

Council of University Librarians, the Conseil des Recteurs des Universités du Québec, the Association of Atlantic Universities and the Librarians of Western Canadian Universities, including those of British Columbia." Their efforts have gone far beyond the preliminary stages. Ontario and Quebec libraries have been sharing cataloging records, trying to rationalize collections, and running a daily interlibrary loan delivery service for the better sharing of collections since 1974. What the National Library needs to do is find a way to link these networks, not ignore them and start again. Networking in Canada faces two major problems that cannot be ignored: a small population and an immense geographical area. These make regional developments all the more important.

The National Library must first prove to the nation that it is capable of providing reliable service and leadership in those areas that have been its responsibility for nearly three decades before demanding the control or abolition of services that already operate efficiently.

The report is followed by several appendices, including a somewhat idealistic outline of a Canadian library network as envisaged by the National Library; the text of the National Library Act; an organization chart for the library; and several tables of budgets and expenditures for various types of libraries across the country. Finally, there is a three-page bibliography of relevant materials.

The report will be the subject of much discussion by Canadian library groups and

in government circles in the coming months. It should lead to a critical examination of the reasons why librarians and researchers across the country are still so skeptical of the library's abilities.—*Dorothy F. Thomson, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Canada.*

Manheimer, Martha L. *OCLC: An Introduction to Searching and Input*. New York: Neal-Schuman, 1979. 64p. \$8.50. LC 79-23985. ISBN 0-918212-38-3. (May be purchased for classroom use at \$4.95 each, minimum order five copies.)

With more than two thousand libraries in fifty states employing the services of OCLC for cataloging and interlibrary loan, publications that offer guidance in using the system are always welcome. OCLC provides its own documentation, of course, and with the publication of *On-Line Systems* has greatly improved the organization and method of updating its material. As the bibliographic utility has expanded and refined its services, however, the size and complexity of the documentation has increased and can appear overwhelming to the novice.

*OCLC: An Introduction to Searching and Input* answers the need for a concise, simplified manual for the person unfamiliar with the OCLC system. Martha L. Manheimer, an associate professor of library science at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Library and Information Science, demonstrates a thorough knowledge of her subject and considerable expertise in presenting it. The purpose of her book as stated in the introduction is ". . . to pro-

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vide students in library schools and practitioners in the field with a practical introduction to the mechanics of bibliographic searching, card modification and input to OCLC." The manual has been designed for independent use but could also be used as a text for group instruction. An introductory section includes a list of documents to be used in conjunction with the manual and a very brief description of the OCLC system. The major portion of the text is devoted to eleven exercises designed to develop the skills necessary to search the system and to manipulate and input records.

The exercises on card modification and input are quite well done. The instructions for operating the terminal and editing the record are clearly stated, and the practice examples provide a step-by-step introduction to the elements of a machine-readable bibliographic record. The searching exercise is also well presented and covers most of the approaches to accessing the data base; however, I believe that it is not comprehensive enough. When technical material is simplified or condensed, there is always the danger that necessary information will be omitted. For example, there is no mention of characters to be included, excluded, or substituted; no special rules are given for searching the United States, United Nations, and Great Britain; nor is the use of the circumflex in constructing a search key mentioned. Use of the ISSN for searching should have appeared in this section rather than in a later exercise, and the list of stop-list terms should have been included.

These omissions may have resulted from the fact that the author tried to cover too many topics in a relatively short work, rather than concentrating on the three areas indicated in the title. Exercise 6, for example, which deals with the verification of information on member input records, requires the reader to use classification schedules and *Library of Congress Subject Headings* and to modify the record according to ISBD-M. Such activities surely lie outside the scope of an introductory manual on use of the OCLC system.

The book would have been strengthened by the addition of a comprehensive glossary. Some exercises do begin with a list of terms, but they are often incomplete. Other

exercises incorporate the terms in the text, making it difficult to refer back to them. Definitions for some terms are entirely lacking and must be inferred from the examples or found in OCLC documents.

Despite its flaws, the author has produced a useful little manual. She has clarified and illustrated the techniques for using OCLC and succeeded in her stated objective of introducing the beginner to the system. Students and library personnel both should find it helpful.—*Mary C. Hall, State University of New York, College at Buffalo.*

## ABSTRACTS

*The following abstracts are based on those prepared by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information Resources, School of Education, Syracuse University.*

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**Computer Output Microform (COM) Catalog Requirements for the Virginia Commonwealth University Libraries.** By Robert L. White. Virginia Commonwealth Univ., Richmond. 1979. 78p. ED 175 472. MF—\$0.83; PC—\$6.32.

Generated as the result of the deliberations of the COM Catalog Advisory Work Group, which depended heavily on a review of the available literature, individual analysis, and group discussion, this report is intended as a general planning document for Virginia Commonwealth University libraries concerning their possible implementation of a COM (computer output microform) catalog. Attention is given to the advantages and disadvantages of a COM catalog, building a library date base, strategies for conversion, closing the card catalog, COM catalog format and frequency of update, film type and format, and problem areas. Special importance is placed on listing the following types of requirements for a COM catalog: general, bibliographic records, film format, and microform readers. In addition, recommendations for dealing with potential problem