Recent Publications

BOOK REVIEWS

Kunoff, Hugo. *The Foundations of the German Academic Library.* Chicago: American Library Assn., 1982. 220p. $15. LC 82-3879. ISBN 0-8389-0352-5.

The *Foundations of the German Academic Library* is a study of the German university library between about 1740 and 1820 as exemplified at Leipzig, Jena, Halle, and—especially—Göttingen. The book is an amplification of Kunoff's 1972 Indiana dissertation on the impact of the Enlightenment on German university libraries.

Kunoff finds the origins of the American research university and its research library in the University of Göttingen, which opened in 1737, and in its great founding rector Baron von Münchhausen and the notable trio of its first three librarians: Gesner, Michaelis, and Heyne. The other fundamental catalysts in this notable invention were the creation of the research seminar (the first systematic academic course), given its classic—or neoclassic—form by the great librarians Johann Gesner at Göttingen and Friedrich August Wolf at Halle, and the creation of a regularly published scholarly journal of rigor and quality at Göttingen. Kunoff argues that the planned, shaped, systematic scholarly research collections that characterize the greatest U.S. research libraries evolved from the models established by Gesner and Wolf to support the ongoing study and scholarship fostered in these universities.

Indeed, Kunoff argues that the profession of academic librarianship itself evolved from the evolution of the practice of collection development and the organization of library materials and readers' services during this century. While there is a tendency in the book at hand to view the past through the perceptions, values, and structures of the present, the treatment is—especially in the latter chapters—intriguing and spiced with lively anecdotes.

Indeed, every librarian will find much of interest in these pages; any academic librarian who feels overwhelmed, understaffed, and undervalued should read the account of staffing and hours during the early days at Leipzig University Library, or the noxious results of juxtaposing the university library and the medical school operating theater at the University of Halle.

Such anecdotes underscore an important point that can be overlooked in perusing Kunoff's detailed treatment of his subject, that only the operation at Göttingen exceeded the size of a poorly provided community college or departmental library today: for the most part, an eighteenth-century German university library was a tiny, jury-rigged affair run by a single librarian who was often also a professor and who—almost as often—paid far too little attention to the operation, or the collection, of his charge. The poverty of most eighteenth-century university libraries has led other scholars, such as Carl Wehmer—who is not mentioned by Kunoff—to claim that the German university library was a "creation of the late nineteenth century" (Carl Wehmer, "The Organization and Origins of German University Libraries," *Library Trends* 12:498–99 [Apr. 1964]). The notable exception was Göttingen, whose collection amounted to some 120,000 volumes in 1776.

With the exception of Paulsen's *German Universities and University Study* (1906), the second chapter of J. Periam Danton's classic *Book Selection and Collections: A Comparison of German and American University Libraries* (New York: Columbia Univ. Pr., 1963), p.12–33 (which is not mentioned by Kunoff, but from which his readers would benefit), Kunoff's topic is not well covered in English. Thus, Kunoff's close following of the more significant German authorities, and of other documents such as university statutes, regulations, and personal correspondence, allows English readers an often fascinating view of the major German universities of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.—*Paul H. Mosher, Stanford University.*

Fiction, 1876–1983: A Bibliography of United States Editions. New York: Bowker, 1983. 2,328p. $99.50, cloth, 2v. set. LC 83-21376. ISBN 0-8352-1726-4.

The idea behind *Fiction, 1876–1983* is a highly promising one. Derived from the databases of *Books in Print* (800,000 titles)

and *American Book Publishing Record* (almost 2 million titles), the 170,000 entries (*not* titles, as Bowker erroneously claims) of *Fiction* list—in theory and in the promotion, at least—"virtually every fiction title that appeared in the U.S. in the period covered." The format is that of a sort of cumulative *Books in Print* for fiction. There is an author index, a title index, a directory of publishers and distributors, and an author classification index, which groups authors by nationality and literary period where such information was available.

Based upon the questions given in the foreword as examples of the types of queries that *Fiction* is capable of answering, Bowker apparently expects this book to be a kind of one-stop authority for reference questions dealing with the U.S. publication of fiction editions. With *Fiction*, they say, one can date the first U.S. translation of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, identify the first edition of *A Farewell to Arms*, find the title of John Cheever's last anthology of short stories, and learn the kind of fantasy novels published between the wars.