

model for future experiments resulting in interesting journal articles.—*Michael J. McGill, School of Information Studies, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York.*

McGarry, K. J. *Communication, Knowledge and the Librarian*. Hamden, Conn.: Linnet Books, 1975. 207p. \$10.50. (LC 75-4864) (ISBN 0-208-01369-3)

K. J. McGarry has produced a primer for librarians in an area in which librarians urgently need a primer. He covers an enormous 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 disciplines and new concepts. Most remarkable of all, he recognizes and points out clearly that this new approach, while potentially extremely fruitful, provides only a partial view and leaves out of the discussion some very important aspects of librarianship 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 communication from the cybernetics, linguistics, sociological, psychological, and anthropological viewpoints. He surveys literature and concepts, discussing the use of models, information theory, entropy and redundancy, symbols, culture and the concept of self, social role theory, and other pertinent matters. He then examines the process of interpersonal 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 communications. 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 human interaction are inherently impossible.

McGarry proceeds, through a brief discussion of nonverbal communication, to an excellent analysis of the impact of the development 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 discussion is long and very valuable as a conceptual framework for the study of the history of books, media of other sorts, and libraries.

The attempt to make direct application of the theories so well discussed in this volume to the library scene is not entirely successful. This is usually the case when attempts 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 mechanisms." We, whose civilization has developed and become dependent upon an information mechanism of unprecedented magnitude, complexity, and fragility must struggle successfully to preserve and improve 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 understanding 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 Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Denkschrift. (Supra-Regional Provision of Literature in the Federal Republic of Germany: Memorandum.) Bibliotheksausschuss der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft. Boppard: Harald Boldt Verlag KG, 1975. 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-