

the original author's card file of salient data on most of the "libraries" known to have existed outside of Asia; from caches of cuneiform tablets in Mesopotamia to the shelves of religious literature in nineteenth century American Sunday schools; from the museum of Alexandria to the Library of Congress. One finds dates of founding, numbers of volumes, names of principal benefactors, descriptions of regulations, and physical layout.

Only occasionally does one get a sense of "development" that means anything but growth in size and numbers. In short, as a form of history it fails to rise above the level of chronicle.

Moreover, the newest edition attempts to foster an illusion of having updated the statistics of which its treatment of the recent past largely consists. The data produced in the earlier edition stubbornly remain; the phrase "in the 1960s," however, now reads "in the seventies" in order to convey, quite erroneously, the currency of the statistics. Some sections badly needing revision did not get it. (The section on Latin America, to cite but one example, while shortened by simply dropping earlier paragraphs on Paraguay, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela, leaves glaring obsolete treatment of Chile and Argentina virtually intact.) There are some curious omissions: no sense of modern librarianship as a profession, little appreciation for the development of library architecture. The continued exclusion of the Far East from such an otherwise broad survey seems as quaint as it does arbitrary. There is virtually no attention given to the technological developments of the last decade.

Not surprisingly, the book's usefulness diminishes as it approaches the present. More seriously, when the authors move beyond statistics to the organic relationship between libraries and the societies in which they exist, their treatment is often unimaginative or downright naive. The new edition still concludes with the same banal essay on the role of libraries which appeared in each of its predecessors. In fact, neither author has really succeeded in getting at the real role of libraries and how societies are different because of them.

In sum, it is an old-fashioned approach

that suffers by comparison with recent works in library history, especially those appearing in conjunction with the American Bicentennial that called attention to the richness the field holds for its students and the greater sophistication in handling the subject deserves.—W. A. Moffett, *Director of Libraries, State University of New York, College at Potsdam.*

Jarvi, Edith. *Access to Canadian Government Publications in Canadian Academic and Public Libraries.* Ottawa: Canadian Library Association, 1976. 116p. \$12.00.

This is a report of a preliminary study undertaken in 1975 by the Canadian Library Association to determine how well academic, public, and community college libraries make accessible to their publics government information in the form of publications. In doing this, the study relates two aspects of government publications activity: the state of bibliographical control of Canadian government publications both national and provincial; and the role of the libraries in the procurement, handling, and

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servicing of these publications. The former aspect of the report renders it a valuable reference tool in its own right, but it is the latter part that is more significant and shall receive most attention.

The results in the second part are based on questionnaires returned from sampled libraries which requested information about library holdings of Canadian government publications, loan policies, access to shelves, hours of opening, staffing, use and users, and the adequacy of bibliographical tools. Questionnaires were also sent to provincial government printing and publishing offices inquiring about distribution methods, depository library systems, and the issuance of checklists. In addition, potential library users were also contacted to identify if these people obtain government information from libraries or other sources.

All this means a report with a lot of data and information, any segment of which has value to libraries or persons interested in publications. The amount and kinds of data furnished make a significant contribution in an area characterized by a paucity of studies. What emerges from *Access* is a clear picture of what Canadian libraries are doing to organize and service their governments' publications. Certain trends are discernible: large academic libraries tend towards separate collections, public libraries integrate their documents more than academic libraries, strong provincial documents collections are found wanting in smaller academic and public libraries.

Although averages and mean scores are registered for the various data categories, meaningful comparisons on staffing patterns, processing time, and use are actually lacking because the sample skews the figures. It is notable that the study indicates that libraries with computerized processing were not significantly more efficient in processing their publications than those with conventional intake procedures. The incongruities or lack of usefulness of some of the derived scores is attributable to the assumption in certain tables that libraries servicing similar-size clienteles have similar collections.

This is not to impeach the usefulness or value of *Access*. The comparative data are presented in a sharp graphic format, and

any administrator or librarian responsible for a documents collection can easily obtain a sense of where his or her operation stands in relation to others in spite of some shortcomings in the data. Needless to say, this support from the study is of immeasurable value, and a resourceful person can put the indicators to work.

As is the case in most reports, recommendations are made. They all have merit even though one could guess what was coming when reading the report. For instance, some serious problems with bibliographic control and distribution of official publications need a remedy. The recommendations came down more on the side of separate collections than integrated ones. Some disagreements could surface about the proposal that equates accessibility with open-stacks. As could be expected, the study recommends a need for standards for government publications collections.

The sad fact is that so little study and research have been made of government publications collections that there still is no agreement on how to count government publications. So there is a long way to go. In spite of shortcomings, *Access* is a fine example of a very good study of a neglected area and hopefully is a start in the right direction. Professor Jarvi states in the introduction that more is to come.—*Harry E. Welsh, Government Documents Center, University of Washington Libraries, Seattle.*

Conference on Library Orientation, 5th, Eastern Michigan University, 1975. *Faculty Involvement in Library Instruction: Their Views on Participation in and Support of Academic Library Use Instruction.* Edited by Hannelore B. Rader. Ann Arbor: Pierian Pr., 1976. 119p. \$8.50. LC 76-21914. ISBN 0-87650-070-X.

Both the title and subtitle of this slim volume are disappointingly misleading. Rather than sticking to its implication of faculty-library cooperative projects, "faculty involvement" is used as a catchall to justify presentations on almost anything to do with academic library instruction—ranging from the introductory remarks by Fred Blum, who talks about the need for faculty to receive such instruction (a theme left undeveloped by the other participants), to