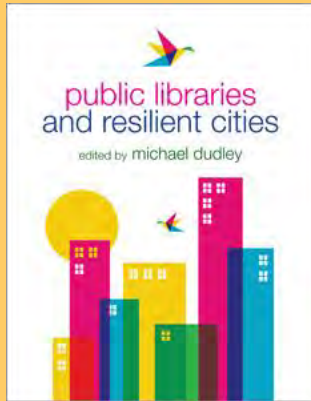


# Book Reviews



**Dudley, M. ed.**  
***Public Libraries and Resilient Cities.***  
**Chicago: American Libraries Association, 2013.**  
**ISBN: 978-0-8389-1136-5**  
**\$65.**  
**Reviewed by Barbie Keiser**

Public libraries contribute to a city's diversity, adaptability, and learning capacity," reaffirming the notion of 'library as place,' though each constituency may provide a different meaning to the phrase and expectation of the concept. This collection of essays presents 14 ways in which the public library can play a central role in urban planning for sustainable, resilient communities "providing new context for its contribution" (p. ix).

In Chapter 1, editor Michael Dudley reviews "some of the major trends facing urban contemporary societies and their libraries." In his estimation, the library has become "a symbol of the town's resilience," through its Facebook page, Flickr account, and innovative programming. Public libraries continue to change. Their resiliency lies in their adaptive qualities, providing new service and playing "a leading role in bolstering urban resiliency" (p. 2). Dudley sees the library as "a fundamental component of the public realm" fostering "a community's learning capacity... (forging) new connections between social actors," particularly when it comes to "acculturation and education of low income groups who suffer economic deprivation because of functional illiteracy" (p. 14-15). "The ability of public libraries to address the needs of diverse urban users is inherent in its structure" reaffirming the fact "that we are all members of a larger society to which and for which we have responsibilities," including being

front and center in the community planning process (p. 16). Ultimately, we must see the library less as a container of books, videos, etc., acting more a magnet for users.

In Chapter 2, Dr. Glen Holt explores the ways in which libraries contribute to urban resiliency. "Intentionality," he says, "is the imperative when libraries set out to play a significant role in the lives of their communities" (p. 21). Librarians must talk to users – find out what they want, but Holt identifies five ways in which most can contribute to the resiliency of its communities during economic downturns: providing construction jobs in bad economic times building new libraries with public money; helping people find jobs; improving English literacy skills of children and adults; assisting people access government information and assistance (e-government); and helping the poor. The chapter closes with 14 rules for library contributions to urban resiliency.

Jennifer Hoyer addresses how libraries serve those in the community threatened with exclusion based on "ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, physical or mental disability, education, employment, and economic status" (p. 57). Strategies for tackling social exclusion, remaining a Library4All makes for stronger libraries and communities.

Chapter 4 presents the story of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, followed by Murphy and Clark's implementation of Holt's roadmap to success in Long Island City, through needs assessment, lifelong learning, combining customer service with social service, and evaluation and assessment.

In "Making sustainable choices at Winnipeg Public Library" (Chapter 6), Monique Woroniak illustrates the need for outreach services to immigrant and Aboriginal populations, and provides by being "user driven" as opposed to "user focused." Chapter 7 highlights "Creative partnerships in Massachusetts," and Mary Wilkins Jordon discusses green libraries in Chapter 8, "Public Library Gardens." Chapter 9

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presents the importance of public libraries and local government partnerships.”

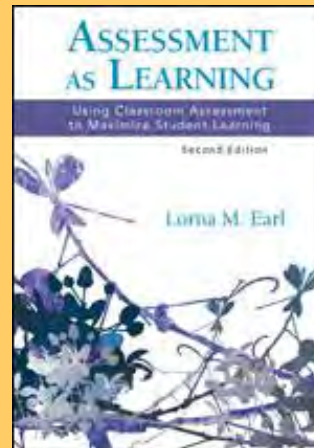
In Chapter 10, Maja Berndison speaks of the library as place, striving to answer three questions (p. 121):

1. What is the role of the library in these models and strategies for urban and cultural planning?
2. What is the role of public libraries in different strategies of culture-led regeneration?
3. How do these tendencies challenge the design, the concept, and the mission of the public library?

Chapter 11 recounts how the Houston Public Library responded to the devastation of Hurricane Ike in 2008.

A community participatory/collaborative model for library planning in the wake of an economic crisis, libraries and climate change, and “engaging communities” closes out this powerful research-packed study that is a must-read for all public library directors and urban planners.

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**Earl, Lorna M.,**  
*Assessment as Learning: Using Classroom Assessment to Maximize Student Learning, Second edition,*  
Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2013.  
ISBN: 781452242972,  
pbk. \$31.95  
Reviewed By Anna Maire Guengerich

In this second edition of her 2003 bestseller book, author Lorna Earl thoroughly explains the differences between assessment *of* learning, *for* learning, and *as* learning, and offers well-researched reasoning for a renewed focus on assessment as learning. She specifically cites the great amount of research in the field of human learning processes since the first edition. While the author recounts classroom situations that illustrate the concepts she presents, the book is not meant to be a step-by-step guide. Rather, it asks crucial questions about learning, and can empower teachers to reclaim formative assessment that happens every day in their classrooms. The layout is reader-friendly, with highlighted boxes of quotes from experts and the author’s assumptions, helpful figures and tables, and an “Ideas for Follow Up” section for educators at the end of each chapter as they begin to consider a shift in their own thinking about assessment as learning.

In her introductory chapter, Earl explains her professional background as an education professor, consultant, and international researcher of learning and assessment. Research continues to show that formative assessment *done well* can produce phenomenal gains in student success, but “people still don’t get it.” This kind of formative assessment means that deeply rooted ideas about thinking and learning will be challenged. Educators who understand the relationship between teaching and assessment as learning can, in turn, help their students “get it” – whatever the subject might be.

The next several chapters include essential background material. The author provides a brief but informative history of how education, schools, and assessment have evolved in a social context, throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century until today's emphasis on large-scale reform that is driven by national and state policy. Chapter three specifically speaks to the characteristics of assessment of learning, for learning, and as learning. Summative assessment of learning is the most familiar; it categorizes (think test scores and grades) and compares in relation to other students or standards.

Formative assessment *for* learning includes regular descriptive feedback from the teacher rather than a grade only, and can directly help the teacher adjust instruction. Assessment as learning is also formative but with students taking an active role in self-monitoring what they do and do not understand, and then knowing how to determine the next steps to move forward in their learning journey. While all three types of assessment have a place and purpose, Earl contends if authentic learning for students is the goal, assessment as learning must receive a greater focus.

Chapters four and five continue to present fundamental concepts in understanding the power of assessment. Earl provides clarity for complex ideas, such as experts and novices, motivation, and Csíkszentmihályi's flow theory. She also explores the ideas, theory, and research that reinforce the importance of assessment as an integral part of the learning process itself.

With this sound foundation now established, the last half of the book puts theory into practice, and describes the significant uses of classroom assessment: to find out what students believe is true, to motivate learning, to make connections, to extend learning, and for reflection and self-regulation. Earl illustrates her points effectively by drawing on classroom assignments, standards, student work, and rubrics.

She shows that the first step in learning is to assess what misconceptions or knowledge gaps students have. From this diagnostic assessment, the teacher

can then address the gaps, allowing students to adapt to new information. When a teacher provides thoughtful responses, the student feels supported to move forward. Motivation increases when mistakes and obstacles are treated as regular parts of learning.

Earl asserts that another step in learning is finding patterns and organizing new knowledge, rather than just accumulating random details. Assessment practices that include descriptive feedback and the different stages of model work help students understand where they are and what the learning targets are. As students gain confidence in self-assessing, they can begin to take control of their own learning and monitor their own work. They are able to think about their own thinking and knowledge, and can see that effort leads to learning.

In conclusion, I recommend this book as a thought-provoking piece for all educators, at any stage of their career. As I was reading, memories of all the test scores, grades, and report cards of my own school years came to mind, making Earl's book even more compelling. Throughout her book, Earl takes the reader on a learning journey, just like the one she describes for students. She acknowledges from the start that our ideas about learning and assessment practices are deeply ingrained, but reading this book is a first step in making a critical change for both educators and students to embrace authentic, life-long learning.

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