for nontechnical GLAM audiences to understand" and acknowledging that it "inevitably becomes increasingly technical as it wears on," this monograph is aimed at the general Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums audience.

Written in a clear and easy-to-read conversational tone, which makes it accessible to librarians, perplexed and otherwise. One of the strengths of this approach is that the authors can contrast the way they discuss linked data with the "constant conference presentations and theoretical journal articles" that many readers—including this reviewer—will have experienced. The authors have chosen to have the book introduce progressively more complex concepts relating to linked data, helpfully using the same example throughout: the musician George Clinton and the musical acts with which he was associated. There are many strengths of this book—it is a clear, concise and comprehensible discussion of linked data—one unexpected consequence for me was the appearance of the Funkadelics on my Spotify playlists!

The work is arranged in 7 chapters, presenting the origins of linked data; background information such as MARC and RDF; URIs and serializations; ontologies and linked data; then outlining some real-world examples of linked data; demonstrating linked data within libraries; and finally offering some realistic linked data projects for librarians to engage with. There is a useful index, glossary and bibliography.

This is not a book that aims to be a complete user's manual for the linked data professional (as the authors note, it is uncertain exactly what a linked data professional looks like) but it is exactly what the title says: a guide for librarians who have attended conference presentations, read journal articles and attended webinars, but remain perplexed. It is successful in that it makes the topic approachable and comprehensible. The many diagrams throughout, demonstrating relationships, as well as snippets of code, are crucial to the text and help to transform those 'perplexed librarians' of the title into calm and well-prepared data professionals.

One of the strengths of this book, and one that I think will resonate with many of its readers, is that it doesn't pretend to provide an easy roadmap demonstrating where linked data is going. Rather, it is clear and upfront about the struggles currently facing library data (clearly stating that while MARC is not dying, broken or in need of repair, it also has difficulty expressing complex relationships, for instance) and clear about the uncertain future. The section on BIBFRAME is mercifully short, perhaps recognizing that

a second subject of 'constant conference presentations and theoretical journal articles' might be too much for this book.

The four librarians who wrote this book are all experts in the field: software developers; digital collections professionals; and metadata librarians. Throughout, they speak with one voice, with none of the abrupt changes in writing style that can befall books written by a relatively large team. The authors achieve their goal of producing a work that would be useful for any GLAM professional who wants to know how linked data might impact their profession, while also providing a variety of opportunities to start engaging with linked data themselves.

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