
Eric Moon and Karl Nyren have assembled well over 200 articles, editorials, and reports which appeared originally in Library Journal between 1960 and 1970. All of the items were authored by LJ staff members. The selection understandably reflects the tastes and the judgments of Moon and his associates, who have consistently espoused social involvement by librarians.

Their sense of mission and their sympathies for the human side of librarianship impart a special flavor to their style and inextricably to the things they choose to write about. Four articles appear under the heading “Data Processing, Automation, Information Science,” twenty under “Book Selection,” and sixteen under “Discrimination.” Clearly, the mechanics of library management do not stimulate Mr. Moon and his associates to creative effort, except possibly when opportunities for mockery arise.

Computers and LJ don’t fit quite comfortably into the same space. “Cataloging and Classification” are of the same ilk as computers and rate only two brief notices, one of which by Moon commences with the confession that “we find it difficult to get very passionate or excited about cataloging theory.” I suppose that it is equally difficult to get passionate about Newton’s law of gravitation or Einstein’s theory of relativity.

Moon, Nyren, Berry, Geller, and all those other wonderful LJ people who keep kicking the straw out of our stuffed shirts are really incurable romantics. They believe that libraries are for people and that the fewer economic advantages citizens have, the more libraries can do for them. The predisposition to support the underdog tends to draw these authors toward politics and leads them to look at libraries continually as social instrumentalities. I point this out not in a spirit of disagreement, but rather to emphasize that the articles in this anthology display a special bias which leads to a systematic exclusion of serious examination of other things which may be important, if unexciting.

The issues of the sixties discussed here were significant—federal aid, censorship, manpower, and all that. I submit only that other things were in the air also—including the growth of library systems, the decline of juvenile reading, and substantial innovations in building design.

The prose is lively, the opinions provocative, and the point of view leftish. But the anthology is only a sketch, possibly a caricature of what librarianship is really all about, not only in the sixties, but all the time.

Library Issues: The Sixties is good fun, but I do not know what to do with it now that I’ve read it. I suspect that the editors looked upon it as a kind of Our Times journalistic review, to be leafed through once and laid carefully away with our other trinkets and memorabilia. One would hardly find a reason to return to it, except perhaps to enjoy the sprightly but really rather gentle iconoclasm.—Ervin J. Gaines, Minneapolis Public Library.


Most academic libraries find themselves caught in a three-way squeeze brought about by rapidly increasing book collections, escalating prices of library construction, and faculty demands for immediate access to “their” books. Librarians will not be greatly surprised to learn that Ellsworth has discovered no universal solution to these problems. He has presented a summary description of twelve systems for storing books in academic libraries, analyzed the cost factors for each of the systems, and suggested a procedure for determining costs in a specific university. You pay your money and you take your choice. But you are not likely to be entirely happy with any system.

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