

but on page 99. This was difficult to ascertain from the index; it was not found there under "collected acts" but only under "association agreements," for which two pages were cited. In general, however, the index is good.

This volume is important not only to European Communities depositories but to any research institution involved with studies of Western European political and economic affairs.—*Carolyn W. Kohler, University of Iowa, Iowa City.*

Williams, Patrick, and Pearce, Joan Thornton.

*The Vital Network: A Theory of Communication and Society.* Contributions in Librarianship and Information Science, number 25. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Pr., 1978. 111p. \$13.95. LC 77-94757. ISBN 0-313-20324-5. ISSN 0084-9243.

Since bibliographic and information networks are topics of consuming interest in the profession today, many librarians may acquire this title in the hopes that it will provide some insight into the elusive goal we all seek—a vital network. These hopes will be disappointed; the subtitle, *A Theory of Communication and Society*, is more descriptive of the book's contents.

Some librarians who acquire this work as a result of its misleading title may find that doing so is a rewarding mistake. The purpose of the work is to present a theory of macrocommunication systems that would provide librarians and other communication professionals a theoretical model from which to derive values and priorities.

Briefly, the theory is a simplified derivative from the works of George Herbert Mead and Lev Vygotsky. It starts with the position that human intelligence is the product of language; the "cultural biosystem," which encompasses science, literature, and social and political institutions, is essentially a communications system. The ability to communicate is the foundation of human existence, and communication is the ultimate human activity. Naturally, the theory reflects well on the significance of the role of "communication professionals."

After establishing and to some extent justifying this broad framework, the authors analyze three communication industries—entertainment, journalism, and education—in terms of their roles in American society. These chapters present a series of observations that at

times are interesting and provocative but provide little systematic evidence in support of the authors' theory. Basically, Williams and Pearce have succeeded in establishing a point of view and presenting a few examples. Although the point of view is held with some consistency, it is not developed systematically in sufficient depth to warrant the name of "theory."

The approach of this book must be considered somewhat oblique if it is aimed specifically at our librarians. Librarianship is treated in a brief postscript, but no attempt is made to establish the relevance of the theory to librarianship in the course of presenting the theory in the main text. In light of the series in which this title is published, it would have been appropriate to treat librarianship at least to the same degree as entertainment, journalism, and education. Had such an effort been made, the authors might have come closer to achieving their goal.

Nevertheless, Williams and Pearce have produced a book that is provocative enough that it may be of interest to librarians who have the time to indulge their reflective moods on the role of the profession in society.—*Joe A. Hewitt, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.*

Stern, Madeleine B. *Books and Book People in 19th-Century America.* New York: Bowker, 1978. 341p. \$25. LC 78-12197. ISBN 0-8352-1109-6.

For almost four decades Madeleine Stern's well-written essays and anecdotes have graced the pages of journals and monographs, reminding us of the rich heritage of our nation's book trade. Some twenty-three of those essays are now brought together in this volume, which is well designed in a manner appropriate to its subject. The resulting medley should provide several evenings of agreeable reading for anyone interested in the subject.

Virtually the entire contents of the book have appeared elsewhere. Readers who remember Stern's *Imprints on History* (Indiana University Press, 1956) might choose to think of this book as its second volume, so similar are the styles and contents of the two, were it not that fully fifty pages from the earlier title are reprinted here. The integrity of the subject of *Books and Book People*, however, and the fact that some of its pieces are reproduced from