

Recent Publications

BOOK REVIEWS

Spyers-Duran, Peter, and Gore, Daniel, eds. *Economics of Approval Plans*. Proceedings of the Third International Seminar on Approval and Gathering Plans in Large and Medium Size Academic Libraries, Held in the Ramada Inn, West Palm Beach, Florida, February 17-19, 1971. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1972. 134 p.

Librarians probably use their literature to better advantage than most professional people. We readily learn from others in our field because we are inclined to write about our experiences and also because we read a lot. To learn more about approval or gathering plans, I recommend the reading of *Economics of Approval Plans*.

The editors of this small volume might just as well have titled it another "how-to" book with the following possibilities: ". . . Establish an Approval Plan; . . . Choose an Approval Plan Dealer; . . . Save Money With an Approval Plan." Actually, the title was taken from the first essay in the book and it only partly describes the contents.

As the subtitle tells us, it is Number 3 in a series of seminar proceedings on approval plans and from all indications the subject has been exhausted, at least until a new breed of approval plan is devised to aid or bedevil the librarian.

The papers are varied in quality and style. We have the scientific approach of a study of the economics of approval plans as well as chatty, off-the-cuff statements explaining why approval plans fail. There is reported a case history in establishing the plan in a medium-sized university by LeMoyné Anderson, a useful account pointing out pitfalls along the way. One paper recounts for us the kinds of plans offered by three major dealers, a revealing study that is good to have at hand, although such information becomes dated very fast.

One chapter is concerned with a panel discussion by book dealers; conversational in tone, it really contains little of significance for us. Comments such as "bugs in the program," "our sales were suffering," etc., were hardly worth capturing on paper.

Have we answered all the questions? Does anyone still have doubts? At least one of the papers would lead us to believe that there are indeed no unanswered questions: "It seems obvious that the approval plan technique for building research libraries is here to stay. The results of the present study clearly demonstrate its efficiency and effectiveness." [Axford]

Richard Chapin finalizes the volume with his witty summary which turns up some sharp deductions about the three-day conference. Once again we are reminded that "we don't know what we're talking about." Who has yet defined a gathering plan, an approval plan, a blanket order? The importance of collecting current materials and doing it well is noted by Mr. Chapin as he opines that 80 percent of all research done on a university campus is based upon materials published in the last ten years. He takes to task the writers of "efficiency papers" because "they seem to indicate that books received on approval plans get on the shelves at hardly any cost." There are still selection costs, despite the best efforts of the dealers' computers.

The book does not repeat what has been said before at the seminars, for the most part. New ideas, strategies, and experiences from which most of us could benefit will be found here. On the other hand, the library scene has changed somewhat since these papers were written, a fact which will have to be taken into consideration when reading the book.—Roscoe Rouse, *Oklahoma State University, Stillwater*.

Wasserman, Paul. *The New Librarianship: A Challenge for Change*. New York: Bowker, 1972.

Paul Wasserman's new book is an impor-