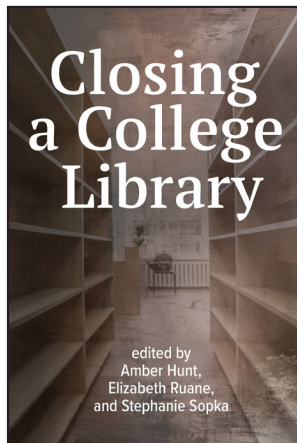


Reviewers of previous editions have hailed this book as essential reading, and it is evident why. This masterful guide seamlessly blends the art and science of building design, planning, and maintenance, offering invaluable insights for both novices and seasoned professionals. It is a must-have for any library planning a new building or considering a renovation. — *Marie Daum, Kennesaw State University Libraries*

Closing a College Library, Amber Hunt, Elizabeth Ruane, & Stephanie Sopka (eds.), Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries, 2024. 116p. eBook, \$32. 9798892556064.



For most, permanently closing and dismantling a library is inconceivable; libraries are seemingly timeless institutions. The public assumes that these beloved knowledge centers will always be there for them. Likewise, academic librarians, until recently, almost never had to consider the possibility of closure, much less factor that grim scenario in their planning and forecasting. As the growing number of defunct colleges and universities over the past decade demonstrates, however, library closures are now a viable concern in the profession. More than a tragic outcome of the strong headwinds disrupting contemporary higher education, library closures pose unique logistical challenges for practitioners ill-prepared to confront them. *Closing a College Library* provides a timely resource for those impacted by this unfortunate emerging trend.

In this sobering but brief volume, contributors discuss their experiences with shuttering libraries at private nonprofit institutions that either merged with another or ceased operations altogether. Featured libraries include those that served Concordia University-Portland (Oregon), Marlboro College (Vermont), Marylhurst University (Oregon), and Robert Morris University (Illinois). Collectively, the authors draw from their varied experiences to offer strategies and advice, warn against potential pitfalls, and prepare readers for the emotionally fraught labor that closing and dismantling an academic library involves.

While affected practitioners of all job titles will find *Closing a College Library* insightful, the book is indispensable for those whose responsibilities include administration, collection management, electronic resources, special collections, access services, or institutional repositories. Interested readers should pay close attention to the unique considerations the authors raise concerning a library's legal obligations when lawsuits are filed against its institution; decommissioning interlibrary loan services; transferring physical and electronic resources to other institutions; withdrawing from consortia; and creating documentation about the facility for its next owners/occupants. Written by librarians for librarians, a closure "to-do list," sample deed of gift, and other practical documents are appropriately included as appendices for convenient retrieval.

Though *Closing a College Library* is a preliminary handbook, it is a significant contribution to the field. When they required guidance for their own closure, the editors discovered that information on the topic was scarce. Recognizing a need, the authors have produced this timely addition to the library science literature. More than merely addressing a gap, however, this work ultimately equips other practitioners with an essential resource. The authors state: "We have tried to take our collective misfortune and turn it into something useful, something that will help librarians do the best they can with this most unenviable

task" (p. vi). The authors are to be commended for their willingness to revisit a personally and professionally distressing chapter of their lives for the sake of supporting others. Because of their efforts, practitioners now have a conscientious resource they can consult and adapt to their own circumstances.

Regrettably, the four institutions featured in this book are not unique. From 2016 to 2024, over 100 colleges and universities merged or closed.¹ Nor is this disturbing development over. According to the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, as many as 80 institutions may close their doors from 2025 to 2029.² In this age of contraction, academic librarians should not assume that the unthinkable will never happen to them. For better or worse, *Closing a College Library* will be a relevant resource for years to come as more higher education institutions fall victim to the looming demographic cliff. — A. Blake Denton, *University of Southern Mississippi*

Notes

1. Higher Ed Dive. (2024, December 5). *A look at trends in college consolidation since 2016*. <https://www.highereddiver.com/news/how-many-colleges-and-universities-have-closed-since-2016/539379/>

2. Kelchen, R., Ritter, D., & Webber, D. (2024). *Predicting college closures and financial distress*. Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia. <https://doi.org/10.21799/frbp.wp.2024.20>

Building Representative Community Archives: Inclusive Strategies in Practice. Hannah Leah Crummé, ed., ALA Neal-Schuman, 2024, 288 p. Softcover, \$64.99. 9780838939598



In 2017, the Watzek Library Special Collections began the work of building relationships with the Vietnamese community in Portland, Oregon to address a historical gap in the records housed in their collections. Renowned for its extensive collection of books related to the Lewis and Clark expedition, it became apparent to the Special Collections team that the collection did not fully represent Portland's history or diverse population (39). Thus began a nearly decade-long project led by Hannah Leah Crummé, the current Head of Watzek Library Special Collections, alongside Dr E.J. Carter, Zoë Maughan, and Vân Truong, to document the experiences of Vietnamese immigrants and refugees whose presence in Oregon has been steadily growing since the 1970s (40). With a wealth of experience grounded in the creation and maintenance of community archives, as outlined in the third chapter of the

edited volume, Crummé has assembled ten chapters of case studies and practical knowledge from different contributors who recount their experiences working with or building community archives. The edited volume is designed to provide archives and special collections with workable and innovative frameworks for improving their collections, procedures, and community relationships by addressing disparities in their holdings.

Crummé begins *Building Representative Community Archives: Inclusive Strategies in Practice* by arguing that "although history is often written by those in power, records are kept by everyone" (xi). Archives have historically prioritized the collection and preservation of records that present a whitewashed perspective of history while failing to accurately document the experiences of marginalized communities who are often excluded from the Western colonial narrative. Crummé points out that the need for this work now "is the result of earlier failures to examine our own approaches with a critical eye" (xxii). The broad range of institutions included in this volume that are grappling with these necessary and sometimes challenging