

Recent Publications

BOOK REVIEWS

Library Response to Urban Change: A Study of the Chicago Public Library.

By Lowell A. Martin. Chicago: American Library Association, 1969. 320p. \$8.50.

Like a bogged down dinosaur, struggling feebly, while its healthy neighbors fed upon it, the Chicago Public Library was sinking slowly. Then the alarm was sounded. The afflictions and deficiencies of the library were agonizingly detailed in a series of newspaper articles. The second city was shamed. What to do? Citizens sprang into action. Experts were asked to examine the patient.

It is highly appropriate that the consultants were headed by Dr. Lowell Martin, a Chicago native, former member of the C.P.L. staff, one of the most knowledgeable and highly respected public library experts. Dr. Martin has provided a model study, both practical and farsighted, based on deep understanding of the potential capabilities of the public library. The report is studded with helpful maps, tables, charts and graphs.

The basic premise is that "the urban condition calls for something more than 'business as usual.'" It is pointed out that "Chicago, with other cities, will not be allowed many mistakes; either it will maintain its institutions of communication and understanding, or it will lose power and validity." The Chicago Public Library is called upon to aim for "excellence and innovation" and "to adjust to the people of the city in all their diversity, rather than expecting the people to conform to a standard institution."

Dr. Martin says, "The problem is not to remake our libraries into something other than libraries—a new form of school, a community meeting place, an amusement center—but rather to take the inherent strength of a 'library,' as a resources center with materials for self-realization, and

relate it to the multifarious interests of a society that is re-examining itself." The report outlines a dynamic "library response to urban change."

Beginning with analysis of the people in their varying levels of education, interests, needs and ethnic differences, the report inquires into the library's public services and personnel and technical services. It recommends use of the new technology, including computers. Then come organization, financial support, and administration. The responsibilities of the library as a chief communication and research agency in the metropolitan area are recognized. Creative solutions for the central building, regional organization, and branch problems are offered. Inner city library service is stressed.

Two recommendations show the advanced point of view of the report:

At whatever level, library resources will be as much film as print, as much sound as words, as much leaflet as book.

The various outlets and units of the Chicago Public Library will be linked by communications connections for sight and sound which will make resources available rapidly at any point in the system.

In setting forth the priorities for the next decade, Dr. Martin lays it on the line: "Three ingredients are essential . . . the will to change and develop, money to pay the way, and personnel to get the job done."

It will be interesting to see if these ingredients are marshaled to revitalize this library. The next moves are up to the Chicago elected officials and library trustees. Dr. Martin and his enlightened associates have diagnosed the ailments and prescribed the treatment. If their advice is followed, a torpid institution will come alive as a source of pride for Chicago and an example to be followed by other cities.

Library Response to Urban Change is required reading for librarians. If they use its fertile ideas in their planning, the citi-

zens will benefit enormously. Every city can and should have such a library as Dr. Martin envisions for Chicago, a "nerve center . . . for contemporary information, in substance functioning as the fact bank, information switchboard, and special library for the general populace."—*Edwin Castagna, Enoch Pratt Free Library.*

Library Automation; a State of the Art Review. Ed. by Stephen R. Salmon. Chicago: American Library Association, 1969. 175p. \$7.50. (73-77283).

The papers presented at the ALA Pre-conference Institute on Library Automation at San Francisco in June 1967 constitute this volume. The purpose of the institute was to inform ALA members of the state of the art of library automation. It achieved its purpose, and with the principal exception of on-line applications described since 1967, it still constitutes an informative review for librarians not directly involved in research and development.

Separate sections of the report are devoted to acquisitions, cataloging, serials, and circulation, but the publication lacks an adequate review of information retrieval. Necessarily lacking are descriptions of on-line systems in acquisitions, serials, and circulation that have been activated since 1967.

Other sections discuss the MARC Project at the Library of Congress, networks, system analysis and design, and buildings. The MARC Project has had major developments since 1967, which of course are not in *Library Automation*. On the other hand, system analysis and design is a timeless topic. One of the most interesting sections is that by Robert H. Rohlf entitled "Building-Planning Implications of Automation." This section does not give cookbook answers to those who wish detailed replies to the question "How will library automation affect the building I am planning?" but it does give a valuable basis from which effective planning can proceed.

Library Automation will be a useful and informative publication for some years to come.—*Frederick G. Kilgour, The Ohio College Library Center.*

Cataloging U.S.A. By Paul S. Dunkin. Chi-

cago: American Library Association, 1969. 159p. \$5.00. (69-17830).

Paul Dunkin has given us a brief survey of cataloging theory in the United States. He prefaces his book with an annotated list of the most influential writings on cataloging; after which he summarizes the cataloging codes from Cutter's on. Then, under each problem area—entry, description, subject, classification, the catalog—he discusses the major points of view and their theoretical bases. His expressed intention is to show why we catalog as we do.

The categories, assumptions, and objectives of the transcendent theories are presented with clarity. We see how we arrived at our current practices, that they do not form a coherent whole and reflect historical not logical development. They are largely "the accumulation of what has been done in LC" (p. 143), a compromise of conflicting bibliographical objectives, particularly of conflicting theories on "the public's needs and/or wants. (They are not necessarily the same.)"

We index the book collection both to locate a work and to relate it to other works. That is our first principle. Cataloging attempts to do this systematically, and parts of Cutter's coherent but expensive system still stand. Parts have fallen under attack. But no matter how cogent or inviting later theories have been, the system has remained closed to any but peripheral and compromised changes, adopted usually for economic reasons and tending to make the system a less coherent whole. Mr. Dunkin shows us why we have arrived at our current practices. We all know what they are and what problems they raise in application and comprehension. Thus we enter works on "principles of authorship," not according to the title page statement the author and publisher have agreed on. Our forms of entry reflect wave after wave of opinion. We relate some types of material by added entries, others by uniform titles, and still others by form headings. Our subject headings reflect a number of views on the uses of language, and a continual reduction of attempts to apply them systematically or to relate them fully. MARC finds it necessary to bolster our descrip-