

Busha, Charles H., and Harter, Stephen P. *Research Methods in Librarianship: Techniques and Interpretation*. New York: Academic Pr., 1980. 417p. \$ 19.50. LC 79-8864. ISBN 0-12-147550-6.

This book is a good one, designed for use as a research-methods textbook in library school courses and as a handbook for practicing professionals who are engaged in research projects or in the review of them. Beyond the introduction to research and the scientific method, the book is set up in three main parts. The first, methods of research, considers in some detail survey research, historical research, and operations research. Each section contains a description of the research techniques applicable to the method, the pitfalls surrounding the particular method, and a description of some of the completed research projects in librarianship that serve as examples of the particular method being discussed.

The chapter on survey research is the most comprehensive. The authors introduce the issues of populations and samples, offer comments on the advantages and disadvantages of the questionnaire, and introduce types of questions that are included in questionnaires. Good advice is offered on the preparation of a questionnaire and on the scaling of the responses.

In the chapter on historical research, the authors describe the search for evidence undertaken by the historian. They analyze and classify sources according to whether they are primary or secondary and classify types of records that are considered primary sources.

Also included in the first section are short discussions on the case-study method, library-user studies, evaluation research, content analysis, community surveys, and the Delphi method.

The second part of the book introduces descriptive and inferential statistics. The explanations are clear and concise and are welcome in this guide to library research. The final section of the book offers advice on the computer and the calculator as aids to research, on writing a research proposal, and on writing a research report.

Good textbooks enhance the development of librarianship. The profession indeed will be well served by this excellent text on re-

search methods in librarianship.—*Beverly P. Lynch, University of Illinois, Chicago Circle.*

Library Lit. 10—The Best of 1979. Edited by Bill Katz. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow, 1980. 512p. \$12. LC 78-154842. ISBN 0-8108-1213-4.

Boring. What seemed like a new and exciting concept ten years ago is now old and faded. Perhaps that is just symptomatic of the transitory nature of our times.

Boring. The fact that there is still, despite a recent proliferation of specialized library journals, so little library literature that makes for stimulating reading on the part of the faithful reader is discouraging. It is hard to believe that Katz can really think that "a prudent reading of the past ten years will show that there is no more stimulating, no more exciting profession than being a librarian" (p.vi).

Boring. The nine articles on libraries and librarians, the eight articles on technical services/readers' services, the seven articles on communication and education, and the six articles on the social prerogative that constitute the thirty articles selected by this year's panel of judges to represent the best of 1979 are indeed, for the most part, simply boring. Not one of those articles really catches the reader's imagination or stands out as one that will prove to be of enduring value.

Despite my obviously unfavorable attitude toward the series as a whole at this point and toward this particular volume, some comment on the particular volume is needed. Approximately half of the articles are either by, or are of potential interest to, academic librarians. Not bad and worth our attention on that score alone. Unfortunately, most of them (e.g., DeGennaro on "Library Administration and New Management Systems") appeared in journals that we all read regularly. What was of interest on first reading somehow doesn't always seem quite as exciting on rereading only a short while later. A few (e.g., Hickey on "The American Librarian's Dream: Full Bibliographic Control") are from more obscure sources that we might not normally encounter. It is helpful to have them brought to our attention here. A few, and

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this is more and more evident in recent volumes, are, like Stange on preservation in "From Rags to Riches," by nonlibrarians and appeared originally in non-library journals. It is interesting to see the aspects and ideas of librarianship that are capturing the imagination of the outside world. Perhaps we are seeing, to some degree, a return to the golden days of the early nineteenth century when librarianship was of somewhat greater interest to the world in general.

While, fortunately, this particular volume contains no examples of what Shaw castigated as articles on "how-I-run-my-library-good," it is replete with the relatively new kind of speculative essay on "how-I-should-run-my-libraries-good" that has become popular in recent years. In one sense such essays continue the kind of innocuous "glad tidings" essay that Beals deplored some forty years ago, but, in another sense, they are somewhat more substantial and valuable because they build on an increasingly solid base of literature and research. They seem to represent the beginnings of a more analytical approach to librarianship designed to synthesize ideas and information into a philosophical structure. For pointing up that trend this series, and its editor, deserves credit.

All in all, this is a volume you may want to borrow from your library and dip into. Unless you are aiming to maintain a complete series, it is not one that you are likely to want to buy for your own collection.—*Norman D. Stevens, University of Connecticut, Storrs.*

Mason, Ellsworth. *Mason on Library Buildings*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow, 1980. 348p. \$25. LC 80-12029. ISBN 0-8108-1291-6.

Boll, John J. *To Grow or Not to Grow: A Review of Alternatives to New Academic Library Buildings*. LJ Special Report #15. New York: Bowker, 1980. 32p. \$5; prepaid, \$3.95. ISBN 0-8352-1322-6. ISSN 0362-448X.

New Academic Library Buildings. LJ Special Report #16. New York: Bowker, 1980. 71p. \$7; prepaid, \$5.95. ISBN 0-8352-1323-4. ISSN 0362-448X.

How refreshing it is to read a lively and well-written book on an important aspect of

librarianship! Mason presents five chapters on building problems, originally published from 1965 to 1969. The chapters on lighting and air handling are superb, and the chapter on interiors remains very good indeed. There follow six chapters providing library building reviews, three of which were published previously. The new critiques are of Harvard's Countway Library of Medicine, Dalhousie University, and the Robarts at Toronto. Stimulating and sometimes humorous footnotes greatly add to the text.

A typical note comments that removal of shields from light fixtures provides more footcandles "but at the same time anyone exposed to the fixture has constricted eye pupils, and he gets less light. In addition, the diffusing properties of the fixtures are greatly impaired and interreflection of light in the room drops enormously. *Sic crescit stultitia!* (Loose translation, 'Fools may take over the world')."

Mason at times presents but one view of what should be done. For example, he mandates use of a building-planning committee, but states later, however, that he is grateful he had no committee of any kind at Hofstra "to muck-up affairs." And, as another highly questionable assertion, an institution should never use an architect who has not designed libraries.

This volume is full of wisdom. Mason properly points out that seating was in the past generally projected at too high a percentage of enrollment. Construction penalty clauses in contracts are nearly impossible to invoke successfully. There has been a rather wide student reaction against carrels. Many interiors are left to the mercies of the purchasing agent, and "in this direction madness lies." And custom-designed furniture can be less expensive than ready-made furniture.

Mason provides a great service with his candor. For example, he is frank to say that OSHA issues stupid regulations. He is good on details. (But false in repeating that "water is more destructive to books than fire.") This is an attractive book, with a good selection of appropriate photographs; building floor plans and a demonstration model building program are appended. Anyone entering the task of planning an academic library addition or substantial renovation