



Book Reviews

The State and the Academic Library. Ed. Vicki L. Gregory. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Pr., 1993. 196p. \$55 (ISBN 0-313-28108-4).

Anyone who pays more than casual attention to the *Chronicle of Higher Education* or similar journals is aware of the increasingly close and often obtrusive links between state government and politics and public higher education. These links have always existed, of course, but many of the current problems of colleges and universities, from fiscal issues related to budgeting and accountability to social issues like political correctness and speech codes, are drawing close scrutiny from state government officials. This book seeks to describe the various forms of state governance of higher education, particularly with respect to academic libraries and networks in which academic libraries take part. It aims to offer both practitioners and students an "understanding of the basics of the process of interaction between the state and its institutions' academic libraries."

Although Gregory is listed on the title page as editor, she is also the author of just under two-thirds of the text, including major sections entitled "The Nature and Function of State Government As It Relates to Academic Libraries" and "The Interaction between State Government and Academic Libraries." The remainder of the book consists of four case studies of library-state interaction in Florida, Massachusetts, Georgia, and Colorado. Appendices offer directories of state coordinating agencies of higher education and state library agencies.

Gregory focuses on the present, with only enough attention to recent historical developments to give a context to current conditions. She describes the

major players within state government—governors, legislators, state departments of education, coordinating agencies (like boards of regents) and state libraries—and talks about some of the ways in which interactions are played out, such as resource allocation and program review. More attention than might be expected goes to cooperative networks, especially in the four case studies, which deal almost solely with the development of networks in their respective states. Such networks have clearly become one of the most important and visible avenues by which the state declares and expresses its interest in libraries of all types. But the attention paid to networking issues seems to come at the expense of attention to the relationship between the individual academic library in a state institution and the various arms of state government. Although it would be difficult to characterize such relationships and the factors that lead to their success or failure, the book might have been more useful if the authors had spent more time on this topic.

Gregory and the authors of the case studies convey effectively the extraordinary diversity in the ways that states organize their relationships with academic institutions, and the often arbitrary, even capricious, factors that can affect the political process. At the same time, Gregory makes a valiant effort to identify and describe the underlying similarity and consistency that exist from state to state. In the end, however, the reader is struck less by the similarities than by the enormous differences in political culture, differences based on size, history, and the personalities of political figures.

The editor/author declares that this book is aimed at both practitioners and

beginners. There is something here for both groups, to be sure, but ultimately *The State and the Academic Library* is probably most valuable for the student. The case studies—most notably Janet Freedman's report on the Massachusetts experience—and other examples scattered through the text provide a vivid sense of what actually happens in real-life situations. First-hand experience is no doubt the best teacher in these matters, but getting an eyewitness account of others' experiences may be the best substitute.—Edward Shreeves, *University of Iowa, Iowa City.*

Franklin, Janice R. *Database Ownership and Copyright Issues among Automated Library Networks: An Analysis and Case Study.* Norwood, N.J.: Ablex, 1993. 181p. (ISBN 0-89391-752-4).

The purpose of this book is to demonstrate how conflicts involving database ownership between a national bibliographic utility (OCLC) and the regional utilities it has spawned (in this case study SOLINET) can be understood in light of social network theory and how such conflicts can be avoided if the tenets of this theory are recognized by all the players involved.

The universal principles of social network theory are said to apply to all social networks, whether they are groups of libraries, politicians, or colleagues. The application of these principles to a conflict situation, such as that involving centralized versus regional networks, is supposed to result in a formulation of cooperative, rather than competing, relationships.

Janice Franklin meticulously traces the events surrounding the decision by OCLC in 1982 to copyright the union catalog amid resistance from regional networks, such as SOLINET. Starting in the late 1970s the subject of ownership of databases became controversial as the regional networks emerged from passive roles as OCLC brokers to more independent, active competitors of OCLC. Eventually these regional networks joined together in various efforts to preserve the right to use, as they wanted,

the data generated by their members. For instance, they sought to produce local services in the form of COM catalogs, local area networks, and other computer-generated services provided to and shared by third-party libraries not directly linked to OCLC. OCLC, seeing its role as compiler of the union catalog database, took issue with the idea of providing services to third parties who had not contributed to the national database as contractual members. OCLC argued that, if not protected, the national database would lose its integrity and quality, and thus secured copyright on its union catalog in 1982.

This book provides a sound understanding of the issues that led to OCLC's copyrighting of its database and the frictions between it and the various regional networks that have surfaced in the wake of that action. Franklin surveys the literature on the history of library networks in America, tracing their history back to the earliest years of interlibrary cooperation. She outlines numerous subjects relevant to the problems between regional and centralized bibliographic utilities: the impact of federal legislation and financial support to central utilities on the retention of local regional control, the primary goals of copyright law with regard to national databases, and library network development. All of these topics are viewed with respect to social, economic, and political forces, and in particular to social network theory. The applications of this theory to OCLC as well as to SOLINET are at times unclear and confusing. What emerges from the analysis, however, are a few basic and understandable conclusions: (1) that a centralized structure such as OCLC can be most effective in dealing with subordinate organizations, such as regional networks, if it attains a decentralized structure of authority; (2) that competitive forces should be openly acknowledged and reduced to levels that will not destroy networking goals; (3) that good communications are of utmost importance; and (4) that policy formulations and role definitions should be clearly expressed and communicated.