

munication, a link that is essential to the development of a post-World War Two global exchange of ideas through communication networks.

Day analyzes Levy's use of the word *virtual* both through an examination of the influence of French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari on Levy's work and by an explication of Levy's arguments concerning the relationship between capitalism and the construction of information. Finally, Day explores the ways in which Heidegger critiqued information culture's model of language and truth and Benjamin's "engagement with the congruence of aesthetics, history, knowledge and technical reproduction in the modern phenomena of public information." Day's critique of Benjamin's observations from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is especially pertinent to today as one considers the shattering effects of the industrial age, and in particular, the development of mass communication's technical reproduction, on local knowledge. A return to Benjamin's project has surprising resonance in our present era of "creative destruction," a term used by Joseph Schumpeter and made current by Alan Greenspan to describe the continuous "scrapping" of old technologies for new ones.

This is a pretty demanding book, yet Day is engaged in more than an academic exercise in the hermeneutics of information. He also challenges our profession to think carefully about the word *information* and its use when he writes, "Information professionals and theorists question very little what information is, why it should be valued, or why it is an economic and social 'good.'" The word *information* is applied to literacy, equity of access, and freedom, as well as to policy statements and initiatives, yet rarely challenged "with any social, political, and historical depth"; both meaning and connotation are taken at face value. *The Modern Invention of Information* is worth reading for those who wish to explore its deeper meaning.—William Welburn, *The University of Iowa*.

Jackson, H. J. *Marginalia: Readers Writing in Books*. New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale Univ. Pr., 2001. 324p. \$27.95, alk. paper (ISBN 0300088167). LC 00-043721.

Historically, librarians have had little tolerance for notes scribbled in book margins, seeing no pardonable difference between them and other forms of book defacement. Transgressors have not had an easy time of it at the hands of our professional ancestors. For example, 2,700 years ago, Ashurbanipal's librarians called down the wrath of Adad and Ishtar on the heads of tablet defacers, and during the Middle Ages, monastic librarians placed "anathemas" (curses) and other drastic injunctions in books to dissuade potential abusers. Throughout history, it is clear, members of our profession have had nothing but evil thoughts and threats (and replacement fees) for self-styled book improvers, witty emendators, underliners, and moustacheurs.

Whether we like it or not, however, marginalia and the many other forms of spontaneous, often subversive reader reactions found in "author-ized" texts are in and have become the darling of historians and literary scholars. Consider, for example, Alexander J. Peden's *Graffiti of Pharaonic Egypt* (Brill 2001), in which demotic scribbblings found in Egyptian tombs are described as a "more accurate reflection of the character of the Egyptian era of the pharaohs than the far more polished artistic or literary works" they appear next to. Another recent work, *The Medieval Professional Reader at Work*, by Kathryn Kerby-Fulton and Maidie Hilmo (Univ. of Victoria 2001), subjects the marginalia of medieval clerics and scribes (one known only as the "Red Ink Annotator," as if he were some daring and mysterious bandit) to careful and revealing study, yielding a veritable "taxonomy of marginalia in late medieval English manuscripts" and contributing to a "recovery of medieval reader response."

So is it okay now to scribble in books? Well, if you ask a frontline librarian, no, it still isn't. Exceptions will be granted

only to the long-deceased or to luminaries (also dead) the likes of Horace Walpole (known as “the prince of annotators”), Charles Darwin, Herman Melville, or Ezra Pound—all avid writers of marginal notes. But even then, it depends who you ask. Of Samuel Taylor Coleridge one librarian has said that he “would spoil anyone’s books if he could get his hands on them.” And yet, as H. J. Jackson documents in her delightful work, *Marginalia: Readers Writing in Books*, Coleridge was often begged by owners of private collections to write in the margins of books they owned, marks that would then be shown with pride to later visitors, as if to say “Coleridge was here.”

We as librarians find ourselves thrust into a difficult situation. On the one hand, we remain charged, as Jackson puts it, with the “defense of other people’s books,” and that means the protection of the pristine page, the property, at least intellectually, of the author alone. On the other, however, books with annotations by important individuals have not only high provenance value for the collector but also may open up, as we are increasingly becoming aware, a unique window upon a prominent annotator’s intellectual development. The marginal note can be, as Jackson writes, “invaluable for the unusually direct access it provides to the author’s thought processes and secret obsessions.” This makes these notes simi-

lar to diary entries, for marginalia, too, are often a “means of introspection and free association of ideas.” But unlike diary entries, marginalia stand in direct proximity to the ideas of others that have given rise to them, reflecting a kind of “creative symbiosis” of the annotator’s thoughts with those of the author of the annotated book.

So librarians should take a deep breath, step back from their role as defenders of the sanctity of the printed page, and consider with the author of this book, as the publisher’s blurb suggests, how marginalia can “add richness to the reading experience, bring[ing] the reader into conversation with authors and with readers who have come before.” Indeed, it is, above all, as an educated and perceptive reader of marginalia that Jackson presents her thoughts on the topic. She peruses at length, for example, a heavily written-in copy of Boswell’s *Life of Samuel Johnson* (1791) that the British Library purchased—for a considerable sum, by the way—from the London bookseller Thomas Rodd in 1839. Notes populate the margins on almost every page of this copy of Boswell’s book, providing a rich contemporary reading of an important source work, yet no one has ever determined for sure who hides behind the mask of “Scriblerus,” as the otherwise anonymous male annotator refers to himself. It becomes clear in reading down these margins that the annotator knows many of Johnson’s contemporaries personally—Burke, Langton, Reynolds, and Garrick among them—and for that reason, among others, takes great delight in correcting Boswell’s facts and refuting his opinions. (“Bozzy,” Scriblerus writes at one point with derisive intimacy, “Thou art an absolute Idiot to print this.”) At the end of her exposition, Jackson ventures a highly educated guess as to Scriblerus’s real identity—in the process adding whole layers to our understanding of Johnson, Boswell, and their reception by contemporaries, but, above all, of the exegetical potential of the marginal note.

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Jackson gives a similarly detailed reading to the scribbled oeuvre of many other famous annotators, among them William Blake, S. T. Coleridge, Hester Lynch Piozzi, Mark Twain, Ezra Pound, and T. H. White. In all, about 200 titles are listed in her bibliography of annotated books, each with copy location and annotator's name. (Doodlers are ennoblingly referred to as "extra-illustrators.") In addition, the relatively few instances of published marginalia are included in the separate bibliography of secondary works, among these the huge corpus that belongs to the Coleridge *Collected Works* edition published by Princeton University Press. (The sixth and final volume of Coleridge marginalia, *Valckenaer to Zwick*, was edited by H. J. Jackson and published by Princeton in November 2001.)

Jackson's eleven-page bibliography of secondary sources is also valuable for uncovering a body of literature that will surely inform further study of the topic. This literature ranges from compilations and catalogs of annotated books, such as the British Library's *Books with Manuscript: Short Title Catalogue of Books with Manuscript Notes* (1994), to interesting treatments of marginalia in out-of-the-way sources, among them a how-to guide by Mortimer J. Adler ("How to Mark a Book"), published in 1940 in the *Saturday Review of Literature*.

Only as the present reader finished reviewing this book did he realize that he had not written anything in its margins. This was a missed opportunity because of all the books that have ever crossed his desk, this one seems in retrospect to cry out to be written in, underlined, dog-eared-generally to receive all the marks of "self-assertive appropriation" dealt with on its pages. Yet another reason to look forward to a sequel.—*Jeffrey Garrett, Northwestern University.*

Libraries & Democracy: The Cornerstones of Liberty. Ed. Nancy Kranich. Chicago: ALA, 2001. 223p. \$32 (ISBN 083890808X). LC 2001-22974.

I think it would be a fair assessment to

say that, generally speaking, most Americans do not spend a lot of time contemplating the institution of democracy. Let's face it, the majority of us take it for granted. After the September 11 tragedy, however, I think that many of us have been reexamining what it means to live and work in a free society and more important, what it means to be a citizen in a democracy. If we look at the institutions that embody and best symbolize our democratic ideals, libraries are at the forefront, especially in their defense of free and open access to information for all people.

Nancy Kranich, associate dean of libraries at New York University and the 2000–2001 president of the ALA, uses this volume to expand on her ALA presidential theme, "Libraries: The Cornerstone of Democracy." Her book is a collection of twenty essays written by professionals (some notable) in the field of library and information science, in which they share their insights on the role that libraries play in advancing democracy. It presents a historical overview of libraries and democracy in civil society, and addresses issues pertaining to technology, copyright, censorship, ethics, free speech, and advocacy.

The Introduction, written by Kranich, sets the tone of the collection by declaring that "libraries serve the most fundamental ideals of our society as uniquely democratic institutions." She explains that although citizens may have a rudimentary understanding of the relationship between libraries and democracy, very little has been written that openly discusses "the meaning of libraries as cornerstones of democracy." Kranich's goal with this collection is to present a range of perspectives on the role that libraries play in advancing "deliberative democracy." What is achieved is a collection of essays all enthusiastically supportive of libraries and librarians.

Section I is composed of densely written essays addressing the role of libraries in democracy from a historical and theoretical perspective; it is informative to the