

Recent Publications

BOOK REVIEWS

ALA World Encyclopedia of Library and Information Services. 2d ed. Ed. by Robert Wedgworth and others. Chicago: American Library Assn., 1986. 895p. \$165 (ISBN 0-8389-0427-0). LC 86-10894.

To a large extent, the second edition of the *ALA World Encyclopedia of Library and Information Services* follows a format that resembles the original, 1980 version. In addition to an "Outline of Contents" consisting of five major sections, it contains hundreds of essays ranging in length from a few hundred words to more than 25,000 words. Arranged alphabetically by subject, the articles, many of which include pertinent tables and photographs, cover a vast array of topics—for example, education, abstracting and indexing, professional organizations, and philosophy of librarianship. Without a doubt, the heaviest concentration of subject matter occurs in the area of biography: there are entries on more than 200 people who have contributed substantially to the profession of librarianship. Another substantial portion consists of essays on the status of libraries in more than 150 countries.

There are some major differences between the two editions as well. Aside from the increase in the number of pages from 601 to 895, the most conspicuous is the replacement of the parallel index with a more traditional subject index. This is definitely a change for the better because it allows for much quicker and more thorough access to the text. The "Outline of Contents" also has been modified. Although both editions use the same five main divisions in classifying material, there are changes within these sections in the sec-

ond edition. For example, a few subjects have been deleted while others have been transferred from one section to another. Some topics have been condensed to the point where they no longer exist in their original form, as in the case of "State Library Agencies in the United States." Other sections have been expanded, particularly in the area of biographical articles. Except for section 3, "Theory and Practice of Librarianship," there is little change in the structural format of the remaining four major divisions covering "The Library in Society," "The Library as an Institution," "Education and Research," and "International Library, Information, and Bibliographic Organizations." The "Outline of Contents" remains one of the most valuable parts of the *ALA Encyclopedia* and, in conjunction with the new indexing approach, provides even better access to the articles in the volume. It can further serve as a teaching aid; and the modifications in the second edition enhance its usefulness in the instructional area.

On the whole, the essays are well written and accurately reflect the subject matter in a concise manner. According to the editor, approximately 85 percent of those in the original edition have been revised, representing the combined efforts of 411 contributors and 31 advisers from all over the world. Nevertheless, an unevenness in quality exists in some of the essays, particularly where a lengthy article is subdivided among various authors. For example, nine individuals prepared the extended work on "Archives." Most of its sections are informative and well done, but a few fail to include references to the

most important of recent secondary sources for their subject areas. In one instance, no new information at all was added in the second edition while in another, mention of relatively recent studies that analyze trends was omitted.

Even more importantly, a few subjects receive very little attention. The U.S. Government Depository Program serves as a good example. Although this subject may or may not warrant a separate essay, it certainly deserves more attention than what its effect has been on "Law Libraries" (p.443). It is ignored in otherwise fine pieces, "National Libraries—Deposit Laws" and the protracted essay on libraries in the United States. Perhaps this oversight can be attributed to the new indexing format in the *Encyclopedia*, which supposedly is to be used in conjunction with other sources (p.v) such as the *ALA Yearbook of Library and Information Services*. This annual quite appropriately focuses on current issues of the U.S. Government Depository Program; it does not provide a synopsis of its origins and major historical

developments. For users who require an overview on the dissemination of government publications in the U.S., the *ALA Yearbooks* are a poor substitute for an informative article in a single source.

Like the text, the new subject index also suffers from a certain level of incompleteness. Although it is much better than the parallel index, it does not contain any reference to some individuals and organizations discussed in the articles. For example, no reference is made to William Caxton (p.224) nor to the Instituto Columbiano de Cultura, either under its full title or under its acronym COLCULTURA (p.213). The index, as one of the fundamental access points, definitely needs to be expanded in later editions.

The second edition of the *ALA World Encyclopedia of Library and Information Services* constitutes a major undertaking for which the editors, advisers, and contributors are to be complimented. Taken in its totality, this volume is useful and has reference value. Any weaknesses in this second edition are comparatively few in number; it

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definitely marks a major improvement over the original version.—James W. Geary, Kent State University, Ohio.

Information Technology and Information Use: Towards a Unified View of Information and Information Technology.

Ed. by Peter Ingwersen, Leif Kajberg, and Annelise Mark Pejtersen. London: Taylor Graham, 1986. 194p. \$37 (ISBN 0-947568-06-9).

This volume comprises thirteen papers presented at a seminar entitled "Information Technology as a Tool for Information Use" at the Royal School of Librarianship, Copenhagen, in May 1985. The seminar was international in scope and produced papers on diverse topics, but, as a collection of such, this volume fails to present the unified view of information science theory or practice that is suggested by the subtitle. In fact, there are several conflicting viewpoints presented in the various papers.

Well-known authors in information science, such as F. W. Lancaster and Blaise Cronin, have contributed to this collection. The papers are organized under three themes: (1) "Socio-Economic Aspects and Policy-Making"; (2) "Information Systems Design: Pragmatic Issues"; and (3) "Education for Information." Lancaster has contributed an excellent introduction in which he raises several important questions concerning the present state of information technology and accessibility to information. He expresses his doubt that subject specialists have any better access to the relevant literature in their fields than they had before the advent of computerized information systems. He also predicts a vital role for the information gatekeepers of the future. Both of these viewpoints are contradicted by other authors.

Common themes addressed in this volume are the difficulty of measuring qualitative and quantitative contributions of information and information technology in organizations, the debate concerning generalization versus specialization in library and information science education, and the question of whether there will be greater or lesser future roles for librarians