



Postcards in the Library: Invaluable Visual Resources (Monograph Published Simultaneously As Popular Culture in Libraries , Vol 3, No 2)

Norman D Stevens

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Postcards, individually and collectively, contain a great deal of information that can be of real value to students and researchers. Postcards in the Library gives compelling reasons why libraries should take a far more active and serious interest in establishing and maintaining postcard collections and in encouraging the use of these collections. It explains the nature and accessibility of existing postcard collections; techniques for acquiring, arranging, preserving, and handling collections; and ways to make researchers and patrons aware of these collections. Postcards in the Library asserts that, in most cases, existing postcard collections are a vastly underutilized scholarly resource. Editor Norman D. Stevens urges librarians to help change this since postcards, as items for mass consumption and often with no apparent conscious literary or social purpose, are a true reflection of the society in which they were produced. Stevens claims that messages written on postcards may also reveal a great deal about individual and/or societal attitudes and ideas. Chapters in Postcards in the Library are written by librarians who manage postcard collections, postcard collectors, and researchers. Some of the authors have undertaken major research projects that demonstrate the ways in which postcards can be used in research, and that have begun to establish a standard methodology for the analysis of postcards. They write about:

- major postcard collections, including the Institute of Deltiology and the Curt Teich Postcard Archives
- the use of postcards for scholarly research
- postcard conservation and preservation, arrangement and organization, and importance and value Postcards in the Library describes the postcard collections in a variety of libraries of different kinds and sizes and indicates very real ways in which the effective use of postcard collections can result in and contribute to substantive, scholarly publications. It also offers advice and suggestions on the myriad issues that libraries face in handling these ephemeral fragments of popular culture. Special collections librarians, postcard collectors, postcard dealers, and historical societies will find the information in Postcards in the Library refreshing and practical. Libraries with established postcard collections or those thinking about developing postcard collections will use it as a valuable planning tool and start-to-finish guide.

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