

Recent Publications

BOOK REVIEWS

Cooperative Resources Development: A Report on a Shared Acquisitions and Retention System for METRO Libraries. Faye Simkin. New York: New York Metropolitan Reference & Research Library Agency, 1970. 64p.

Library cooperation, though universally acclaimed as a desirable goal in theory, has often been difficult to put into actual practice. It is heartening, therefore, to have brought to our attention a report on cooperative development of resources conducted by the New York Metropolitan Reference and Research Library Agency (METRO) as part of the statewide 3 R's program. SHARES (an acronym for Shared Acquisitions and Retention System) is a METRO program that seeks to test two closely related concepts: shared acquisitions and joint storage of library materials.

The report under review begins by tracing the early steps taken by METRO to develop shared acquisition techniques through studies made by Hendrik Edelman and Eugene Boice. Edelman's earlier recommendations form the basis for many of the ideas contained in this report.

For purposes of experiment, the Ad Hoc Committee on SHARES selected five types of materials in which shared acquisition projects might be attempted. The following were included: (1) college catalogs; (2) U.S. government documents; (3) American doctoral dissertations on microfilm; (4) serials indexed in the H. W. Wilson company indexes; and (5) monographs analyzed in the *Essay and General Literature Index*. The report describes the procedures, problems, and some of the solutions devised in trying to develop viable shared acquisition programs in these five areas.

However, not enough time has elapsed to make a definitive evaluation of these five projects. The author of the report believes, therefore, that SHARES will need at least another year to test and evaluate the ongoing projects, to assess financial implications, and to determine whether the steps taken have been correct.

In the area of shared retention and storage, the author feels that careful consideration must be given to methods of linking METRO with the Center for Research Libraries in Chicago and the Medical Library Center in New York. If SHARES were to launch an independent retention program, Simkin insists that it must develop as a complement to the Center for Research Libraries and should not attempt to do locally what is now being performed effectively on a national level. SHARES should consider storing locally only such material which is infrequently used, but which is in sufficient demand to necessitate regional acquisition and preservation.

Some interesting general conclusions are formulated in the report: (1) Any cooperative enterprise, such as SHARES, is likely to be more successful if resources are added to a library's holdings rather than taken away. Therefore, shared acquisition should precede any plan for shared retention. (2) A cooperative acquisitions program will not relieve each library's responsibility to maintain a strong collection for the use of its own clientele. (3) The goal in cooperative acquisitions is the reduction of overall costs, and at the same time continuous growth in total available resources. (4) Resources on microform are important in any cooperative acquisitions program as well as in a retention and storage plan.

What SHARES has accomplished to date cannot be described as spectacular. But the wonder is that important first steps in li-

brary cooperation have been initiated. SHARES must be rated high for effort. This reviewer is of the opinion that SHARES could accomplish a great deal more if adequate funds for cooperative action were made available. This is the rub.

It is quite clear that large-scale library cooperation of any type cannot flourish without introducing funds from outside sources not heretofore tapped. While the current picture seems rather dim insofar as additional federal funds are concerned, librarians must push for state aid with greater vigor than ever before.—*Alex Ladenson, The Chicago Public Library.*

Libraries in France. John Ferguson. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1971. 120p.

With the growing enthusiasm for comparative library studies, new surveys of foreign libraries should be noted with interest by the library profession. In this context John Ferguson's *Libraries in France* is especially welcome, offering as it does a state-of-the-art look at the French library scene. Considering the paucity of materials on French libraries that have been published in English, this book is a useful entry into a rather embarrassing void.

Written in a concise, factual style, Ferguson's book is a sort of *Guide Bleu* to the world of librarianship in France. The author, librarian of the British Council in Paris, surveys numerous aspects of the French library scene, from the structure of the national library board to the operation of mobile bibliobuses in remote areas. His study emphasizes the rather arresting fact that, by contrast with the country's rich cultural heritage, development of a nationwide system of library service has been, until recently, an unfortunately low-priority item.

The text consists of thirteen short chapters; details concerning the history, development, and purpose of various types of French libraries are summarized. Municipal, general, university, and children's and school libraries are among the varieties thus treated; space is devoted to a compact discussion of phono record libraries as well. The section dealing with professional organizations and the status of education for librarianship in France brings hard-to-find information together in useful fashion.

Of particular interest is a chapter devoted to *La Lecture Publique*. Issued in 1968 under the auspices of a governmental committee, *La Lecture Publique* was a study of the state of French library service, and is to French libraries what the *Public Library Inquiry* was to the American scene. Persons interested in the scope of public library service available in France circa 1968 will find Ferguson's résumé of the report helpful indeed; a summary of the means being employed to expand service is included as well.

Short bibliographies accompany each chapter of this book, and there is an index. The chapters on university and public libraries contain particularly handy tabular summaries of statistics regarding library building programs. To sum up, *Libraries in France* is a compact statistical survey of the subject and should prove most useful as a ready reference tool.—*Cathleen Flanagan, University of Utah Libraries.*

Scientific and Technological Documentation: Archival Evaluation and Processing of University Records Relating to Science and Technology. Maynard J. Brichford. Urbana-Champaign, Ill.: University of Illinois, 1969. 35p.

One result of the unprecedented increase in the number of colleges and universities, and of the expansion of the older institutions, in the last decade, is the growth of interest in the development of institutional archives, apparently exceeding the rate of growth of archives in the previous decades. The concern of most institutions for their archival responsibilities is still inadequate, but there is certainly a recognized need for help by many academic librarians and scholars in gathering and administering their institutions' records of permanent historical value.

Previously, there has been little available in print relating to the specific role of the college or university archivist, other than periodical articles, or a few pages in a general manual on archives. The most direct assistance has been found in two slim volumes of conference and institute proceedings, also emanating from the University of Illinois, and in which Maynard Brich-