The Expansion of an Industry, 1865–1919. New York: Bowker, 1975. 813p. $29.95. (LC 71-163903) (ISBN 0-8352-0489-9)

It was a pleasant surprise to all persons interested in the history of the American book when the first volume of this important work appeared in 1972 and its high quality was determined. It is even more surprising to see this second volume appear so soon after the first, and it is equally pleasant to note that it is of a quality commensurate with its forerunner. May the author be similarly successful in his projected third and final volume!

Make no mistake about it, this is a *big* book, probably exceeding 350,000 words of text in the one volume alone, plus extensive appended bibliographic paraphernalia. It is so big, in fact, as to raise a question as to just what readership the author is addressing. It is too extensive to serve as a textbook, and few readers are likely to sit down and read through its 800 full pages, despite the fact that it is very well written —even exciting in spots—and the typography and design are carefully chosen to facilitate its reading.

The projected trilogy will certainly serve as a reference set, as virtually all aspects of American publishing history are covered in a comprehensive and balanced manner. Since the text is arranged topically into chapters—except for one section which consists of anecdotes culled chronologically from *PW*—the reference user is heavily reliant upon the index. The index is very full, however, covering more than sixty pages, so it can be expected to serve this purpose admirably.

The volume consists primarily of a large number of extensive essays on different aspects of the American publishing scene from the Civil War to the end of World War I. There are accounts of marketing mechanisms; distribution problems; accounting practices; the economics of publishing, bookselling, and authorship; the rise of the literary agent; and the origins of the university press (Cornell, 1869). There are descriptions of music, textbook, and religious publishing; of the publication of children's books and paperbacks; of labor disputes in the printing industry; of serialization of novels and attempts to control prices; of the development of modern copyright; and the sad and usually silly history of censorship. Of considerable reference value is the large number of cameos— three to ten pages in length—of the major publishing houses of the era. And there is a nostalgia trip for those who were reared on *The Prisoner of Zenda, Alice of Old Vincennes, When Knighthood Was in Flower,* and other books of that ilk.

The author has sought widely for material, with the files of *PW,* newspapers, and literary periodicals serving as his main primary sources. He has also exploited what monographic scholarship has been accomplished on the subject, although these sources are interlarded with the many, usually less reliable, house histories sponsored by the houses themselves. In a few cases, where nothing better was available, he has had to use wholly unreliable local, city, and county histories, but he has done so cautiously. Statements drawing upon these latter two kinds of sources especially will be subject to future correction. The volume is an excellent, comprehensive, well-researched, and nicely written account of a key period in the development of the American book.—*David Kaser, Graduate Library School, Indiana University.*

Slote, Stanley J. *Weeding Library Collections.* (Research Studies in Library Science, no. 14) Littleton, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 1975. 177p. $10.00. (LC 74-23062) (ISBN 0-87287-105-3)

As the budgetary noose tightens, librarians are looking harder and harder for ways to realize greater cost efficiencies. Among the many solutions proposed is that capital outlay costs be deferred by transferring infrequently used materials to compact or regional storage areas. Though it was long felt that such weeding was a complex task to be done only by subject experts, it is now becoming clearer that the use criterion provides a simple and satisfactory way of identifying materials to be weeded. The theory upon which use-oriented weeding rests traces back to Bradford's "law of scattering," which was given mathematical shoring by Goffman and first applied to actual library weeding routines by Trueswell and Buckland.

Slote's book, basically a reworking of his frequently cited dissertation, shows that the fiction collections of several New Jersey public libraries conform in general to the "law of scattering" observed in other subject areas and other kinds of libraries. In brief, since recently used books are most likely to be reused books, they should constitute any library's "core" collection. Unused books should be stored or discarded. Since Slote intends his book to be a textbook, he also gives a brief history of weeding, a review of weeding literature, a rebuttal of other weeding criteria, and a clear description of "scientific" weeding routines.

On the practical side, Slote's weeding method is sensible and workable. As a textbook, however, the book is weakened by its narrowness of vision. For example, students need to consider at length the implications of the very real conflict that exists in academia between those who see the library as a repository and those who see it as a use-oriented knowledge dispenser. Students should also think about the peculiar coincidence that the no-growth model of the library has emerged simultaneously with the emergence of the no-growth model of the economy at large. That is, are we innovating or are we merely being swept along? On the mathematical side, surely graduate students should at least be shown "mathematical proofs," no matter if, as Slote says (p.64), they are "difficult to follow."

Such general questions aside, the book is badly organized, repetitive, and unnecessarily combative in tone. Rigorous editing could have reduced it to a longish how-to-do-it article for one of the general library periodicals. As it stands, it is a disappointing handling of an important idea, especially when compared with so solid a book as Buckland's *Book Availability and the Library User* (Pergamon, 1975) which develops this subject (as well as others) with such greater incisiveness.—*Peter Dollard, Monteith Library, Alma College, Alma, Michigan.*

Buckland, Michael K., *Book Availability and the Library User.* New York: Pergamon, 1975. 196p. $7.50 pa. (LC 74-8682) (ISBN 0-08-017709-3) (ISBN 0-08-018160-0 pa.).

Although the publisher's price of $7.50 for the paperback edition may appear a bit steep for a 196-page monograph, this book should become a classic. The investment in a personal copy should not be begrudged; it is a small price to pay for professional survival. The point may be argued, but I believe that Buckland's greatest contribution is his ability to develop a perspective on libraries and their problems which is thoroughly modern.

For example, Buckland recognizes and accepts a fact which much of the profession tries to ignore: that libraries are finite in nature, that there must and should be limits to their growth. Recognition of our limits must increase our awareness of the need to structure the library within those limits so that the best possible service can be provided to library users.

Service to users is, after all, the means by which most libraries today justify their existence and their annual budget requests. Yet as Buckland points out, there remains a great disparity in the attention paid by the profession to intellectual access and physical access or availability. The priorities assigned by users, and by funding agencies as well, have been clear for quite some time. What has been written on a subject, or even what the library owns on a subject, is generally a matter of less interest than what the library has available on the subject to meet a need at a specific time.

For those librarians ready to accept the concept of the limited library with service to users as its objective, Buckland suggests a number of methods for improving service and measuring it which have been developed through his own research and that of others. Even a partial list of these tools is impressive. One may determine what the optimum size of the library should be, what titles it should contain, and how long those titles should be retained. It is possible to directly measure user frustration with the library and to quantitatively measure the library's performance by its ability to make materials available when needed and to satisfy its users on a continuing basis.

The key to availability lies in understanding the relationship between user demand, loan period, and duplication policy. Clearly the level of demand will vary from title to