Book Reviews

Research and Evaluation for Information Professionals, by Robert M. Losee, Jr. and Karen A. Worley. San Diego: Academic Press, 1993. 239p. $45 ISBN 0-12-455770-8. LC 92-43659. Permanent paper.

In their preface, the authors state that they intend to "introduce future and practicing information professionals to investigative techniques useful for solving problems and answering those questions that occur in the management of libraries and information centers." Criticizing the "how we done it good" articles so prevalent in much of the professional literature, they hope that the two parts of this book, covering "what information systems are and what they do" and "specific methods and procedures for conducting research," will raise the level and quality of practicing professionals' research.

There is much in this book that is good. Certainly the intention is worthwhile, and the authors raise a number of important issues. Their premise—that information professionals are often reactive rather than pro-active due to a lack of substantive research in core intellectual domains—is dead right. The introductory chapter on the philosophy of science and research is solid. Chapters on the research proposal and the presentation of results put the notion of inquiry into context, providing inexperienced practitioners with information on how to begin and end a project, as well as how to conduct the research. In an early section, examples are drawn not only from the library world, but also from other information professions: interface and screen design, telecommunications and networking, bibliometrics, and database management system design. Many chapters discuss ethical concerns including (interestingly enough) the chapter on statistical analysis, which looks at a 1990 report from our own field describing Case and Richardson's attempts to generate a predictive model for graduate GPA using such variables as ethnicity, gender, GRE scores, and undergraduate record.

Yet this is one of the few real research studies that is cited here. The bulk of the bibliography is devoted to works on methodology and statistics, which is appropriate, but examples of good (and bad) studies from the literature would enliven and make more tangible the authors' presentation. Furthermore, although Busha and Harter's 1980 standard on research methods in librarianship is cited, no mention is made of Jeffrey Katzer's excellent *Evaluating Information* nor of the more recent works of Peter Hernon (*Statistics: A Component of the Research Process* or *Statistics for Library Decision Making*).

The two tacit sections of the book are quite distinct; the authors make no explicit connection between the problems and variables for evaluation presented in the first section and the methodologies and analysis techniques described in the second. Losee and Worley acknowledge this, saying they prefer readers to make these connections on their own. This is a fine idea, and some of the end-of-chapter exercises will help, but not all readers will work through those exercises, and a bit more guidance from the authors would have been useful.

The level of detail provided in various sections of the book is quite uneven. There are, for example, extended (and sometimes confusing) discussions of the ISO/OSI telecommunications standards and the standard error of the mean. Yet the concept of "variables" (dependent,

independent, intervening), central to any understanding of empirical research, is presented in a single paragraph. Indeed, throughout the chapters on methodology and statistical analysis, the presentation is very sketchy, which limits this book's usefulness as a guide to conducting research. Unfortunately, however, readers may infer that after reading this book they will have all the tools needed to conduct a study, while in many areas they would be sadly lacking.

Although it cannot stand alone as a guide to conducting research, this work has a place in large comprehensive professional development collections with other more substantive methodological and statistical works. Smaller institutions should consider some of the other works mentioned above.—*Joseph Janes, Assistant Professor of Information and Library Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.*

University Libraries and Scholarly Communication: A Study Prepared for The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, by Anthony M. Cummings et al. Washington, D.C.: Association of Research Libraries, 1992. 205p. $8 (paper) ISBN 9-918006-22-8. LC 92-44941. Permanent paper.

As the President of the Mellon Foundation states in the foreword, the principal objective of this study "has been to describe the library landscape as it appears today, in its collecting, operating, financial, and electronic dimensions." The work is divided into two distinct parts. The first section evaluates the state of research libraries today by analyzing ARL data collected over several decades on 24 major U.S. research libraries. The study concentrated on the period from 1963 to the present in the areas of collections, expenditures, and publications.

The second part of the study looks at information needs and new technologies, especially the possibilities of electronic publication as it may impact tomorrow's research libraries. It also examines resource sharing, discussing the economic and legal issues and the new networks such as NREN. The two parts are distinct in their presentation, the first being an analysis of data, and the second a review of current trends and technology.

As Ann Okerson states in her synopsis of the study, the Mellon Foundation examined two interrelated trends.

[1] The explosion in the quantity of described published material and a rapid escalation of unit prices for those items jeopardizes the traditional research library mission of creating and maintaining large self-sufficient collections for their users. . . . [2] The rapid emergence and development of electronic information technologies make it possible to envision radically different ways of organizing collections and services the library has traditionally provided.

This study is an important source of information for any university administrator concerned with libraries and their future. It is founded on the most complete and extensive data extant for a group of libraries anywhere in the world, and it summarizes the effects of a rapidly changing electronic environment on today's libraries. Most of what is presented in this study will be familiar to librarians; however, there are a few surprises for even the most knowledgeable. For example, the authors assumed

that research libraries were consuming ever greater proportions of university budgets, but the data proved them "*very* wrong."

At the bargain price of eight dollars, this report belongs in every academic library. It will serve as a source of education for academic administrators, and it will provide librarians with valuable library data and a clear understanding of the impact of electronic technologies on libraries.—*Paul M. Gherman, Kenyon College Library, Gambier, OH.*

Managing Human Resources in Research Libraries, edited by Anne Woodsworth and Ellen Detlefsen (issue editors). Champaign, IL: University of Illinois, GSLIS, 1993. 158p. $18.50 (paper) ISSN 0024-2594. (*Library Trends*, Fall 1992.)

The ten articles included in this issue of *Library Trends* are concerned with the impact of technological changes on the library workforce and organizational structure. In her introduction, Anne Woodsworth states that large libraries "are becoming increasingly complex to manage" and "need an increasingly broad array of talent to achieve their missions successfully." The situation is further complicated by funding cutbacks in many of these libraries that make it difficult to meet current service demands. It is an appropriate time to reexamine human resource management in research libraries.

Russell Shank provides a brief analysis of the impact of shifting cultural values and technological changes on research libraries. Changes in organizational structure, job content, and ways of working brought about by technology are a source of anxiety for library workers at a time when there is increased concern about the quality of life provided by employment.

The next three essays examine the changing professional workforce in libraries. Ellen Detlefsen discusses the trend toward the creation of specialist professional positions that are frequently filled by specialists without MLS degrees or MLS degree holders with additional degrees or certifications. Based on her analysis of recent job listings, the specialties may be in technology, management, or a subject area. Rachel Anderson and Sherrilynne Fuller describe the role of librarians in institutional information programs in health science settings where they have become an integral part of faculty teaching and research efforts. Paula Kaufman proposes strategies to bring nonlibrarian professionals, whose ways of working and value systems may be quite different from those of librarians, into the professional community of research libraries.

The effects of technological changes on organizational structure are viewed from various perspectives in the next three articles. Leigh Estabrook et al. examine the changing nature of support staff work in research libraries and the issues surrounding autonomy and control. The possibility of a single information job family for computing and library jobs is explored by Anne Woodsworth et al. Maureen Sullivan discusses the changing role of the middle manager.

The final three articles present strategies for meeting human resource needs. Thomas Shaughnessy focuses on the importance of staff development opportunities to