munication and education profession. Their patrons, on the other hand, regard them as aloof, pedantic document shufflers. She believes this negative image has changed little in eighty years despite major changes in the profession during that time.

Although the study was creatively designed, the analysis of the statistical findings lacks depth. The scope of the topic is so broad that some aspects are treated superficially. Sampling techniques are inadequately described, and there is not enough comparison from chapter to chapter. The writing style is conversational ("Tough luck for ex-librarian Mum who fears she may be turning into a cabbage"), which adds some zest to the dry statistics, but the author uses too much jargon to suit this reviewer (e.g., "negative feedback loop mode of operation" and "terminological scatter"). Quotes from punk rock singers and a bizarre restyling of Shakespeare’s life are examples of some of the incongruous interjections in this study. Numerous typographical errors contribute to the impression that the study was published too quickly in an effort to keep it timely. Despite these criticisms, the book does contain much to fascinate those interested in the topic.

Janet L. Ashley, State University of New York, College at Oneonta.


"Know thy library" and make it better is the basic premise of the Management Review and Analysis Program (MRAP). A program that is now nearing the end of a decade of almost constant evolution, MRAP is sponsored by the Association of Research Libraries and assisted principally by grants from the Council of Library Resources, Inc. (CLR). Since little about the program has appeared in the literature, MRAP, a freely chosen, self-evaluation process, and its participants have acquired an unnecessary mystique. This compact and judicious volume at last takes the "wraps" off MRAP.

The research core of the book was supported by a grant from CLR. One of its two authors, Edward Johnson, served as chairperson of the Pennsylvania State University Libraries MRAP Study Team, and after "several thousand man-hours of intense and sometimes frustrating work" in using MRAP thought its overall impact worth examining. His co-investigator was Stuart Mann, a professor of operations research at Penn State with an interest in library operations. Their statistical analyses and careful, almost understated assessments add definite credence to the study.

A brief but helpful explanation of planning and organization development (OD), itself a growing influence on libraries, constitutes chapters 2 and 3, including a useful outline of earlier self-studies at Columbia, Cornell, and Chicago. Duane Webster, indefatigable director of ARL’s Office of Management Studies (OMS) and responsible for MRAP’s development, describes it in chapter 4. Chapters 5 and 6 provide the methods and quantitative summaries analyzing MRAP’s impact on libraries and staff. Chapter 7 presents conclusions and recommendations. Appendixes include examples of questionnaires used.

By the beginning date of the study (May 1976), twenty-two research and university libraries had undergone MRAP. Three—Iowa State, Purdue, and Tennessee—participated in the pilot operation designed to test the program starting in August 1972. From this and later groups Johnson and Mann selected ten libraries for the most intensive phase of the study, a decision based on finances and time. They note some directors declined to participate or did not respond; they also recognize this may have had a biasing effect on the results. Questionnaires (with remarkable return rates), face-to-face interviews, and Delphi panels of participants were all part of the techniques utilized.

Self-assessment is an appealing, if easily criticized process and promises to continue as a standard for libraries. Nevertheless, as the authors point out, it is time consuming and requires a conscious, clear appraisal—and no small dash of courage—before in-
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