Jackson gives a similarly detailed reading to the scribbled oeuvre of many other famous annotators, among them William Blake, S. T. Coleridge, Hester Lynch Piozzi, Mark Twain, Ezra Pound, and T. H. White. In all, about 200 titles are listed in her bibliography of annotated books, each with copy location and annotator's name. (Doodlers are ennoblingly referred to as "extra-illustrators.") In addition, the relatively few instances of published marginalia are included in the separate bibliography of secondary works, among these the huge corpus that belongs to the Coleridge *Collected Works* edition published by Princeton University Press. (The sixth and final volume of Coleridge marginalia, *Valckenaer to Zwick*, was edited by H. J. Jackson and published by Princeton in November 2001.)

Jackson's eleven-page bibliography of secondary sources is also valuable for uncovering a body of literature that will surely inform further study of the topic. This literature ranges from compilations and catalogs of annotated books, such as the British Library's *Books with Manuscript: Short Title Catalogue of Books with Manuscript Notes* (1994), to interesting treatments of marginalia in out-of-the-way sources, among them a how-to guide by Mortimer J. Adler ("How to Mark a Book"), published in 1940 in the *Saturday Review of Literature*.

Only as the present reader finished reviewing this book did he realize that he had not written anything in its margins. This was a missed opportunity because of all the books that have ever crossed his desk, this one seems in retrospect to cry out to be written in, underlined, dog-eared-generally to receive all the marks of "self-assertive appropriation" dealt with on its pages. Yet another reason to look forward to a sequel.—*Jeffrey Garrett, Northwestern University.*

Libraries & Democracy: The Cornerstones of Liberty. Ed. Nancy Kranich. Chicago: ALA, 2001. 223p. $32 (ISBN 083890808X). LC 2001-22974.

I think if would be a fair assessment to say that, generally speaking, most Americans do not spend a lot of time contemplating the institution of democracy. Let's face it, the majority of us take it for granted. After the September 11 tragedy, however, I think that many of us have been reexamining what it means to live and work in a free society and more important, what it means to be a citizen in a democracy. If we look at the institutions that embody and best symbolize our democratic ideals, libraries are at the forefront, especially in their defense of free and open access to information for all people.

Nancy Kranich, associate dean of libraries at New York University and the 2000–2001 president of the ALA, uses this volume to expand on her ALA presidential theme, "Libraries: The Cornerstone of Democracy." Her book is a collection of twenty essays written by professionals (some notable) in the field of library and information science, in which they share their insights on the role that libraries play in advancing democracy. It presents a historical overview of libraries and democracy in civil society, and addresses issues pertaining to technology, copyright, censorship, ethics, free speech, and advocacy.

The Introduction, written by Kranich, sets the tone of the collection by declaring that "libraries serve the most fundamental ideals of our society as uniquely democratic institutions." She explains that although citizens may have a rudimentary understanding of the relationship between libraries and democracy, very little has been written that openly discusses "the meaning of libraries as cornerstones of democracy." Kranich's goal with this collection is to present a range of perspectives on the role that libraries play in advancing "deliberative democracy." What is achieved is a collection of essays all enthusiastically supportive of libraries and librarians.

Section I is composed of densely written essays addressing the role of libraries in democracy from a historical and theoretical perspective; it is informative to the

point of being overwhelming. Jorge Reina Schement's essay, "Imagining Fairness Equality and Equity of Access in Search of Democracy," is especially enlightening. He finds that the promise of the Internet as the great equalizer has fallen woefully short: "7% of American households still do not have a telephone" and "minorities lag behind Whites in computer ownership, while Latinos demonstrate the highest purchasing rate." It is apparent that the digital divide separating the haves from the have-nots still exists: The *ideal* of fair and equitable access to information and technology for all is far removed from the *reality*. Public libraries—with their mission to, in the words of contributor Kathleen de la Peña McCook, "develop a climate of openness by defining library policies to create an institution where all are welcome"—are uniquely positioned to counteract this. Schement explains that we as a society need to move toward a "new fairness; not fairness as uniform distribution, rather fairness as justice—that is, not equality of access, but equity of access. For just as there can be no fairness without equality, there can be none without justice."

The three essays of section II addressing libraries and civil society discuss how libraries can act as natural outlets for providing access to both civic and government resources. Durrance, Pettigrew, Jourdan, and Scheuerer stress the importance of developing Community Information (CI) databases as tools for disseminating information on topics relevant to the community (e.g., civic, government, and job information). In addition, CI initiatives can assist in the development of community networking, youth programs, and services to immigrants and cultural minorities.

Section III looks at the Internet, access issues (i.e., filtering software), the political process, and the challenges librarians face in meeting the needs of increasingly sophisticated library users. The essays in this section provide what, I think, is some of the book's most useful and relevant information, of interest to those both inside and outside the library profession. The Internet has played a fundamental role in the public's ability to access a broader range of information. However, more information is not always better information, sometimes it is just more. With many users experiencing information overload, now more than ever, the skills of librarians are needed to assist the public in finding, evaluating, and using information. As Kranich states in her essay, librarians, by assisting the public in developing information literacy skills, help them "to live, work, learn, and govern in the digital age." Susan B. Kretchmer, author of "The Library Internet Access Controversy and Democracy," provides an excellent and informative overview on the use of filtering software in libraries and the controversy this has generated as a potential threat to the open access to information and the public's right to know.

Section IV includes five essays on the library's function of providing access to local, state, and federal government information (including the Federal Depository Library Program), ethics and government power (e.g., Iran-Contra and White House emails), copyright (the rights of the user versus the right of the intellectual property owner), and First Amendment issues (does censorship have a place in a democracy).

The two essays in section V concerning the Library of Congress (LOC) trace its history from its humble beginnings in 1800 to its present-day glory. James H. Billington, Librarian of Congress, describes the LOC as " an international institution with a universal collection not limited by subject, format, or national boundary." Examples of the LOC's demonstrated commitment to cutting-edge technology includes projects such as the 1994 National Digital Library program (designed to digitize historical items from special research collections); the development of a new user-friendly Web site (unveiled in April 2000); and the mounting of five million digital items from the collections of American history and culture.

The essays in section VI speak to the

significant function that advocacy plays in maintaining the library as a "cornerstone" of democracy. Patricia Glass Schuman in "Advocating for America's Right to Know," implores librarians and those in the library profession to lead the charge for advocacy because ultimate responsibility for protecting the public's right to know lies with libraries and librarians. William R. Gordon in "Advocacy for Democracy I: The Role of the American Library Association," outlines the long-standing commitment that the ALA has demonstrated to preserving the fundamental right of democracy for all citizens. Finally, Joneta Belfrage provides an international perspective on the importance of libraries in a democratic society in her essay, "Advocacy for Democracy II: The Role of the Swedish Library Association."

Libraries & Democracy is successful in providing an overview of the important contributions that libraries and librarians have made to the history of democracy; it is informative, though occasionally redundant. Kranich's enthusiasm and knowledge on this topic are obvious, and her critical investigation of the issues concerning the roles and responsibilities of libraries in democracy is notable.

This collection of essays is authored by, and targeted at, those in the information profession. In essence, this book is "preaching to the choir." We as professional librarians already understand the essential role that libraries play in a free and open society. We as professional librarians understand that access to knowledge, ideas, and information is paramount in the battle against ignorance, intolerance, and prejudice. We as professional librarians understand that America's libraries are one of the last strongholds in the defense of freedom. What is needed is a way to effectively disseminate this information to those, outside librarianship, who do not understand the vital and essential contributions that libraries and librarians have made to the past, present, and future of this institution we call democracy.—*Kelly C.*

Rhodes, Appalachian State University.

Virilio, Paul. *The Information Bomb.* Trans. Chris Turner. London: Verso, 2000. 160p. $23 (ISBN 1859847455). LC 00-32471.

If a need exists (and I think it does) for philosophical insight into the anxiety suffered by many over the speed of modern life, the loss of distance as a geographic feature, the blurring of the border between the real and the unreal, and the eclipsing of the local by the global, then Paul Virilio's *The Information Bomb* is a gem of a confirmation and examination of these anxieties. Anxieties rooted in that defining feature of modern life—technology: "If truth is what is verifiable, the truth of contemporary science is not so much the extent of progress achieved as the scale of technical catastrophes occasioned."

As one might guess from the book's title, this is no glowing account of the wonders of the information age but, rather, an exploration of the underside of the computer revolution as humanity and the planet enter the twenty-first century. Technoscience, disinformation, corporations, states, and the "soft stupor" into which individual men, women, and children have been lulled are Virilio's actors in the disturbing drama being played out on this once immeasurable, but now tiny, globe at an ever accelerating, to the point of dizzying, speed. Technoscience reduces knowledge to bits and bytes, and a new technical wizardry plays with reality, information becoming disinformation, the mind engaging the world almost solely with a screen as intermediary. The television screen and the computer monitor—single eyes obliterate true perspective and depth, transmission speeds compress distance into nothingness, roving and stationary cameras focus on the surface of the mundane and the suspect in complete absence of historical and psychological understanding.

In 145 pages, Virilio's historically grounded and eclectically informed mind meanders through, and comments on, topics as diverse as: the frontier as American icon; genetic engineering; the soft stupor