

However, he concludes that "... perhaps librarians are not the ones who should develop and promote a new national system of library home delivery" since he fears that libraries are too stable and conservative institutions to undergo radical change. He says that "... public library philosophy today is still affected by the paternalistic, Lady Bountiful attitude" and that it is "... unfortunately true that people who work for libraries (and railroads) are often more rude and officious than those who work for airlines and department stores."

Books-by-mail does have appealing points and there have been some successful experiments despite a generally disparaging attitude among most librarians. Mr. Jordan does not give enough information and evaluation to a successful program such as the one in North Central Regional Library in Washington, D.C., and the more modest project in the San Antonio Public Library. A considerable amount of text consists of extensive quotations from correspondence with the author. Author and editor are guilty of poor editing. To quote extensively from correspondence and give a false name in the text and index; to repeat whole paragraphs twice in several instances; to fail to give credit to correspondence in the text or in the index: these failings open questions concerning the validity of the contents.

The book is short, with forty-seven pages devoted to four appendices. "Response to Direct Access and Delivery" (Appendix A) contains testimonials from twelve librarians. Appendix B contains three statements in relation to the "Library Bill of Rights" which deal with access to material. A pilot project for a local and regional demonstration of books-by-mail is presented in Appendix C and readers can see a reprint article about the Jordan Plastic Book Box in Appendix D.

More serious than the editing problem are substantive matters relating to book-by-mail projects. Preferential postage rates are a key factor. His statement that "it does not seem likely that Congress would abolish this modest 'hidden subsidy' to libraries any more than it would abolish the low second-class rates" rings hollow considering pending postal reform legislation. His

rating on the efficiency of parcel post delivery is overly generous, at least for certain parts of the country. Many of his figures are dated by five years or more. He claims that "the climate has never been better for innovations" and that the concept of "the free library is as outmoded as the concept that information is scarce." And yet he indicates that a charge per delivery package of over twenty-five cents would "almost certainly cripple the possibility that home delivery would ever serve more than a handful of people."

It is in the author's arguments to convince the reader of the value of the direct access idea that he opens himself to questionable facts and logic. In an uncited quotation, the statement is made that "increasing numbers of walk-in libraries are experiencing losses of 5-10 percent annually." This should be qualified. He claims New York Public Library is the only library intending to develop research library status (what about Cleveland, Philadelphia, Boston, Los Angeles, to name a few?) and that home delivery will free the branch library from a certain amount of questions and routine circulation so that "library systems might begin to staff branch libraries with competent professionals all of the time."

Mr. Jordan's demonstration projects are not inexpensive—a million dollars for one metropolitan area or state or ten million dollars for a first demonstration project confined to one large state or region. A second demonstration project involving one-quarter of the U.S. citizens would cost \$100 million.

Despite numerous criticisms that can be leveled at this work, the book provides a focal point for the issue of direct home delivery of library materials.—*John F. Anderson, San Francisco Public Library.*

Libraries and Cultural Change. By Ronald C. Benge. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books (Shoestring Press), 1970. 278p. \$9.00.

"There is," wrote Ruth Benedict in *Patterns of Culture*, "one difficult exercise to which we may accustom ourselves as we

become increasingly culture-conscious. We may train ourselves to pass judgement upon the dominant traits of our own civilization. It is difficult enough for anyone brought up under their power to recognize them. It is still more difficult to discount, upon necessity, our predilection for them. They are as familiar as an old loved homestead. Any world in which they do not appear seems to us cheerless and untenable."

In his introductory chapters Mr. Bengé describes a society certainly no less complicated than that of the thirties, but perceptibly changed by the processes of human communication. In them he deals articulately and concisely with the principal doctrines of cultural change, citing such divergent views as those of Eliot, Huxley, Snow, Mills, Marcuse, and Fanon, and then with communication (with due regard for Marshall McLuhan), leisure, literacy, education, censorship, and other social phenomena by which libraries are affected and upon which we hope they have some constructive effect. His concluding chapters deal specifically with libraries' role in a changing society, with the education of librarians, ending with advocacy of a more active and imaginative role for the profession.

Although he assesses, in conventional terms, the functions of libraries (collection, preservation, organization, and dissemination) and some of the particular problems of selection and censorship, individual (as opposed to institutional) responsibilities, status, and the uses of authority, the concluding chapters are rather suggestive than specific in presenting answers to questions posed in the earlier and more general essays.

The questions which he poses, and the manner in which they are presented, however, are highly relevant to the current debate which the American Library Association is having about its own role and the role of the profession. The place of libraries in the general communication of information and ideas, the conception of social responsibility, the role of libraries in the educational process, all must be modified by the rapid changes in the structure of society as a whole. Professor Bengé suspects, with reason, that librarians may be

somewhat conservative in criticizing cultural traits—particularly in their own institutions—which are (in Benedict's words) familiar as an old loved homestead.

Does he go far enough in suggesting what we should do about it?

Perhaps not. Although there is occasional mention of information science, automation, and some of the other intrusions of technique and technology upon the processes of human communication, these are not only scientific but cultural changes (in both the United States and Great Britain) of considerable magnitude, and Professor Bengé touches upon them rather casually.

Although he does deal at some length with the paperback revolution, he might be suspected of underestimating the cultural impact of reprinting and the lesser forms of reprography which, although not conventional parts of the book trade, certainly are having an effect upon it and upon the library as well. Although Professor Bengé rationalizes the Two Cultures of C. P. Snow, he gives no acknowledgement of the Technological Society of Jacques Ellul. This may, of course, simply represent a difference in British and American points of view (we must be considerably influenced by the unrelenting persuasion of Xerox and IBM). Nevertheless the theories and techniques of information science constitute the most conspicuous current accultural phenomenon on the library scene, and this is not conspicuously reflected in these essays.

Libraries and Cultural Change is a valuable contribution to library literature. It is concise, readable, and deals with most of the problems which American libraries share with their sister institutions in Britain. If it deals somewhat briefly with some of the current preoccupations of academic librarians in the United States, it makes up for it in the imaginative presentation of a number of provocative ideas.—David W. Heron, *University of Kansas*.

Eighteenth Century Bibliographies. By Francesco Cordasco. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1970. 230p. \$5.00.

This volume collects under one cover