

# Recent Publications

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Universities, Information Technology, and Academic Libraries: The Next Twenty Years.* Academic Libraries Frontiers Conference, UCLA, Lake Arrowhead Conference Center, December 13-17, 1981. Robert M. Hayes, ed. Norwood, N.J.: Ablex, 1986. 178p. \$29.95. LC 85-22879. ISBN 0-89391-266-2.

The conference from which this book is derived was organized by the editor, who is dean of UCLA's library school, with support from the Council on Library Resources. It brought together approximately forty-five selected participants (academic research library directors, library school deans, university administrators, representatives of library consortia and associations, and sponsors of library development programs) to consider the future of universities and their research libraries through the remainder of this century and to deliberate on the needs for research on academic librarianship and for education for management of academic research libraries.

What this book can offer the potential reader is substantial, but probably a good deal less than its title might suggest. Since everything in it is five years old, this is hardly a preferred source of material on the status of developments in information technology, academic libraries, or universities. And, since the title's indicated concern for "the next twenty years" is respected only sketchily and unevenly in the text, a reader would search in vain for some conference product that tabulates chronologically the major developments to be anticipated in academic research libraries through the end of the century.

Indeed, one will find barely any confer-

ence product at all here. The book is primarily an assemblage of material describing the background and conduct of the conference that is sandwiched in with the texts of background talks, which were delivered by six distinguished, invited speakers for the purpose of stimulating deliberation by conference participants. Also, the editor has tabulated and characterized the various issues that were uppermost in the participants' minds, as reflected in the personal lists of five main issues that each attendee was asked to bring to the conference.

The meager product of the discussion sessions takes up only seven pages in the final chapter. It consists of two groups of statements prescribing educational objectives to be met and research tasks to be undertaken in connection with academic librarianship. The educational objectives are familiar ones relating to technology, management, academic environment, and fundamentals of librarianship; input from other disciplines; recruitment of superior students; and continuing education. The thirty-nine research tasks are presented without any intrinsic or accompanying explanation of why they are particularly timely or what purposes they will serve. These tasks are stated so broadly that, as guides to action, they are sterile. For example: "Identify how information needs are currently being met in the university, and project what means are likely to be used in the future." Or: "Carry out parallel studies of librarians' attitudes and perceptions of faculty." Although the transcripts from the closing session make plain that at least some of the conferees were euphoric about new insights gained,

the product presented here seems to show that the doctors and saints of this event, like Omar of yore, went out by the same door where in they went.

Nevertheless, there is plenty of worthwhile reading in this book for academic librarians who take their profession seriously. The six background papers that fill most of the pages provide, collectively, a treasure of carefully considered, even inspired, organization and interpretation of information bearing on the future of universities and their libraries. The papers are by three university presidents: William Gerberding (University of Washington); John Brademas (New York University); and Steven Muller (Johns Hopkins University) and three vice-presidents: Gerald Stevens (Yale); William Schaefer (UCLA); and Howard Resnikoff (Harvard). Their presentations overlap in scope, but they focus on different aspects of the outlook for universities: economic and political environments, future student population, information technologies and their impacts, and prospects for academic programs and organizational structures.

The panorama suggested by this group of presentations is one in which we will see universities adapting, perforce and clumsily, to: continuing technological and social revolution, fairly static instructional volume and older students, proportionally more foreign students, uneven progress in accommodation of minorities, unlikely restoration of generous government support for students or institutions, growing demand for vocational instruction, shrinkage in areas of liberal arts and social science, aging faculties, competition from commercial providers of vocationally oriented instruction, increased cooperation with industry as a way of securing support, increased conflict of interest between faculty and institution, and slowed growth of basic scholarship and research. Universities will need to revise dramatically their instructional methods and adapt their organizational structures in order to coordinate broad information activities based on technology. Academic libraries, if they are perceptive and adaptable, can avoid sliding into irrele-

vance by becoming the multifaceted information hub of the emerging university. These prospects, and what can be done about them by universities and libraries, are elaborated to different degrees in the several papers.

So far, in the passage of time since original presentation of these papers, no important surprises or omissions have turned up to diminish the authors' credibility. Their insights are of the kind that trigger creative thinking about useful courses of action for education and academic librarianship.

Readers must depend on their own ingenuity for integrating related passages from the several papers. Expect no help from the subject index, which is vapid and usually fails to link discussions of similar concepts when the speakers used different phraseology or contexts, but the name index could conceivably help some readers.—Ben-Ami Lipetz, *School of Information Science and Policy, State University of New York at Albany.*

*International Librarianship Today and Tomorrow: A Festschrift for William J.*

*Welsh.* Comp. by Joseph W. Price and Mary S. Price. New York: K.G. Saur, 1985. 174p. \$32.50. ISBN 3-598-10586-X.

In his preface to *Index to Festschriften in Librarianship*, J. Periam Danton characterizes festschriften and provides the basis on which to judge this genre. A festschrift is meant to honor "a more or less distinguished individual" with a volume of contributions "by the honoree's friends and colleagues who are also usually prominent in their fields," and to have lasting significance. A biography of the honoree is usually present; a bibliography of his or her work is always present. Danton adds, however: "In the field of librarianship, at least, there is a considerable number of works in which both are lacking. Indeed in a few Festschriften there is no indication whatever, either on the title page or in the preface, introduction, dedication, foreword, text, or appendix—of who the honoree is, where he was active, or in what field!"

The compilers of this volume have not