McClure, Charles R. *Information for Academic Library Decision-Making: The Case for Organizational Information Management.* Contributions in Librarianship and Information Science, no.31. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1980. 227p. $23.95. LC 79-8412. ISBN 0-313-21398-4.

Decision making, for some time the darling of management theorists, has finally made its formal debut into librarianship. Given the increasing complexity of academic libraries both in their organizational development and in their utilization of technology, it is no wonder that investigators should now begin to examine the process by which library management decisions are made. This is a useful and important research study, derived from the author's 1977 doctoral dissertation.

Several underlying assumptions of the study bear emphasis. "(1) The most important resource of the organization is the individual, and (2) every employee is a decision-maker" (p.186). McClure examines the patterns of factual information exchange among library staff members. He demonstrates that various staff groups access and utilize different types of information in a situation-specific manner. His concern, which is every administrator's concern, is that "if an organization employs twenty individuals who are contributing to the accomplishment of goals at only 75 percent of their potential, there is a loss of five positions in the organization" (p.171). He effectively argues that if more staff members have a wider and better selection of information on which to base their contribution to the total decision-making process, better and more responsive library services will be developed. This is not a new discovery, but what is significant in this book is that now there are empirical data to describe just how information is utilized in a number of libraries. Beyond that—without rehashing the old shibboleths about participative management—McClure provides practical guidance on how the opportunities for participation can be extended to more staff on the basis of enhanced "organizational information management."

The study draws on many of the most important user studies of management and technical information that have been produced over the last fifteen years. It also incorporates some useful concepts from, and references to, recent research on communication in organizations.

McClure points up one important and possibly surprising fact that may reflect more on the libraries in his sample population than on general practice in the field. He states with regard to management information that "of primary importance is the consideration that for many libraries there simply are no internal or statistical reports" (p.165). I can see how this may be the case in some academic libraries, but in most that I have known either as employee or consultant there has been an overwhelming flood of internal reports. Perhaps the point is really that there are few up-to-date, problem-oriented reports effectively employing empirical data to support management recommendations. This is certainly the case, although ARL's SPEC Kits (Systems and Procedures Exchange) have helped to address this problem somewhat through the sharing of certain reports of general applicability. Computer-based management information systems (MIS) are also needed to provide detailed library statistical data on demand.

The final point is not a criticism of the study, which is outstanding within the scope of its coverage. The research, however, deals primarily with the factual components of information necessary for managemental decision making. It is doubtless understood, though not explicitly acknowledged, that there are other information components of decision making that may in some cases be as important as or more important than concrete facts, i.e., the values, experience, and purposes of the contributors, as well as the historical and political characteristics of the setting.—*Robert S. Runyon, University of Nebraska at Omaha.*

"**Special Issue on AACR2.**" James Thompson, ed. *Alternative Catalog Newsletter,* no.21 (June 1980). $5 (prepaid). ISSN 0161-7192. (Available from: Milton S. Eisenhower Library, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD 21218.)

In February 1980, editors of the *Alternative Catalog Newsletter*—convinced that

opposition to AACR2 was widespread on the grounds of cost of implemention and lack of conviction that the new rules greatly improved on AACR1—invited readers to submit their opinions. Issue 21 contains replies received.

As this review is being prepared, OCLC is "flipping" headings to AACR2 forms, and libraries everywhere are gearing up to cope with changes now less than a month away. If the editors hoped to stem this tide, they have probably failed. However, the issue makes interesting reading, and future revisers of catalog rules should take note.

Thirty-one persons responded. Eighteen were from small to medium-size university libraries. The rest represented special, college, and very large research libraries and one was a vendor of data-base services. Most writers were catalogers and heads of cataloging, with a sprinkling of library directors and heads of technical services. Thirteen took the opportunity to let off steam about the rules themselves. Six others, while generally positive about the code, favored deferring all or part of AACR2 until on-line authority control is in place, in order to lessen the devastating effect of massive changes on file maintenance. Only eleven were supportive of full implementation of AACR2 in January 1981, several on the grounds that it's far too late rather than because of overwhelming enthusiasm for the rules.

Not surprisingly, Michael Gorman, one of the editors of AACR2, takes to task "no-neck administrators" who prefer "dumb headings" to the cost of change. Several others, however, point to equally "dumb" portions of the code. Jim Thompson comments that, between the ambiguities and inconsistencies in AACR2 itself and the decisions on applying it at the Library of Congress, "it will be virtually impossible for a cataloger in any other library to create a record which another cataloger can accept with confidence." The hope that AACR2 would increase standardization seems not to have been achieved.

AACR2 may have had more input from the field than previous code revisions, but until publication only a few persons had seen a complete draft. Patrons, those for whom cataloging presumably is done, were not consulted at all. Administrators and others ask why impact studies were not done *before* adoption and why so much time and effort should be invested in the card catalog just before it ceases to exist.

Those who took up *ACN*'s invitation are, for the most part, thoughtful, rational librarians who will comply somehow with AACR2 because they have no choice. Most of them are dependent not only on the Library of Congress but also on data bases such as OCLC and RLIN. Not complying would be even more expensive. However, they raise serious questions about the wisdom of this step at this time.

Since rule revision is an ongoing process, AACR2 will not be the last code. In the future, drafts of proposed changes should be distributed and publicized more widely. Those who are highly critical then have the responsibility to express their concerns while there is still time.—*Mina H. Daniels, State University of New York at Albany.*

Osborn, Andrew D. *Serial Publications: Their Place and Treatment in Libraries.* 3d ed. Chicago: American Library Assn., 1980. 486p. $20. LC 80-11686. ISBN 0-8389-0299-5.

Eighteen years elapsed between the first and second editions of this book, but only seven years between the second and third editions. This is a recognition of the local, national, and international developments in librarianship, technology, and economics that have affected serials purchasing, cataloging, and accessibility. A thorough effort has been made to update names and editions in the text and in the chapter bibliographies, leaving the basic organization of the text unaltered. Osborn mentions the "growth of understanding in serials management," the financial crisis of the seventies, and progress in automation. However, the text does not give a full and integrated discussion of the concerns foremost in the minds of those working with serials and administering the overall collection: automation of local records, economics and budgeting, full text retrieval, and nontraditional formats including electronic journals.

The book still offers the best available introduction to the basic traditional procedures of serials processing within libraries.