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Pathways to nursing: a guide to library and online research for nursing and allied health (Book Review)

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Pathways to nursing: a guide to library and online research for nursing and allied health. Tucker, Dennis C., and Craig, Paula. *Medford, NJ: Information Today, 2004. 120p. ISBN 1-57387-192-3. \$24.95.*

A good choice of title provided a basis for high expectations for this book. A book that addresses the library research needs of nurses has been sorely needed for many years. This reviewer found that this book appeared to be written from the bias of a public library perspective. A guide specifically dedicated to nurses, at a minimum, needs to urge them to seek out the best medical and/or nursing libraries in their geographic locale. The chapter, "The Library as a Physical Space," describes a generic-type space with no delineation between public, academic, or health science libraries. In the description of each department, there was a definite bias towards the reference librarian being the most educated and best prepared librarian. No professional positions were described in the library's circulation and technical services departments. The technical services department was essentially described as a place where book orders are received and processed. There was no mention of professional responsibilities in today's health sciences library, such as contract negotiations for electronic resources, collection development, outreach, cataloging, or instructional sessions provided to patrons. If an author takes the time to educate nurses, they need to market the fact that librarians are professionals and that librarians provide assets other than physical space. The descriptions included in this work are a disservice to the nurses and allied health professionals who will read this book and an affront to professional librarians who provide creative ideas and implement unique solutions to organizing health science knowledge. The book emphasized paper resources, including the card catalog, and very little was mentioned about online journals which are used heavily in most health sciences libraries. PubMed and CINAHL databases received minimal description in the text. Information about humanities resources occupied space that would have been better used listing the health sciences databases that nurses actually use in their busy, pressure-packed schedules. A section devoted to learning to use these key databases would have been ideal as that is what medical librarians can uniquely provide to nurses. This interesting title proved to be misleading. Not recommended for nursing or allied health professionals and students.