

mation policy," defined by Mason as a set of interrelated laws and policies concerned with the creation, collection, management, distribution, and retrieval of information. Here the relationship between the government and the private sector is examined in an economic context, where information becomes a commodity. Mason points out the balance that exists between subsidizing the creation of government information and establishing property rights for information.

Political, economic, and technological conditions in our society make the role of the federal government in library and information services of major importance not only to libraries and librarians, but to all citizens. Mason has drawn together in a single volume a review of the philosophical base, the historical development, and the policy issues. She then suggests appropriate roles for federal involvement in the future. This is not an in-depth analysis of each area included but gives a perspective and basis for further discussion and future policy development.—*Sandra K. Peterson, Yale University.*

**Rogers, A. Robert, and Kathryn McChesney.** *The Library in Society.* Littleton, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 1984. 285p. (Library Science Text Series) \$28.50. LC 84-15440. ISBN 0-87287-379-X.

The authors and their six contributors, who intended this work as an introductory text for library science students, state that they seek to provide a theoretical and conceptual framework that would aid in developing a better understanding of the role of libraries in society. They set out to accomplish this by presenting a view of librarianship in an international context.

The book is divided into four main parts. Part 1 attempts to encourage students to view libraries as integral parts of the societies in which they developed. Chapter 1 describes the role of the library in meeting societal needs. Philosophies of librarianship are presented in chapter 2. Chapter 3 surveys the history of libraries and librarianship from antiquity to the status of libraries at the end of World War II with an emphasis on the West. Part 2 describes the major types of libraries. There

are separate brief chapters on national libraries, school and media centers, college and university libraries, public libraries, special libraries and information centers, and other governmental and quasi-governmental libraries. Part 3 presents overviews of librarianship from various regions of the world. Basic concepts of international and comparative librarianship are presented in the first chapter, setting the stage for the slightly more detailed descriptions of librarianship in Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand, Africa, and Latin America that follow. Part 4 surveys the impact of professional associations on library development in the first chapter. Major professional issues in industrial and postindustrial societies as they affect libraries and librarianship are discussed in the next chapter. Problems and prospects of libraries in the Third World are presented in the last chapter. At the end of each chapter a bibliography of basic sources mentioned in the chapters for further reading are given. This is often preceded by a short list of questions for discussion and reflection—both appear to be useful to students.

The authors state in their preface that they wished to view librarianship in an international context while most "library in society" books seemed to focus almost exclusively on the United States. They have succeeded in their effort to present libraries in society in general terms in an international context; however, so much ground is covered that it seems to lack adequate depth and detail and often results in a superficial, less meaningful presentation as a whole. The textbook's tone and many generalities may be somewhat irritating to a reader seeking more detailed knowledge; perhaps it is not possible to do more with an objective of presenting an introductory survey such as this.—*Pat Kissinger, Northern Illinois University.*

**College Librarianship: The Objectives and the Practice.** Ed. by A. Rennie McElroy. London: The Library Assn., 1984. 447p. \$50. ISBN 0-85365-785-8. (Dist. in the U.S. by Oryx).

*College Librarianship: The Objectives and the Practice* belongs to the Handbook on Li-