model for future experiments resulting in
interesting journal articles.—Michael J. Mc­
Gill, School of Information Studies, Syra­
cuse University, Syracuse, New York.

McGarry, K. J. Communication, Knowledge
and the Librarian. Hamden, Conn.: Lin­
et Books, 1975. 207p. $10.50. (LC 75­

K. J. McGarry has produced a primer for
librarians in an area in which librarians
urgently need a primer. He covers an enor­
mous span of knowledge concisely and well.
He structures a viable approach to a field
of intellectual endeavor which, in common
with several newly emerging fields of study,
represents a confluence of several older dis­
ciplines and new concepts. Most remark­
able of all, he recognizes and points out
clearly that this new approach, while po­
tentially extremely fruitful, provides only
a partial view and leaves out of the discus­
sion some very important aspects of librari­
anship and human knowledge.

McGarry’s object is to discuss the library
in terms of its place in the communication
system of society. To do this he first treats
the current state of knowledge of commu­
nication from the cybernetics, linguistics,
sociological, psychological, and anthropo­
logical viewpoints. He surveys literature
and concepts, discussing the use of models,
information theory, entropy and redundan­
cy, symbols, culture and the concept of self,
social role theory, and other pertinent mat­
ters. He then examines the process of inter­
personal communication and the necessities
of that process.

Perhaps McGarry’s gloomiest conclusion
in relation to the human condition is that
hierarchy is an omnipresent necessity of all
life and interaction, including communica­
tions. One hopes that Warren Bennis and
others of his school of thought have what
will prove to be a more correct viewpoint
in this regard. It would be very disturbing
to many people and institutions if we were
to discover that democratic processes of hu­
man interaction are inherently impossible.

McGarry proceeds, through a brief dis­
cussion of nonverbal communication, to an
excellent analysis of the impact of the de­
velopment of communications on society.
In this context he discusses McLuhan’s
ideas, set forth in English and treated in a
sane and productive manner. He rightly
points out the fallacy of subscribing to yet
another form of simplistic determinism
while recognizing the seminal nature of the
concepts McLuhan presents. This discus­
sion is long and very valuable as a con­
ceptual framework for the study of the his­
tory of books, media of other sorts, and
libraries.

The attempt to make direct application
of the theories so well discussed in this vol­
ume to the library scene is not entirely suc­
cessful. This is usually the case when at­
tempts at practical application are made
early in the development of a new body of
knowledge.

The attempts must, of course, be made
because it is from them that a significant
force and direction are given to further
theoretical development. The importance of
the process of theory building and practical
application is underscored by a quotation
from Eric de Grolier (p.123), “Now the
death of a civilization can be interpreted
as the death of its information mecha­
nisms.” We, whose civilization has devel­
oped and become dependent upon an in­
formation mechanism of unprecedented
magnitude, complexity, and fragility must
struggle successfully to preserve and im­
prove that mechanism. The consequences
of failure could be as cataclysmic as the
consequences of failure to keep the peace.

This terse and literate book provides a
carefully selected and structured guide to
the study necessary to achieve understand­
ing of the subject. Hopefully, the book will
serve as a starting place for course work in
many library schools.—Ernest W. Toy, Jr.,
California State University, Fullerton.

Überregionale Literaturversorgung von
Wissenschaft und Forschung in der Bun­
desrepublik Deutschland: Denkschrift.
(Supra-Regional Provision of Literature
in the Federal Republic of Germany:
Memorandum.) Bibliotheksausschuss der
Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft. Bop­
116p. (ISBN 3-7646-1621-0)

One of the major goals of the Library
Committee of the German Research Society
(GRS) has been the development of an ef­