

shows, many features of our profession, including its goals and functions, have not been given but have changed considerably as social situations and acceptance by others have shifted. She correctly surmises that the development of professional ideology is irregular and does not reflect something so obvious as the progressive evolution of a basic mission, or the swing of a pendulum from conservatism to liberalism, but is a multidimensional process that requires a more complicated theoretical explanation. This she finds in the "role-set" model and the play of competing values between librarians, their clients, and their sponsors (trustees, university bureaucrats, etc.). She identifies three major lines of stress as a source of recurring conflicts in the period covered by her study: disputes arising out of the assertion of institutional and status autonomy and those emerging from what she calls the "elitist-populist dilemma" and the "neutrality-advocacy dilemma." It is a thoroughly original approach, and only occasionally does the inevitable jargon of her discipline make trouble for the non-sociologist reader.

As a postscript, one cannot resist adding that in 1967, when Geller first published an article on this subject in *Library Journal*—indeed, one that was included in Eric Munn's anthology, *Book Selection and Censorship in the Sixties* (New York: Bowker, 1969)—she was editor of *School Library Journal*; today she works as an investment broker.—William A. Moffett, *Oberlin College Library, Ohio*.

Light, Richard J., and David B. Pillemer.

Summing Up: The Science of Reviewing Research. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Pr., 1984. 191p. \$17.50. LC 84-4506. ISBN 0-674-85430-6. (alk. paper)

Advancing knowledge through a process of cumulation requires accurate and perceptive analyses of what has been studied, what has been discovered, and what remains to be done. Reviews of the literature, the authors maintain, are commonly inadequate to the task, and they discuss, in detailed and sophisticated fashion, ways to improve them. They have excellent credentials for their task,

Light as professor at Harvard's Graduate School of Education and Kennedy School of Government and Pillemer as assistant professor of Psychology at Wellesley College.

A review of previous research, though an established expectation, is all too often done *pro forma* and in pedestrian fashion. The most common approach is simply to summarize, serially, studies that seem to have some relationship to the new study being undertaken. The result is often more confusing than helpful, for the summarized studies have been based upon different definitions, assumptions, and methods and produce findings that are inconclusive or even contradictory. The researcher frequently concludes that the best course is simply to ignore the past and to begin again. Light and Pillemer convincingly argue that well-done reviews not only can prevent such duplication but, even more important, can help to shape improved research studies that genuinely advance knowledge.

In approaching their task, the authors emphasize four "themes":

First, each review should be shaped to respond to a specific question or to a particular purpose; a review designed as the basis for a pragmatic program decision ought to be quite different from a review that seeks to discover fundamental relationships.

Second, disagreements among studies, far from suggesting despair, ought to be considered opportunities for understanding; that different findings appear in studies carried out in different places, for example, may suggest locales and their cultural components as promising variables for further investigation.

Third, the natural appeal of the objectivity of quantitative measures should not be allowed to eliminate qualitative components; a statistically valid relationship may be comprehensible only in the context of informed interpretation of the real world situation.

Fourth, statistical precision cannot replace clear theoretical understanding; almost always, even when a number of studies seems to produce consistent findings, penetrating judgment and analysis

will add depth and breadth to the results.

The book contains six chapters. After the first introductory chapter, the second, "Organizing a Reviewing Strategy," presents the authors' conviction that a review should be structured to focus upon a specific question rather than simply to summarize a number of studies. "Quantitative Procedures" discusses selecting techniques appropriate to the question rather than routinely using conventional measures. Being soundly knowledgeable, Light and Pillemer are not intimidated by the mysteries and magic of statistics. For example, before even discussing statistical measures, they are careful to point out that every summarizing measure involves the loss of some of the details of the underlying facts and that a researcher should be mindful of the implications of taking even that first step. Going on, they illustrate how the customary emphasis upon measures of central tendency often masks important variation and suggest, among other things, the potential of careful analysis of outliers as a means to sharpen understanding.

"Numbers and Narrative: The Division

of Labor" argues for careful attention to individual cases as a source of increased understanding and clarification. Throughout the work, the authors keep their attention close to the real-world events that are being studied and, to an extraordinary degree, they avoid the trap of becoming so enamored with methods and devices as to forget the true purpose of an investigation. They illustrate their general principles with examples and thus make themselves unusually clear. One ingenious device is a "box" presented along with the text in the same way that charts and tables are conventionally used. Within the box, they discuss in detail an example that illuminates a point in the main text. This device gives the reader the benefit of extended explanation without loss of the sequence and pace of the narrative discussion. "What We Have Learned" gives specific examples of ways that reviews have advanced knowledge by clarifying general findings, by integrating a variety of findings, by settling controversies, and by providing new insights into various research strategies. The final chapter gives a checklist of characteristics

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and questions to use in assessing and improving reviews.

The whole book reflects alert and informed intelligence that, without pomp or pretension, sets out purposefully to reform and improve a key element in the whole process of thought and research by which scholars hope to add to knowledge. The informed wisdom behind the book makes its advice and insights applicable to virtually all aspects of scholarship. It is thus a book that repays reading by almost anyone involved in serious study and is entirely likely to satisfy the publisher's prediction that it will "become a methodological classic."—W. L. Williamson, *University of Wisconsin, Madison*.

Metz, Paul. *The Landscape of Literature: Use of Subject Collections in a University Library*. Chicago: American Library Assn., 1983. 143p. (ACRL Publications in Librarianship, no.43) \$30. LC 83-15511. ISBN 0-8389-3286.

This work is a thought-provoking study of the use of libraries, and it is likely to become one of the most influential as well. Metz, user services librarian at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VPI), analyzed data from VPI's automated circulation system in order to answer the question, "Who reads what?" Information on 58,457 books in circulation to 10,126 borrowers on two days in May 1982 provided the data for the study. The circulation data provided information on five categories of borrowers, their departmental affiliation (or major), and the classification of the borrowed material, broken into eighty-one subject categories.

This review can only summarize some of the most important results of Metz's study; the 143 pages are packed with information. His most important finding is that the use of library collections is extremely interdisciplinary, much more so than previous studies have indicated. Metz writes:

The data show quite clearly that the majority of faculty use of most subject literatures is by outsiders—that is, by readers with other specialties than those primarily associated with those literatures. The findings support a view of the library as a most unrestricted and unpre-

dictable bazaar for the exchange of ideas and reflect a much more catholic and interdependent view of knowledge than citation studies have ever suggested. This view of library use, in turn, suggests policies stressing the integration of services, an opposition to arbitrary barriers to the flow of information, and the avoidance of narrow specialization. (p.56-57)

In the sciences, Metz's study shows that not only did faculty in the sciences use the monographic collection (a majority had books checked out), but his study reinforces other use studies that indicate that a large majority of the science faculty's library needs are met by books in the sciences. However, the VPI study showed a higher use of literature outside the faculty's specific discipline than indicated by citation studies.

Social scientists at VPI were heavy library users (two-thirds had books checked out; with an average of 16.3 books) with extensive reliance on materials outside their specific disciplines. Geographers were especially interdisciplinary; only 7.8 percent of books in use by geographers were classed in geography, while 22.4 percent were in economics, and 9.5 percent were in sociology. Only 10.5 percent of books in use by psychologists were classed in that discipline. While these figures are not inconsistent with the findings of citation studies, what is new and surprising in the Metz study is the extent of interdisciplinary use of the collections.

Metz suggests that reliance on fund allocations to departments for book selection may not build balanced collections, because the needs of departmental users may not be the same as those of nonspecialists from whom much of the use materials in the discipline will come.

Periodicals often present problems in use studies. Since at VPI periodicals do not circulate, they were not part of this larger study. However, Metz attempted to monitor their use in the library's photocopy service. While the sample was small, the use "seems" to follow similar patterns as for monographs, but with "a more narrow concentration of use on materials in core literatures."

As almost 70 percent of the books were