

good introduction with over 900 entries; the price is rather dear and the annotations inconsistent in quality, but instruction librarians will want to see this one.—*Anne Roberts, State University of New York at Albany.*

Kiewitt, Eva L. *Evaluating Information Retrieval Systems: The PROBE Program.*

Foreword by Bernard M. Fry. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979. 168p. \$15.95. LC 78-55322. ISBN 0-313-20521-3.

Currently, the use of on-line searching to retrieve bibliographic data from machine-readable bases has become such a common phenomenon, and the use of batch retrieval appears to be almost anachronistic. Nevertheless, in the early seventies, batch retrieval was still novel, experimental, and daring. At that time, ERIC was particularly concerned with the dissemination and use of the ERICAPES, and a number of universities and commercial organizations prepared programs that were predominantly batch mode-oriented. Ronald Tschudi prepared PROBE, a batch process for Indiana University. Eva Kiewitt, then education librarian, evaluated the program at the request of ERIC.

The primary purpose of the study was to test the performance of PROBE and recommend improvement and/or change. The information collected was ultimately used in the author's dissertation, "PROBE: Computer Searches of the ERICAPES—An Evaluation of a Pilot Study" (1973). The present study is neither as tight nor as well organized as that dissertation and to some extent suffers by comparison. However, the intent and functions of this book are different from the dissertation, and although the author has drawn heavily on that thesis, it has been manipulated and massaged for publication.

The book has merit. It is a good state of the art on the literature evaluating the performance of information retrieval systems, and is particularly useful for library school students. Not only does Eva Kiewitt review the classic literature in this area, but through her discussion of the pitfalls and mistakes that she experienced in her study of PROBE future evaluators can profit from

her errors. The reader is provided with a number of caveats and guidelines. It is unfortunate, however, that she has not significantly updated her original bibliography. Fewer than 10 percent of the references bear post-1973 imprints.

The book does have other limitations and omissions and is at times frustrating, especially when the author reaches conclusions that do not appear to be supported by the data. Among these limitations is the failure to include evaluations and studies comparing on-line and batch-oriented search services. Inasmuch as one of the stated purposes of the book was to determine, not only if changes should be made in PROBE, but also to determine whether "it should be used in addition to or in place of the use of online capabilities," it is disappointing that the author does not come to grips with this stated purpose.

A more extensive investigation of this problem would have been appropriate inasmuch as DIALOG, an on-line retrieval service, is already available to students and faculty on the Indiana campus. Only one comparative study is reported, and a very brief summary of the methodology and the results is presented. The study undertaken in 1977 replicating the 1973 study simply substantiated the 1973 findings, and on this basis the author recommended that PROBE or a "similar program" remain an integral part of the overall reference services.

Then the author again recommends that the advantages of batch mode retrieval be compared to on-line access in order to determine whether PROBE is still a viable form for searching ERIC tapes. One suspects that although the 1977 study confirmed user satisfaction, adequate turnaround time, and the lower cost of the PROBE search versus the DIALOG search, the author still suspected its feasibility. She is careful to point out that cost analysis of PROBE is based on the pricing structure at the university and that additional costs are built into a retrospective search. Other limitations of PROBE are noted, and one questions its lower cost benefits.

There are a number of unanswered questions that remain after completing the book. Why, for instance, has Kiewitt failed to compare the original and the current goals

of PROBE? This is one of her recommendations, and yet it is difficult to understand how one can examine the feasibility of a system without examining its goals. What is the justification of maintaining PROBE with its searching limitations? How would the addition of supporting data bases such as *Psychological Abstracts* affect cost? And a minor irritation. Why has the author omitted punctuation from the title of the book? It was difficult to determine whether this was a two-part essay or whether PROBE had a built-in evaluation program.

The author has attempted to include too much information in too little space. As a result, many topics are hastily and unevenly covered. Although the review of pre-1973 literature is extensive, later studies, as pointed out, are slighted. The 1973 study is presented in laborious detail, the 1977 study sketchily. Little or no attempt is made to summarize results, and one wonders if the brief history of ERIC was really necessary. The author, however, does present a good case for continuous evaluation of retrieval systems, and the study of PROBE is probably not only of historic interest but should prove helpful to future evaluators.—*Sylvia G. Faibisoff, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb.*

Evans, G. Edward. *Developing Library Collections*. Library Science Text Series. Littleton, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 1979. 340p. \$15 U.S. and Canada; \$18 elsewhere. LC 78-27303. ISBN 0-87287-145-2.

Collection Development. LJ Special Report #6. New York: Library Journal, 1978. 80p. \$5; cash with order, \$3.95. ISBN 0-8352-1129-0. ISSN 0362-448X.

Changes and studies relating to collection development make it difficult to produce a textbook on the subject that is anything more than a general overview, which is soon out-of-date. Those previous books that have succeeded have concentrated on general principles and not specifics. Evans tries to combine these principles with practical applications to cover collection development in all libraries. The result is a well-written yet flawed discussion of collection development principles and applications.

Evans defines collection development as

being comprised of six elements: community analysis, policies, selection, acquisitions, weeding, and evaluation. (Preservation of library materials is, unfortunately, completely ignored.) Each topic is described in detail, with variation depending on the type of library. The chapters on selection (one on audiovisuals and one on books) are quite strong, with emphasis on current selection aids and their applicability. Students should find the short synopses of nine previous books on collection development to be especially useful.

The book attempts to show that selection of library materials does not take place in a vacuum. Thus, Evans covers not only A/V selection; he also describes the production, distribution, and acquisition of these items. Similarly, there are chapters on production and distribution of books and a description of basic ordering procedures. Unfortunately, some of his statements in this area are incorrect; Ford's revised work on acquisitions remains a better student text in this area. However, while areas related to collection development are covered, Evans doesn't manage to convey the importance of seeing collection development as an integral part of total library operations.

Evans discusses interlibrary cooperation, copyright, and censorship in separate chapters under a "related issues" heading. The description of the effect on collection development of the new copyright law is very general. Ten pages are wasted by simply reproducing sections of the new copyright law.

There are too many gaps to make this an effective text. Neither the article by Edelman and Tatum (*C&RL*, May 1976) on development of collections nor Magrill and East's excellent review of collection development trends (*Advances in Librarianship*, v.8) is cited in the text. Budgeting is not well covered; Clapp-Jordan is practically ignored, while common terms, such as periodical back files, are explicitly defined. The usefulness of this book to both librarians and students is undermined by its broad scope, general coverage, and failure to discuss important issues, such as those raised by Galvin and Kent in their Pittsburgh study.

The LJ Special Report is mistitled. It is