

In sum, Harris' book, while not felicitous in style, embodies suggestions for developing a subject heading list, in machine-manipulable form, which could stimulate considerable investigation into the theory underlying the construction of the headings. Any book with such potential, in these lean years for treatises on the subject, deserves to be taken seriously, even if only to prod the library world toward further research in the field.—*Doralyn J. Hickey, Associate Professor of Library Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.*

Current Problems in Reference Service.

Thomas J. Galvin. New York: R. R. Bowker Company, 1971. 162p. \$9.95.

The new Bowker Series in "Problem-Centered Approaches to Librarianship" is designed "to make case studies available for instructional use in all major areas of the library school curriculum, as well as to demonstrate the value of the case study as a vehicle for presentation and analysis of professional problems." This inaugural volume of the series includes thirty-five new case studies in general reference and may be used in conjunction with the thirty case studies published in Mr. Galvin's earlier collection, *Problems in Reference Service: Case Studies in Method and Policy*, also published by Bowker. Those unfamiliar with case study methods and objectives are referred to the "Introduction" to this earlier collection, or to any of several other works listed in a "Selected Bibliography" appended to the present volume.

This new collection should be attractive to anyone engaged in the training of library personnel. The cases are drawn from actual library situations and have been specially selected to represent issues of current concern. One case, for example, poses a problem in performance budgeting. Another deals with the borrower's right to privacy. Several cases involve services to the handicapped or to minority groups. Many older problems are of perennial concern, and thus four cases contain variations on the theme of censorship. The situations presented sometimes go well beyond the usual concept of general reference. One of them requires the design of an acquisitions program for the reference collection of a new, two-year school of engineering technology,

starting with an initial purchase of \$35,000.

As raw material, the cases vary in quality. Some are much richer than others in the possibilities offered for investigation, interpretation, evaluation, and resolution. These possibilities seem greatest when the fundamental issue or problem facing the student is one of administrative decision-making. These cases have many conflicting elements to consider and no "right" answers. It is in the presentation of these kinds of problems that the case study method was developed and has demonstrated its value.

Less successful are those cases primarily concerned with the identification of reference sources and the location of specific information. Such problems are more narrowly limited in scope and lacking in the kinds of conflicting alternatives so favorable for case presentation. One questions the relative effectiveness of the case method with "reference problems" since they appear to gain less by such presentation than do the administrative issues. It is doubtful that any substantial benefit is obtained by dressing up a reference question with dialog which often sounds contrived and with characterization which tends to become caricature. The author suggests evaluating the reference interview in these cases, but this device wears thin after two or three uses.

Despite this criticism, each of the cases has some value as a tool, and the use of a tool has much to do with its effectiveness. Presumably, the successful use of these cases in the classroom has justified their publication here. Another instructor may use them or not, in any way that is profitable and convenient for his purposes. That seems to be just what Galvin intended.—*Larry N. Yarbrough, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.*

The Chinese in California: A Brief Bibliographic History. Gladys C. Hansen, Annot. by William F. Heintz. Portland, Ore.: Richard Abel & Company, 1970. 140p.

Was California discovered by a Buddhist monk in 458 A.D., or by the blown-off-course Chinese sailor-navigator Hee-Lai in 217 B.C.? Did the first Chinese laborers arrive in California in 1815, or in 1848, or at some date in between? Mr. Heintz' annotations, based primarily on Mrs. Hansen's