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## Knitting the Semantic Web (review)

Knitting the Semantic Web

By Jane Greenberg and Eva Méndez, editors

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Reviewed by:

Karlen Chase

SUNY University at Buffalo

Graduate School of Education

Department of Library and Information Studies

Buffalo, NY, United States

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### Review

Information scientists and librarians alike often refer to the semantic Web, touting its utopian qualities, its ability to provide equitable access to the world's information, but what is the semantic Web exactly? It often is the victim of "semantic" overselling, obscured by an idealistic pitch.

In *Knitting the Semantic Web*, editors Greenberg and Méndez have assembled essays that elucidate this intangible concept. They have divided the book into two sections: (1) articles about various semantic Web tools, such as Resource Description Framework (RDF), standardized ontologies, and Simple Knowledge Organization (SKOS); and (2) examples of current and possible semantic Web projects that include applications in physics, medicine, and libraries.

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Since many of the tables and figures throughout present models as opposed to quantitative data, the articles featuring RDF, SKOS, XML, and physics offer stronger, more concrete explanations for what the semantic Web can do for human-computer interactivity than the articles written by those with less technical backgrounds. However, it is this range of the authors' educational and professional backgrounds that contributes to widening the audience of the book. Indeed, the library student interested in evolving cataloging trends, the computer scientist on the cutting edge of standardizing Web languages, and the librarian eager to understand what the semantic Web can do will all find relevant material in this book.

The work of Tim Berners-Lee is frequently cited in the majority of the essays, and the book includes extensive bibliographic references and an index. Readers should be aware that *Knitting the Semantic Web* was also published as an issue of *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* (Vol.43 No.3/4). Despite the distraction of several sentence-level errors that managed to slip past the editors and Haworth Press's plugs for their document delivery service that appear on the first page of every article, the book does an excellent job of clarifying how the semantic Web can facilitate both humans' access to information and computers' abilities to communicate and automate information tasks.

## Reviewer's Bio

Karlen Chase is completing her last semester in the MLS program at the [University at Buffalo](#), where she works as an assistant in the [Special Collections/Poetry Collection](#). She received her MFA in writing from [Vermont College](#). Her primary interests are cataloging, reference, and integrating creative writing and librarianship.

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