the words which give meaning to our collective experience. Although not specifically aimed at librarians, *Language, Gender, and Professional Writing* gives us another tool with which to examine a range of assumptions about libraries and what they do—and do not—contain. Along with offering practical solutions to daily communication problems, the collection provides the theoretical framework for us to enter intelligently into the debate about language and usage and to analyze how we, as librarians, may also effect change.—*Ellen Broidy, University of California, Irvine.*

Hernon, Peter. *Statistics for Library Decision Making: A Handbook.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1989. 200p. $35 (ISBN 0-89391-586-6). paper, $19.95 (ISBN 0-89391-605-6). LC 89-6744.

Slater, Margaret, ed. *Research Methods in Library and Information Studies.* London: Library Association, 1990. 182p. $35 (ISBN 0-85365-908-7).

The London *Times* once classified research under three headings: "the proof of the blindingly obvious;" "the great leap sideways" towards an irrelevant or unjustified conclusion; and the "we'll prove it if it kills you" presentation of incomprehensible statistics intended to overcome any criticism by quantity alone. On the other hand, as Sherlock Holmes said, "Data, data, data!...I can't make bricks without clay." The two books under review offer guidance to library managers, library school students, and other researchers in finding the clay for the bricks of "action research," which Peter Hernon describes as applied research through data collection and analysis for decision-making concerning library programs, collections, services, operations, and staffing.

The two books complement each other and are complemented by a third recently published book: Arthur Hafner's *Descriptive Statistical Techniques for Librarians* (Chicago: American Library Assoc., 1989). Hafner's is an introduction to de-

scriptive statistics, such as ratios, percentages, means, medians, and so on. He discusses how to round numbers, for example, and how to lay out bar and pie charts. He stops short of inferential statistics—sampling, probability, testing of hypotheses.

Hernon's book, written with the collaboration of six doctoral students, goes beyond descriptive statistics to inferential statistics, as well as to the more general subject of quantitative analysis. It opens with chapters on research and decision making, on quantitative research in library literature, and on the use of microcomputer applications, such as Minitab, for research. The next two chapters cover measurement and descriptive statistics in thirty-seven pages, to Hafner's 250-plus. Hernon devotes the bulk of his book to statistical inference, hypothesis testing, correlation, and advanced statistical techniques like regression analysis, analysis of variance, and factor analysis. He covers a wide range of statistical material here and reminds readers more than once that consultation of standard statistics textbooks will be necessary to flesh out the subjects introduced in his book. In the useful final chapter, Hernon offers some examples of statistical applications in libraries, including a particularly interesting technique for measuring and evaluating usage and availability of CD-ROMs. From Hernon's book alone, however, a reader is not likely to be equipped to understand the Poisson distribution underlying the CD-ROM technique.

Nevertheless, as an introduction to the higher realms of statistical literacy and quantitative research, Hernon is a very capable guide. Especially helpful are the classified bibliographies of articles from library literature on the various statistical topics that Hernon discusses. Librarians concerned with quantitative research will find Hernon worth keeping at hand for these references to and explanations of available techniques.

Margaret Slater's book contains well-edited and integrated essays by ten British librarians, information specialists, and social scientists. Slater's focus is on both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. Where Hafner has more than 250 pages on quantitative measurement and statistics, and Hernon more than 150, Slater's book covers the same subject in a chapter of thirty pages. (The author of the chapter warns readers, probably unnecessarily, that exploration of statistical techniques will require "a clear mind and a cool head.") The rest of the book concentrates particularly on data collection through surveys. There are chapters on sampling techniques and recruiting respondents, questionnaire design and question phrasing, interviews, group discussions, and observation of subjects (for example, managers using information in their daily work). Of particular interest are the chapters on the currently fashionable field of qualitative research. Slater admits that qualitative research is open to the accusation of "manufacturing a mystique to mask mere mumbo-jumbo and undisciplined charlatanry." Slater and her collaborators, however, offer brief but compelling arguments that qualitative research can complement quantitative research—that where quantitative methods can measure the what and the when and the where, the qualitative approach, through in-depth interviews and related techniques, can elucidate the how and the why. Within its brief compass, Slater's book can be recommended as an introduction to the broad field of library research.

Like Hernon, Slater and her authors remind readers that her book is intended only as an overview. There are sufficient bibliographical references (though not as numerous as Hernon's) to point readers in the direction of standard texts on the research methods covered in Slater. Hernon and Slater also offer an interesting contrast in concluding chapters on communication of findings. Hernon concentrates on a written report for publication, and most of his chapter is devoted to illustrating the use of a software package for checking grammar and rhetoric. Slater's chapter discusses oral and written communication of results to various audiences (including, for example, spon-

sors of the research and respondents to questionnaires) throughout the course of the research.

Hafner, Hernon, and Slater, therefore, together offer a useful introduction to library research—what it is, how to collect data for research, how to do quantitative and qualitative analysis of data, and how to turn research into decisions.—*Kendon Stubbs, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.*

Forester, Tom, and Perry Morrison. *Computer Ethics: Cautionary Tales and Ethical Dilemmas in Computing.* Cambridge, MA: The MIT Pr., 1990. 193p. $19.95 (ISBN 0-262-06131-7). LC 89-71358.

The computerization of society during the last twenty years has brought with it astounding gains in our ability to collect, store, manipulate, and manage information. The power of the tools that computers place in our hands has led many—one need not search long for examples—to make extravagant claims about the ability of computer technology to provide revolutionary solutions for a host of previously intractable problems, from office management to automated factories, from ATM machines to expert systems. It is against the grain of these claims that Forester and Morrison's volume attempts to work by relating in detail a constellation of problems that they believe are inherent to computers: they are subject both to malfunctions in hardware and software and to misuse by human beings. What is the downside of information storage if not the invasion of privacy, and what is the downside of information management if not the completely automated battleground of Star Wars?

Computer Ethics has its origins in Forester's and Morrison's classroom work (both teach in Australia) on the human and social context of computing. It is their attempt to highlight some of the more important social and ethical issues that arise from computerization. The book is well suited for both the classroom and for the general reader, and

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