

access to global information resources in U.S. and Canadian research libraries. This is followed by a bibliography of references used in the text.

Aside from the information given in this study on the ARL initiative, there is a wealth of useful information that would be very time-consuming to gather separately, particularly the summaries of area studies library committees, the surveys on international publishing, and the information on the economic realities of maintaining area study collections. This study is well organized, very readable, and very important, and is supported by numerous useful figures and tables. Its title, however, barely hints at its contents, nor does it indicate that the study is a response to an imminent crisis that is being addressed by a very far-reaching project. Those who want to keep up on the development of this program can subscribe to *ARL-Announce* on the Internet, but ARL also needs to be even more aggressive in getting the word out to librarians and faculty than it has been up to now. And the issue of recruiting and training the next generation of area studies librarians must be brought to the fore as the strategic plan is implemented. The project and this study already have made a significant contribution by including Canadian libraries.

Three new developments support the concerns of this project: first, the U.S. government announced in January 1997 a proposal to make substantial cuts in the funding for the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), which would further diminish the resources on foreign countries that American scholars use for research; second, in January, the Mellon Foundation awarded this project a substantial grant that will allow for Southeast Asia and Africa demonstration projects and will enable ARL to move faster in promoting coordinated collection management; and third, U.S. libraries with South Asian collections have

formed three regional consortia to address some of the same concerns addressed in this study.—*Raymond Lum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.*

Wallerstein, Immanuel, et al. *Open the Social Sciences: Report of the Gulbenkian Commission on the Restructuring of the Social Sciences.* Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Pr. (Mestizo Spaces), 1996. 105p. alk. paper, \$37.50 cloth. ISBN 0-8047-2726-0. \$10.95 paper. ISBN 0-08047-2727-9. LC 95-45759.

Although the distance between the covers is not great, this book should play a major role in setting the agenda for discussion on the future of the dominant social science paradigm. Immanuel Wallerstein, distinguished professor of sociology, president of the International Sociological Association, and director of the Fernand Braudel Center for the Study of Economics, Historical Systems, and Civilizations at the State University of New York, Binghamton, is perhaps the preeminent scholar of the social sciences in relation to world systems and their study. Wallerstein, along with ten other scholars of world renown (six from the social sciences, two from the natural sciences, and two from the humanities), has brought to the fore several consequential issues for deliberation regarding the existing disciplinary structure of the social sciences.

In the first section of this book, the authors carefully outline the social and historical construction of the social sciences as a form of knowledge that was organized around two separate antinomies—one between the past and the present, and the second between the descriptive (nomothetic) and the interpretive (idiographic) disciplines. Cartesian dualism, the heart of contemporary inquiry, posited the bifurcation between the human, metaphysical world and the natural world. The Newtonian view of this natural world saw the universe operating like clockwork, mechanically tick-

ing away like an automaton, capable of being controlled and manipulated. The only task being to simplify and reduce nature to its component parts, thus rendering it relatively easy to discover universal, or "natural," laws of causality and the temporal connection between event one "causing" event two.

The rise of the modern state at the end of the eighteenth century demanded new types of knowledge on which to base rational decisions. The resultant definition of social science, being distinct from the "two cultures" of the natural sciences and the humanities, was a response to this state-centric need. The general "professionalization of knowledge" that took place during the nineteenth century institutionalized the emergent social science within a revived university system.

The subject areas addressed by this nascent social science coalesced and became recognizable as distinct disciplines unto themselves, each favoring a different research method—one method more descriptive, attempting to find universal laws, and the other method more analytic or interpretive. Economics, political science, and sociology formed the core nomothetic social sciences and endeavored to discover a systematic, secular, and universal knowledge of the world that could be verified empirically. History and anthropology tended to look at each social group separately, to understand and explain it from its own values.

World developments after 1945 profoundly affected the social sciences. Organizationally, the individual disciplines, divided and isolated, were unable to effectively study complex social phenomena. (One response to this failure was the advent of area studies in which a multidisciplinary organizational structure was paramount). Epistemologically, new breakthroughs in science also were making problematic the search for "uni-

versal laws" of nature through the methods of positivism. Nature and complex social phenomena now are believed to be not only active and creative, but also self-organizing. Combined, these organizational problems and epistemological difficulties questioned the degree to which the social science heritage was parochial rather than universal.

In the last part of this report, the authors offer some possible paths toward intellectual clarification of the social sciences, by making a few suggestions about where opportunities for creative experimentation might lie. First, they suggest an expansion of institutions which brings together scholars from diverse disciplines for short periods of time to work in common around specific urgent themes. Second, the establishment of integrated research programs and joint appointments of faculty between university departments is seen as necessary for a cross-fertilization of ideas. Joint work for graduate students between departments also is proposed.

These important insights for the future of social science also are applicable to librarianship. Most library research in the United States is not theory driven but, rather, is the result of a positivist epistemology that addresses policy-oriented administrative problems or other technical questions. Library research tends to be parochial, and this approach, Michael Harris pointed out in his 1986 article "The Dialectic of Defeat: Antinomies in Research in Library and Information Science" (*Library Trends*, vol. 34, no. 3), "not only fails to explain the problem, but actually tends to mask its real nature." We need to give priority to research that examines complex social phenomena, such as the role of library service in face of the hegemony of modern corporate culture.

This book would do well as an introductory text for a graduate-level course in research methodology. It reads well

and is logically precise. That there is no index is not missed. However, the book sorely lacked bibliographic references necessary for additional reading; there were only eleven footnotes throughout this scholarly treatise. The authors did excellent work of succinctly reporting on a pressing social problem regarding future knowledge production in our in-

creasingly complex and interconnected world. This book is recommended reading for social science librarians, library educators, and others who wish to do library research. It would behoove all librarians to begin to discuss intelligently these same underlying issues.—*Noel D. Young, Berkley Public Library, Berkley, Massachusetts.*