

The last two papers in the collection are possibly the weakest. Esko Häkli presents a broad-brush summary of national planning and research libraries in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland; and John McDonald contributes a slight essay on national planning and academic libraries in the United States. This weakness may, in fact, be the result of McDonald's observation that until very recently there has been an absence of any planning that deserves to be called "national" in scale.

The papers in this collection generate reflection, they indicate gaps in our experience in national and international planning, and they should stimulate librarians to give conscious attention to this very important phase of library development.—*Sylvia G. Faibisoff, Associate Professor, Graduate Library School, University of Arizona.*

SCONUL Seminar on Practical MARC Cataloguing, 2d, University of Southampton, 1975. *Practical MARC Cataloguing. Proceedings of the Second SCONUL Seminar on Practical MARC Cataloguing, Organized by the Universities of Southampton and Birmingham and Held at the University of Southampton, 5th-7th September 1975.* Edited by Ruth Irvine. London: Standing Conference of National and University Libraries, 1976. 82p. £3.60. ISBN 0-90021004-4 (Available from: SCONUL Secretariat, c/o The Library, School of Oriental and African Studies, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HP.)

MARC Users' Group. *Proceedings of a Conference Held in Plymouth on 16 and 17 April, 1975.* Edited by F. A. Clements. London: LLRS Publications, 1976. 36p. £1.00. \$2.50 overseas. (Make check payable to MARC Users' Group and send order to LLRS Publications, Calcutta House Precinct, Old Castle Street, London, E1 7NT.)

It is heartening to note from the discussion in these two publications that our British friends have been sedulously grappling with machine-readable cataloging and that there are others of us who have leapt into the unknown. The results of an open exposition of these experiences are refreshing to one who has lived through similar events.

The SCONUL Seminar consists of presentations by two British university-level processing cooperatives—Birmingham and Southampton. It deals with the experiences growing out of their alignment with MARC and their commitment to AACR (British edition). The purpose of the seminar was to demonstrate MARC's use from a cataloger's viewpoint and to share the problems of functioning with MARC in real contexts. Both systems use off-line access for search, input, correction, and output.

The eleven papers (illustrated with processing forms) generally progress topically in parallel to the actual processing flow, i.e., inputting, computer manipulations, output, etc. Southampton's contributions deal more with particulars, while Birmingham is concerned with the effects of a heterogeneous group of participants—perhaps due to the fact Southampton initially handled medical records, whereas the Birmingham complex embraces libraries of five universities, four polytechnic colleges, and four public libraries.

Many of the presentations are welcome nontechnical and frank delineations of developmental problems, exposing pitfalls of unforeseen complications. The use of unfamiliar abbreviations is disconcerting, especially when some have to be divined by induction. Two articles are worth noting: A. B. Long's "Personal Experiences with MARC and Southampton's Conversion Routines," a revealing, sympathetic, and honest appraisal of the kind of setbacks and advances encountered in such an endeavor, and P. J. D. Bramall's "The Present National and International State of MARC," a strong argument for a MARC-type international system, international standards in bibliographic exchange, interchangeable data bases and software, and centralized dissemination and correction centers.

It is interesting to note that there was little difficulty for experienced catalogers to apply the MARC format to normal cataloging, but that only confusion resulted when trainees were taught to catalog and to use MARC at the same time. In spite of an extensive diagnostic process (signalling gross format errors) which produces an error list, nevertheless listings of machine-acceptable records are still visually inspected to some degree by all members of the cooperatives.

Errors not thus caught are trusted to be found by "relying on library users to tell them later if the cataloguing content is faulty."

The second conference, at which time a British "MARC Users' Group" was officially established, concerned itself—in the context of MARC use—with the relationship of the using libraries to book dealers, to the national library, and to future developments of automation. The seven papers—from a book dealer, the British Library, public libraries, a college library, and the Birmingham cooperative—are of interest insofar as they document current automation uses and plans in Great Britain. Whereas one public library (ca. 13,000 orders per year) found that only an expensive on-line CRT configuration could better its manual system, the book dealer enthusiastically reported highly satisfactory flexibility with a complete on-line random access facility which has allowed him to realize "multiple output from single input."

The magnitude of the users of the British Library's BRIMARC tape service (twenty-six subscribers of which ten are outside the United Kingdom) is dwarfed by the number using LC's program, yet the library has some grand intentions (e.g., convert all BNB (1950 on) to MARC; begin CIP in 1976). The college library described receiving shelf-ready books while using MARC for the cataloguing copy but complained of the quality of LC's use of DC 18, of the invariable use of record type "am" (printed monograph) for all forms of material, and of confusion and error in usage and appearance of the ISBN.

The approaches to technical services automation may be new, although the problems discussed are not; however, these reports only underline the urgency for implementation of international standards.—*Robert H. Breyfogle, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, California.*

Continuing Library Education Network and Exchange (CLENE). *Proceedings, First CLENE Assembly, Palmer House, Chicago, Illinois, January 23-24, 1976.* Washington, D.C.: Continuing Library Education Network and Exchange, 1976. 165p. \$5.00.

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