

Recent Publications

BOOK REVIEWS

Bohdan S. Wynar. *Research Methods in Library Science: A Bibliographic Guide with Topical Outlines*. Littleton, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 1971. 153p.

American librarians, harried by heavy work loads and influenced by their educational backgrounds (humanities), have consistently chosen to rely on intuition and tradition as the best avenues to sound library management. The last several decades, however, have ushered in a library scene at once so mammoth and complex that most contemporary administrators are beginning to doubt the efficacy of intuition, habit, and tradition as guides to library management. Most librarians now appear to view "research" as an essential ingredient in the library administration formula.

This growing interest in "research"—and few agree on the definition of that term—is illustrated by the establishment and concomitant popularity of the Library Research Round Table of ALA. Further evidence of this new interest can be found in the appearance of a number of works designed to facilitate research in library science.

Most of these works, such as the Bundy and Wasserman *Reader in Research Methods* and Goldhor's *Introduction to Scientific Research in Librarianship* fell considerably short of their promise. Others like Bob Lee's *Research in Librarianship: Course Outline and Bibliography* proved to be useful and inexpensive guides to the literature. But, we still stand in need of an adequate guide to research methods in library science.

Bohdan Wynar's *Research Methods in Library Science* will not answer that need. Indeed, Wynar's book is poorly conceived and haphazardly executed. The book is in reality the compiler's course outline and bibliography for a research course taught over the years in various library schools. The topical outlines are so brief as to be useless, and the 700-odd items cited are

neither the best works nor the most representative in their respective categories, i.e., history, experimental studies, surveys, content analysis, etc. For instance, in the history section, the compiler cites several papers by Laurel Grotzinger while neglecting to note her excellent book length study on Katherine Anne Sharp, and he omits any reference at all to the important work of Haynes McMullen on nineteenth-century American libraries. These oversights could be duplicated in each section of the book. Wynar also appends brief annotations to about half of the works cited—annotations which are descriptive in nature and in many cases hardly justify the effort—i.e., "This is a good historical survey," or "a well documented work."

Who could make use of such a book? Certainly not the professional librarian whose need is for a guide to methods rather than the literature. After having taught research methods for a number of years I also doubt whether this book would be of any real value to the master's candidate in library science. The errors of omission and commission are numerous enough to make the bibliographies misleading. But, library school faculty will probably find an occasional item unknown to them, and perhaps the Ph.D. candidate studying for his qualifying exams might benefit from a survey of its contents.

One wonders how a book so poorly planned and executed and with such a limited audience could justify publication in hard cover at a price of \$8.50. Perhaps the fact that the compiler is president of Libraries Unlimited, Inc., is explanation enough.—*Michael H. Harris, College of Library Science, University of Kentucky, Lexington.*

Research Librarianship. Essays in Honor of Robert B. Downs. Ed. by Jerrold Orne. New York and London: R. R. Bowker Company, 1971. xvii, 162p. \$11.95.

Ten librarians contributed to this volume, edited by Jerrold Orne, as a token of professional respect for Robert B. Downs