

Recent Publications

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|--|-----|
| <i>Handbook of Black Librarianship</i> , reviewed by Jessie Cottman Smith | 223 |
| <i>National Conference on New Directions in Law Libraries</i> , reviewed by Leslie W. Sheridan | 224 |
| Breivik, Patricia Senn. <i>Open Admissions and the Academic Library</i> , reviewed by Billy R. Wilkinson | 225 |
| <i>Preservation of Paper and Textiles of Historic and Artistic Value</i> , reviewed by Catherine G. Asher | 227 |
| <i>On-Line Library and Network Systems</i> , reviewed by Ron Miller | 228 |
| <i>Library Services to the Blind and Physically Handicapped</i> , reviewed by Lucille Whalen | 229 |
| Conference on Resource Sharing in Libraries, University of Pittsburgh, 1976. <i>Library Resource Sharing</i> , reviewed by Willis Bridegam | 230 |
| <i>Louis Round Wilson Centennial Day</i> , reviewed by Roscoe Rouse | 230 |
| <i>The Responsibility of the University Library Collection in Meeting the Needs of its Campus and Local Community</i> , reviewed by Roscoe Rouse | 230 |
| Thompson, Godfrey. <i>Planning and Design of Library Buildings</i> , 2d ed., reviewed by Hal B. Schell | 231 |
| <i>Studies in Library Management</i> , volume 4, reviewed by Michael B. Binder | 232 |
| Marshall, Joan K., comp. <i>On Equal Terms: A Thesaurus for Nonsexist Indexing and Cataloging</i> , reviewed by Lois M. Chan | 233 |
| <i>Library and Media: Marriage or Divorce</i> , reviewed by Cathleen Flanagan | 234 |
| Gebhardt, Walther, comp. <i>Special Collections in German Libraries</i> , reviewed by Kurt S. Maier | 236 |
| Davis, Cullom; Back, Kathryn; and MacLean, Kay. <i>Oral History from Tape to Type</i> , reviewed by Alice M. Hoffman | 236 |
| Baum, Willa K. <i>Transcribing and Editing Oral History</i> , reviewed by Alice M. Hoffman | 236 |
| <i>Prospects for Change in Bibliographic Control</i> , reviewed by Joseph A. Rosenthal | 238 |
| Abstracts | 240 |
| Other Publications of Interest to Academic Librarians | 244 |

BOOK REVIEWS

Handbook of Black Librarianship. Compiled and edited by E. J. Josey and Ann Allen Shockley. Littleton, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 1977. 392p. \$17.50 U.S. and Canada; \$21 elsewhere. LC 77-21817. ISBN 0-87287-179-7.

The *Handbook of Black Librarianship* is a unique single-volume compilation of the library world as it relates to blacks. Offering a variety of information on the relationship of Afro-Americans to various aspects of librarianship and libraries, the *Handbook* thoroughly defines Afro-American contributions to libraries and library education both past and present. It is an excellent beginning for documentation of Afro-American contributions in librarianship.

The book represents the work of twenty-four contributors and the two distinguished

librarians, E. J. Josey, chief of the Bureau of Specialist Library Services, New York State Education Department, and Ann Allen Shockley, associate librarian for public services and associate professor of library science at Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee, who compiled and edited the volume.

The seven major sections of the book contain thirty-seven topical essays arranged under selected headings, which embrace an enormous range of clear and concise topics.

Section 1, "Pioneers and Landmark Episodes," presents a chronology of achievements, biographical sketches of Afro-American forerunners in librarianship, and a brief history of the Hampton Institute Library School, the pioneer school of librarianship for blacks.

Section 2, "Early Library Organizations," describes in detail the origin and proceedings of early organizations in five states

where Afro-Americans were denied membership in white organizations. A chronology of events in black librarianship, 1808-1977, is thoroughly presented.

Section 3, "Contemporary Black Librarianship," traces the involvement of black librarians in library organizations, including the ALA Black Caucus and its impact on the American Library Association, as well as its role in motivating other caucus groups. Statistics on black libraries and librarians may be limited due to scope of and response from various surveys.

Section 4, "Vital Issues in Black Librarianship," does not attempt to deal with the total picture of librarianship in the Afro-American community but does discuss several serious issues the reviewer sees as being of prime concern to librarians in all types of libraries serving the black population. The contributors for this section appear to be more concerned with the patterns and importance of library services to children as cultural identity is developed and maintained. The academic librarian will be especially interested in the essay, "The Future of the Black College Library," and the emphasis placed on excellence of library services as vital to survival of the black college.

Section 5, "Significant Books and Periodicals For Black Collections," is a convenient, well-organized section that is in no way comprehensive; however, it can be of inestimable value for librarians attempting to build a core collection and to those interested in brief biographical sketches of black librarians as creative writers. For the most part, annotations for the reference books are brief but thorough.

Academic librarians will find the descriptive bibliography of selected African and Afro-American periodicals extremely useful based upon the four-point criteria by which selections were made to emphasize contents, worth, and usefulness of the titles. Other significant features of this section are brief essays dealing with black authors who have written best-sellers, black librarians who do creative writing, and black authors who have made significant contributions to knowledge and have been recognized through the ALA Notable Books list.

Sections 6 and 7, "African Resources" and

"Afro-American Resources," are outstanding features of the *Handbook*, which identify and describe resources for building African and Afro-American collections with emphasis on procurement and preservation. The essay entitled "Procurement of Materials from Africa" may well be a first attempt to describe the variety of programs and procedures involved in the selection and acquisition of African library materials. This is an invaluable resource for academic acquisitions librarians. The lists of reference books and periodicals, articles dealing with black authors, and listings of best-sellers all reflect the black experience in a unique manner. This reviewer believes this style of documentation to be a first. The black oral history programs, museums, and black historical societies are thoroughly researched and described.

Researchers will find the brief descriptions of four major African collections in the United States invaluable for locating source material. "Afro-American Resources" provides a mixture of ideas that academic librarians will find especially useful, ranging from the essentials for beginning collectors, pointers for archivists, and private collecting.

The bonus section of the *Handbook* adds value to the book as a general reference. There is much solid information, however fragmentally arranged. In order to retain its usefulness, updating will be necessary, especially where staff, budget, and acquisitions statistics are quoted.

The text is presented in clear, readable style, logically arranged. The *Handbook* is a must for all academic libraries and specifically for those serving predominantly blacks. It will be useful in homes and all other types of libraries as a basic reference. The binding looks good but unfortunately perhaps not as strong as needed.

The contributors, compilers, and editors are congratulated for their devoted labors, and perhaps noticeable gaps in coverage may be partially filled in a revised edition.—*Jessie Cottman Smith, University of Maryland, Eastern Shore, Princess Anne.*

National Conference on New Directions in Law Libraries, Denver, 1977. *National Conference on New Directions in Law Li-*