

spell out the meaning which the mystery implies. (p. 53)

The final two pages of the book contain a brief account of the Shakespeare Head Press, written by Basil Blackwell, the sole survivor of the original company. It should also be recorded that the end-sheets and a centerfold contain reproduced interior and exterior views of Scott Library.—*Cecil K. Byrd, Indiana University, Lilly Library, Bloomington, Indiana.*

- ✓ Kronus, Carol L. and Crowe, Linda, eds. ***Libraries and Neighborhood Information Centers.*** Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois, Graduate School of Library Science, 1972. 142 p. (Allerton Park Institute, no. 17).

Carol Kronus and Linda Crowe compiled the various papers presented at the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library Science devoted to library-based neighborhood information centers to form this monographic, but decidedly weak, synthesis. Unquestionably, the conference itself must have been a far more exciting and rewarding experience than the simple gathering of the papers presented. There are too many questions asked by the authors and papers presented, too many issues raised, too many simplistic answers to enormously complex problems, and too little interactive research to allow this work a more successful place on people's reading lists. Even though the conference was held at the University of Illinois on October 24-27, 1971, the results are now outmoded, some conditions significantly changed in the library world, and other projects quiet but nonetheless failures. Why?

I will not attempt at this point in time to relate the significance of this work to the world of academic libraries, but will leave that issue for the end of this review. It seems more appropriate first to discuss the shortcomings of this publication. To begin with, the articles are repetitious and disjointed. There needs to be an interweaving

of research, theory, experimentation, library operational modification based on circumstances at hand, and reworking of previously held concepts or theories about the inner city residents, labeled the urban poor. Information provided by each of the papers related to a specific subject or project, with occasional mention of similar situations. As such, each paper could stand on its own merits, but would add very little to the cohesiveness of the whole.

What was missing in the monograph was the give and take that must have existed between the participants, the audience, and the editors. The exchanges that might have congealed these library and information vagaries with the dispassionate research findings presented by nonlibrary experts could have materially improved the development of a polemic on the role of libraries with regard to information services. Instead, the reader is left to fend for himself. The necessary amalgam to make these papers a valuable interweaving of theory and practice is missing. Furthermore, the success of many of these neighborhood information centers is now in question, particularly with the decline or absence of federal supporting funds. The question never asked in this work is whether such services are the province of the public library. Is this where public libraries should concentrate their efforts?

As an academic librarian, I am disappointed by the inability of researchers and librarians alike to distill the crucial issues in one setting and project their significance into another. Urban academic libraries already are feeling the impact of a need for more assistance in providing information and services to their respective academic and urban communities. How should they cope with this problem? For those librarians with great imagination and dedication, this publication may generate some projects or goals. Unfortunately, for most librarians it will remain a closed book.—*Robert P. Haro, University of Southern California, Los Angeles.*