

new work that holds promise of systematizing at least a part of that burgeoning literature.

Environmental Impact Assessment: A Bibliography with Abstracts is an ambitious attempt along these lines. Specifically, the book seeks to order and explicate recent publications that deal with environmental study and evaluation as a decision-making process. The work is divided into five principal classified sections. The largest of these deals with assessment in the U.S., Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, continental Europe, and selected other countries. Although there is attention to methodology both as theory and practice, the thrust of the work pertains to the legal bases and administrative processes involved in assessment. Together with the introductory material accompanying each section, this emphasis bespeaks an intended audience of assessment administrators who already have more than a passing knowledge of factors involved in the process. Unfortunately, even these users might need ample fortitude to grapple with the book: the prose is dense; the seventeen subsections lack internal classification; and, while the author index is excellent, the subject index contains only 367 points of entry and no cross-references. Furthermore, although each citation bears a unique alphanumeric designation, the lack of an alphabetic arrangement to the subsections, and therefore the alphanumeric entries, makes quick referral from either index difficult.

This volume also raises an unsettling question regarding sales promotion. As noted, the work's subtitle is *A Bibliography with Abstracts*. The publisher's announcement that recently came our way elaborated on this by describing the book as a "single, comprehensive, annotated bibliography" that covers, among other things, "information sources, abstracting all major references (over 1,000 of them!) with critical comment where appropriate." Indeed, the book does offer more than one thousand citations, all with full, clear bibliographic information. However, only 55 percent (595) of these are annotated, frequently to an extent unusual in bibliographies. The remaining 493 citations are altogether bare of summary or evaluation. Nor are these unannotated citations evenly distributed over sub-

ject areas. In seven of the seventeen subsections more than 50 percent of the citations are unannotated. Unfortunately, two of these subsections are expressly devoted to assessment in the U.S. Although there are substantial numbers of annotated U.S. entries elsewhere in the book, users focusing on the U.S. experience may find the going difficult. Conversely, users studying the assessment process as it functions in the United Kingdom or continental Europe may find it quite beneficial to their investigation.

In short, unlike most bibliographies, this work, while having reference value, will not lend itself readily to typical reference service in the college library. Its greatest value will probably be to the serious user who is compelled by need and blessed with time.—*Patricia B. Devlin, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.*

Li, Tze-Chung. *Social Science Reference Sources: A Practical Guide*. Contributions in Librarianship and Information Science, no.30. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1980. \$25. LC 79-54052. ISBN 0-313-21473-5.

This book is the outgrowth of a course syllabus and is intended to be the text for a one-semester library science course. In part I the author discusses the social sciences in general. Part II is made up of eight chapters, each dealing with one of the social sciences. The arrangement for parts I and II is similar: an essay by the author on the nature of the science or sciences followed by sections on access to materials, sources of information, and major periodicals. Part I includes chapters on government publications, unpublished materials and data archives, and data bases.

Source materials are discussed in bibliographic essays with the standard, more important items separately listed. The author's own alphanumeric designation for each item would be helpful to students in compiling class notes and book cards. The author has included with the standard material descriptive information that is accurate, if sometimes superficial.

The arrangement of the text and the style of presentation reflect the author's preferences rather than a design for general use. Since the author has prepared the text primarily for library science students, much of

the information is introductory in nature. Those elements that make it valuable as a text tend to erode its value to the experienced librarian or researcher. The communication of useful information is further hindered by an obvious lack of good editorial work. Sentences are at times awkward and often overly long; the use of qualifiers is distracting to the reader who seeks at least a tone of authority in a guide to sources of information.

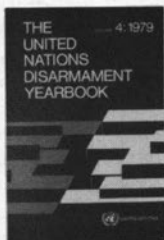
Anyone wishing to use this as a text should examine it carefully prior to a purchase commitment. For others it is neither a substitute for nor a supplement to the more standard Hoselitz and White.—*Joyce Ball, California State University, Sacramento.*

Hall, J. L., and Dewe, A. *Online Information Retrieval, 1976-1979: An International Bibliography.* Aslib Bibliography 10. London: Aslib, 1980. 230p. £16 members; £19.50 nonmembers. ISBN 0-85142-127-X.

This bibliography covers mainly "subject-oriented information retrieval from *bibliographic files*" and the authors make no claim to coverage of either computerized catalogs or numerical data bases.

It spans the period 1976-79, which saw a burgeoning of literature in this field. Much of the increase in the literature is accounted for by articles written by or for practitioners as contrasted with an emphasis on research in earlier years. Although even the beginning date of this bibliography is quite recent, the field has changed so rapidly that already some of the material listed is only of historical interest. Because a number of relevant items were reported to the authors after their cutoff date of June 1979, a supplement of more than 160 additional items was added without annotations and with only partial indexing. Adding the supplement brings the total to more than one thousand entries for the period beginning with mid-1976 and continuing through mid-1979.

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