

the book remains a valuable standard work. It provides a thorough, coherent introduction to acquisitions for the novice and a convenient source of reference for the veteran. It would be a suitable textbook for a course on acquisitions, and the practitioner will find valuable suggestions of sources and procedures for acquiring materials in formats that are unfamiliar. This new edition should join its predecessors on the shelves of acquisitions departments and library school collections alike.—*Eric Carpenter, Oberlin College Library, Oberlin, Ohio.*

Grafton, Anthony. *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship.* Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1990. 157p. alk. paper, \$14.95 (ISBN 0-691-05544-0). LC 89-28347.

Accounts of the production and unmasking of forgeries have universal appeal—pitting the forger's superior understanding of what must have existed against the critic's belief that systematic comparison of data leads to truth. Most studies of forgery familiar to librarians deal with specific items (Mormon documents, the Vinland Map), perpetrators (Thomas Chatterton, T.J. Wise), types (facsimiles of newspaper issue or Lincoln letters), or historical periods. Studies of criticism—whether biblical, historical, literary, or textual—are categorized separately.

In this brief but tightly written essay, Anthony Grafton analyzes serious and skillful forgeries including textual matter produced in Western culture over the past 2,500 years, always with intent to deceive. Thousands are known: historical records of an heroic past, literary remains of a canonical nature, sacred texts offering spiritual authority, and legal documents legitimizing practices and possessions. In modern times, personal or professional gain has proved a temptation to creative and often prominent scholars, as they buttress an argument or fill in a gap. Concerns of the forger include not only the text's linguistic and physical aspects but also a convincing explanation of its provenance.

From extensive reading and hundreds of examples familiar and unfamiliar, Graf-

ton argues compellingly that criticism developed not through some abstract need for it but as a result of the stimulus provided by forgers. The critical method is not an invention of Renaissance humanism or nineteenth-century German scholarship but continues a tradition begun in classical Greece. It has increased in sophistication concomitantly with the challenge of better forgeries and has changed chiefly in the mass of data supporting its contentions. It tends to be less discriminating when dealing with texts that coincide with the critic's assumptions and desires. "Forger and critic have been entangled through time like Laocoon and his serpents," writes Grafton in his introduction; "the changing nature of their continuous struggle forms a central theme in the development of historical and philological scholarship" and has given us a richer sense of what the past was really like.

The author's erudite and wide-ranging theory—originating as a public lecture at Princeton University where he is Professor of History—represents a logical extension of his ground-breaking publications in the history of classical scholarship and in Renaissance education. His exposition of "a fascinating but troubling feature of the Western tradition" gives perspective to the critical judgment bibliographic instruction librarians endeavor to instill and to the "spurious works" catalogers find pervasive in the PA schedule of the Library of Congress classification. More generally, Grafton's lucid thought offers academic librarians a rare and welcome opportunity to step back and consider the authenticity and intellectual origins of some of the materials we care for, as well as the motivations behind the scholarship our efforts support.—*Elizabeth Swaim, Wesleyan University Library, Middletown, Connecticut.*

Libraries and Scholarly Communication in the United States: The Historical Dimension. Ed. by Phyllis Dain and John Y. Cole. New York: Greenwood, 1990. 148p., \$37.95. (ISBN 0-313-26807-X). LC 89-23248.

The collection of essays in this book derives from a conference of the same name