

the nature of its intended audience.

The author, communications librarian at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, is overly fond of lists. Much of her material is derived from a 1978 American Film Institute Workshop on Film/TV Documentation and smacks somewhat of handouts for workshop participants. There are lists of publishers, lists of film archives, lists of periodicals, lists of bookstores selling film memorabilia, even lists of monographic series dealing with film. This material certainly has value, but it will date the book rather quickly and might have been better presented as a series of periodical articles.

The collection development portion includes short chapters on different formats: periodicals, nonprint materials, scripts, trade magazines, and so forth. Chapter 6 contains a handy checklist of criteria for evaluating various types of film reference materials plus examples of the application of these criteria to specific titles. An asset of this portion of the book is the author's stress on understanding the somewhat esoteric terminology of film study. She is careful to distinguish, for example, between a shooting script and a continuity script and stresses the unique value of each for cinema collections.

The reference and public services portion seems intended for a beginner in the field. The discussions of interlibrary loan, the importance of networking, and copyright are cursory and excessively general. By contrast, Michael Gorman's chapter on the cataloging and classification of film study material deals at length with such topics as the differences that would result if a script were cataloged under AACR 2 and under the rules promulgated by the Documentation Commission of the Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film (FIAF). His presentation assumes a good deal more background on the part of the reader—an assumption that seems rather at odds with the rest of the book.

Several portions of the book leave the distinct impression that something has been started but not finished. The chapter on library use instruction is a good example. It purports to provide a sample outline for a group presentation on the use of film library collections; yet only the portion dealing

with the card catalog is included. The chapter is fine as far as it goes but would have been much more helpful if the rest of the suggested outline had been included. The same comment—expand and amplify—could be made about the sections on interlibrary loan and networking mentioned above.

Film Study Collections certainly has some assets. The author's crisp, no-nonsense style is a pleasure to read. She obviously knows her subject. Her material should prove useful to anyone charged with beginning a film study library. But the book could be made considerably better, both by clarifying the nature of the intended audience and by expanding the superficial portions. Perhaps a revised second edition will remedy these defects.—Cathleen Flanagan, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

Wiegand, Wayne A. *The History of a Hoax: Edmund Lester Pearson, John Cotton Dana, and The Old Librarian's Almanack*. Beta Phi Mu Chapbook. no.13. Pittsburgh, Pa.: Beta Phi Mu, 1979. 75p. \$4. LC 78-23377. ISBN 0-910230-13-7. (Available from: Beta Phi Mu, Publications Office, College of Library Science, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506.)

Edmund Lester Pearson (1880–1937)—librarian, editor, free-lance writer—tweaked the library community and the general public for fourteen years through his weekly column in the *Boston Evening Transcript* (1906–20). Satire, hyperbole, and humor laced his prose assaults on the pomposities and idiosyncracies of an emerging profession. Pearson loved a good tale and concocted many for his readers. Once, he even perpetrated a literary hoax with the publication of *The Old Librarian's Almanack* in 1909.

The story of that deception is superbly reconstructed by Wayne Wiegand, University of Kentucky, in the thirteenth number of the Beta Phi Mu chapbook series. A reprint of the *Almanack* follows the account of its genesis, reception, and denouement.

The "Old Librarian" and his *Almanack* were first introduced in Pearson's newspaper column of July 24, 1907. Early the next year Pearson's fictitious character was resurrected, and the hoax was born.

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Maverick John Cotton Dana, prominent in library affairs and proprietor of the Elm Tree Press, Woodstock, Vermont, suggested to Pearson that the quotable *Almanack* should become a literary reality. Pearson shamelessly commingled his satirical commentary with the astrological and meteorological contents of an authentic almanac written by Joseph Perry in 1773. Authorship of the newly discovered almanac was credited to one Jared Bean. Pearson pursued the hoax with abandon, but Dana became apprehensive that the deception was too transparent. Before Dana could temporize and send a warning to readers, the *New York Sun* received a copy for review. The eighteenth-century format and sage advice of the "Old Librarian" hoodwinked the reviewer. The game was on.

Pearson could not resist playful parries with reviewers and other librarians who corresponded about the almanac's credibility. The *New York Sun*, initially fooled by the hoax, indulged Pearson after recognizing the deception. Other gullible reviews appeared in the *New York Times*, *Dial*, *Outlook*, and

Publishers Weekly. Helen Haines, a former editor of *Library Journal*, easily deciphered the hoax and joined the merry conspiracy on the pages of that periodical. Only one publication, *America*, labeled the *Almanack* an unforgivable fabrication. Dana, it contended, was guilty of advertising a fake volume.

Wiegand has scoured the relevant archival sources and secondary literature to produce the definitive account of Pearson's hoax. The historian's craft has been well served by this highly readable contribution. Unfortunately, the chapbook's narrow spine, grainy photographs, and jarring layout mar an otherwise fine example of quality printing. Pearson, who always enjoyed the last word, would no doubt be pleased that his seventy-year-old divertissement was once again in the news.—Arthur P. Young, *University of Alabama*.

Reese, Rosemary S., comp. *Documentation of Collections*. A Bibliography on Historical Organization Practices, V.4. Edited by Frederick L. Rath, Jr., and Merrilyn

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