

department, planning of specific functions, centralization versus decentralization of information activities, cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analyses of the services provided, interactions with users (including user surveys), and standards in control and evaluation procedures. They are certainly as useful and timely for the neophyte as for the veteran in the profession.

The presentation is informal and lucid. Nevertheless, the publication is lacking in three respects: First, the amount of material dealing with the application of computers in information processing and dissemination is scanty. Second, it is almost unthinkable to see a book written on the management of an information department with practically no reference to the various subject-oriented data bases, their availability, use, and management. This is especially relevant at a time when interactive, on-line information systems are almost like household items in an average-sized research library or information department. Third, the half-life of the material cited and presented in the text is on a steady decline since there are hardly any post-1972 references included in the end-of-chapter bibliographies.

Having considered the above factors, one wonders if the manuscript of the book was originally completed some years ago and then kept in cold storage. There is no doubt that any professional who has kept abreast of recent developments in the information science field will readily notice this serious built-in time-lag. Overall, however, this is as good a text as any that covers the field.—*Jata S. Ghosh, Ardmore, Pennsylvania.*

Houser, Lloyd J., and Schrader, Alvin M. The Search for a Scientific Profession: Library Science Education in the U.S. and Canada. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow, 1978. 180p. \$8. LC 77-17563. ISBN 0-8108-1062-X.

Surely one of the most interesting recent works, this book, through its indictment of library education, presents its underlying thesis that we need a comprehensive and purposeful undertaking to develop a coherent theory of librarianship based upon rigorous research. This outcome, the authors argue passionately, is attainable even

though previous efforts have been largely frustrated.

To those who have been indoctrinated in the folklore of education for librarianship, the most startling assertion concerns the institution known for years without ambiguity as "the Graduate Library School," or, simply, "GLS." Veterans of the Chicago doctoral wars may be reminded of an exchange often heard:

"GLS isn't like it was in the Good Old Days."

"Yeah, but then it never was."

We may have joked in those terms, but we knew better. We knew very well that GLS, during the golden years of Louis Round Wilson's deanship, had introduced a new quality to education for librarianship. The school, after floundering under the outsider, George A. Works, began to examine with rigorous logic and precise quantitative measurement the fundamental assumptions of librarianship. It produced a whole generation of library leaders. It was a major source of borrowing for the shape and content of the new curriculum introduced around 1950. In innumerable ways it raised the level of librarianship.

The accomplishments during the ten years of the Wilson deanship are evident, and their soundness is secure beyond question. It will be unfortunate and wasteful if—as seems likely—the attention to this book is directed to defending the impregnable or to denouncing the authors and elaborating the flaws of their case. For their indictment of librarianship is valid.

The case is partially stated in an aphorism:

Librarianship has been deficient in its Science, with the consequence that its Humanity has been tainted with sentimentality and its Technology with meaningless proliferation, uninformed by Theory and unevaluated by Measurement.

(Though surely a Butlerism, its source has escaped me. I shall be grateful for its identification.)

This unfortunate condition was somewhat ameliorated at GLS under Wilson, but Houser and Schrader suggest the advancements were made in spite of Wilson rather than because of him. To raise such a charge and to countenance it in a review just when

the dean's centenary has been recently celebrated is to court accusations of bad taste if not, indeed, *lese majeste*. Yet a decent respect for a man known for his intellectual toughness requires that the charge be confronted, especially since it comes with the peculiarly ambiguous endorsement of the late Douglas Waples in the form of a permitted dedication of the book to him and the statement of his "satisfaction" (p.viii) with the relevant chapters.

When one looks into the matter a bit, one finds that some of those assumed vaguely to have been Wilson protégés (Waples, Pierce Butler, William Randall, Leon Carnovsky) had actually preceded him to GLS. It is interesting, considering the skepticism and mounting hostility to GLS from practicing librarians, that Wilson had served for six years on the Board of Education for Librarianship, the major voice of ALA.

The authors maintain that he aborted the earnest and self-conscious effort that had been mounted by Works, the first dean, Waples, an interim acting dean, and their associates to create a true library science based upon systematic research. Instead, they say, Wilson made of GLS primarily a high-level training school for university librarians, an outcome considerably advanced from the past but, in sum, a subversion of the goals for which the Carnegie Corporation had endowed the school and toward which the early faculty members had directed their efforts.

As if these charges were not enough, Houser and Schrader analyze Wilson's own writings, concluding that none rank as scientific research except for *The Geography of Reading* and even that is "essentially descriptive" (p.65). They say that, even as dean, Wilson kept "his first loyalty" to the Board of Education for Librarianship (p.58). Their criticisms of policies take on an unfortunate tone of personal attack in this hint of double-dealing and in their charge of evasiveness.

The history of GLS and of Wilson's place and contribution are crucially important issues in librarianship and library education. One hopes that John Richardson's Indiana dissertation on the history of GLS will settle many of the questions. But, regardless of the validity of the case against Wilson, the

case against librarianship and library education remains, and it is a strong one.

The case centers upon library school education, which, it is asserted, lacks grounding in "theory and theoretical knowledge base." Why, they ask, does the curriculum not teach theory rather than the

dull menu of "show and tell" sessions, student presentations, "how I do it good in my library" talks, learning "experiences," and accounts of rules, tools, procedures, techniques, routines, products and services which apparently were available sometimes, in some libraries, for some people, under some conditions? (p.vi)

The description is all too familiar, and it reflects more fundamental problems than inept teaching. These problems go to the root of the profession and its practice as well as its training. In their analysis, Houser and Schrader go beyond GLS in Wilson's days to study and comment upon later developments of library education and its present state. On the basis of several of their studies of library schools, they conclude that the overriding characteristic of the years since Wilson's retirement has been

growing intellectual confusion . . . centered in the library science educators [who] prefer personal experience to any other qualifications for teaching, [who] lack any pretense of scientific leadership, [whose] literature exhibits no characteristics of scholarship, [who] do not teach research knowledge or even research methods to their students, [and who] have little influence at all on their students.

When they teach, they teach non-research, experience based, non-cumulative (although possibly additive), subjectively selected and relatively out-of-date literature (abridged and adapted from p.146-47).

Houser and Schrader find something to anger everyone. They say it awkwardly and abrasively. They are pedantic, sententious, and contentious. They arrogantly assume that their conception of science and scientific research encompasses the only valid scholarship. All in all, they make their case in terms that are unlikely to persuade.

Yet, in more measured terms, most of their principal case is valid. It is true that librarianship and library education are in a sad state, arising mostly from the strength of the forces of trade-school pragmatism that

have managed to frustrate every attempt at fundamental change, turning graduate research education into a training ground for practice and directing research efforts toward management studies designed to increase the efficiency of an agency, the library, whose fundamental character is taken to be fixed as it has been handed down from the past.

Library schools suffer most strongly, for they were set on their way by that ultimate trade-school promoter, Melvil Dewey, but the schools' ills are only a reflection of the ills of librarianship itself. Until the profession is reformed, library schools will be able to do very little. Chicago was indeed a unique opportunity for a group of library school educators to chart a new course and, in the event, even that supremely independent institution was unable to stand against the practicing librarian who, as Pierce Butler said almost half a century ago, "is strangely uninterested in the theoretical aspects of his profession . . . [who] apparently stands alone in the simplicity of his pragmatism: a rationalization of each immediate technical process by itself seems to satisfy his intellectual interest" (*Introduction to Library Science*, p.xi, xii).

Houser and Schrader's effort at reform is probably doomed by its abrasiveness, its awkwardness, and its overstatement, but it bears the marks of deep conviction, and it makes points of considerable validity. Librarianship would be advanced if the entrenched forces that have frustrated every effort of this sort in the past were to listen carefully to the underlying message and respond to it. Although that outcome is unlikely, the book will at least have raised some stimulating questions. Everyone who has a serious interest in the profession should read it thoughtfully, with the tolerance for its defects that will permit hearing the message it seeks to convey.—W. L. Williamson, *University of Wisconsin-Madison*.

Grieder, Ted. *Acquisitions: Where, What, and How*. A Guide to Orientation and Procedure for Students in Librarianship, Librarians, and Academic Faculty. Contributions in Librarianship and Information Science, no.22. Westport, Conn.:

Greenwood Press, 1978. 277p. \$18.95. LC 77-84762. ISBN 0-8371-9890-9. ISSN 0074-9243.

The lore of the acquisitions librarian comes to the fore. Ted Grieder presents us with a picture of how to run a university library acquisitions department good. His display is based upon his experiences and the lore that has developed in libraries over the past half-century. Unlike Ford's *The Acquisition of Library Materials*, with its philosophical foundations and theory in the open, Grieder shows the practical workings involved in daily operations of the university library's acquisitions department. His emphasis upon bureaucracy, which accomplishes the library's mission, distinguishes *Acquisition: Where, What, and How* from *Melcher on Acquisition*.

Grieder's approach is to give general ideas about the nature of acquisitions and its various tasks and then to explain by example. The first part of the book is a description of the acquisition task and its location within the library structure, specifically within the technical services division; this is the "where" and "what" of acquisitions. Part two gets into specifics by way of a checking manual (roughly one-third of the book) and chapters on how to set up other important manuals and operations, nitty-gritty administrative procedures, and even "How to Choose a Job."

One is constantly aware of the experientially-based and nontheoretical nature of present-day acquisitions work. From the small chapter on job descriptions and salary considerations for clerical workers, we are struck with the value of experience vis-à-vis professional education: A senior library assistant with five or more years of experience should receive more salary than a neophyte M.L.S. Throughout the book Grieder seemingly qualifies all of his statements about procedure by the profession's ubiquitous imprecision: "varies from library to library." For sure, details do vary from library to library; yet, and herein lies the value of Grieder, those details serve an overarching goal: to acquire materials for the users of any given library.

The student librarian should find this text helpful in giving handles on procedures within the acquisitions operation, which