

nological change, and a shift in balance of research library resources as seen by growing concern for cooperative activity expressed in terms of resource sharing and networks. He calls these changes "far short of being revolutionary." Unlike Fussler's convincing statement, Bryan believes that "in Australia there has been little serious consideration of possible alternatives to the research library and little concern for any fundamental restructuring of its tools of use." He gives reasons for this apparent unconcern and concludes that he sees an assured future for the research library in Australia.

This little publication deserves the attention of the library community. Both of the essays contain a thoughtful and interesting insight on the future of research libraries throughout the world. Admittedly, research libraries face difficult problems, and even though the ultimate solutions are unknown, Fussler and Bryan give us hope and courage to confront the difficult years ahead. The authors should be commended for their efforts and Monash University Graduate School of Librarianship congratulated for making these papers a part of the literature of librarianship.—*Dale M. Bentz, University of Iowa, Iowa City.*

Nora, Simon, and Minc, Alain. *The Computerization of Society: A Report to the President of France*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1980. 186p. \$12.50. LC 79-25472. ISBN 0-262-14031-4.

This book is an excellent English translation of a report to France's President, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, and was first issued in 1978. The topic is the interconnection of computers and telecommunications and its probable effect on society. This effect is essentially described as another revolution—much along the lines of the Industrial Revolution, which previously had transformed the economic and social structure of nations throughout the world. The authors have meticulously annotated and referenced the sources for material included in this work. The original French text had voluminous appendix volumes filled with supplementary material. These have not been included in this translated form. This is a sound decision from this reviewer's viewpoint.

To describe this interconnection of two pervasive technologies, the authors have coined the term *télématique*, or *telematics* in its Anglicized form. The authors have managed virtually to create a work of art in their written expression of the ideas here, which proves the adage of "Don't judge a book by its cover or size." In a petite volume they show their deep grasp of their own French milieu and the social, economic, and technical aspects of computing and telecommunications.

An introduction to this work is provided by Daniel Bell, who points out that France is a *société bloquée*, or a society that has been increasingly rigidified in its bureaucracy and politics through a very centralized political structure, at the core of which is an elite administrative class of professional civil servants (the Enarchs, graduates of the École Nationale d'Administration). Consequently, it is difficult for France to move rapidly and with flexibility when dealing with a rapidly developing and changing technological force.

Nora and Minc are issuing a powerful warning to France, both to its bureaucracy and its people, that both will have to change and adapt if *télématique* is to be harnessed in the interests of France as a nation among world leaders. They warn that some erosion in the centralized nature of the bureaucracy and employment in the service areas of banking, insurance, social security, and postal and office work are bound to occur. Sometimes they are brutally frank in their pronouncements. For example, on page 79 they say:

The appearance of network systems has given rise to the development of data banks, which are multiplying, especially in Canada and the United States. Meanwhile France is beginning to fall behind in this field. The public authorities need to undertake vigorous action; failure to do so can create a dependence that may have heavy consequences.

The volume concludes with a chapter addressing the question "Will a computerized society be a society of cultural conflicts?" and another called "Planning for an Uncertain Future: Socializing Information." These point out the obvious—that stability in a computerized society is difficult to achieve. It also points out that knowledge

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and time will make the information society possible. The real question is whether France, with the constraints to which it is subject, will be permitted the time for this vital learning process.

In this reviewer's opinion, this volume is well worth the asking price for any collection, institutional or private, that reflects the social aspects of technology. Moreover, its narrow column typeset text will be appreciated by speed reading fans everywhere.—Audrey N. Grosch, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

The Role of the Library in an Electronic Society. Edited by F. Wilfrid Lancaster.

Proceedings of the 1979 Clinic on Library Applications of Data Processing. Papers presented at the 1979 Clinic on Library Applications of Data Processing April 22-25, 1979. Urbana-Champaign, Ill.: University of Illinois, Graduate School of Library Science, 1980. 200p. \$9. LC 79-19449. ISBN 0-87845-053-X. (Available from: Publications Office, Graduate School of Library Science, 249 Armory Building, Champaign, IL 61820.)

The papers in this volume record the proceedings of the sixteenth annual clinic, a clinic that differs rather sharply from its predecessors. First, instead of library automation, various aspects of electronic communication were examined, usually by leaders from fields outside of librarianship. Second, the clinic was designed as an integral part of F. W. Lancaster's research on the impact of a "paperless society" on the research library of the future. Not surprisingly, the papers are both descriptive and speculative: Particular applications of information technology are described, and several speculative articles assess implications of new developments on society in general and libraries in particular. Among the most interesting of the descriptive articles is a forecast of the technology of the future by William J. Kubitz. Kubitz provides a remarkably succinct summary of the technological trends in computer technology development, which seem almost to have reversed a law of nature, as each year computers are built that do more and more at less and less cost. Not only will this trend continue but also it will accelerate at an ex-