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and Gee often rely on unsupported generalizations to advance their cause. Many of these seem to exaggerate the importance of the library to scholars across the board and, therefore, are at odds with this reviewer's experience as well as with a number of scholars' descriptions of how they work. Although the reader may not necessarily be converted to the authors' panoramic vision, many of the points they make and ideas they present are valuable, and their book serves as a guide to action, both for the academic officer at whom it is directed, and also for the librarian who wants to involve academic officers effectively in achieving the library's goals. Few of the ideas are likely to be completely new to librarians, but their presentation from the viewpoint of the academic administrator provides a number of fresh insights.—*Melissa D. Trevvett, University of Chicago Library, Illinois.*

Nicholas, David, Gertrud Erbach, Yin Wah Pang, and Koren Paalman. *End-users of Online Systems: An Analysis.* London and New York: Mansell Publishing, 1988. 181p. (ISBN 0-7201-1995-2). LC 88-8220.

This book is a final report of an eighteen-month study funded by the British Library. It was completed in September 1987. An interim report has been previously published under the title of *Online Searching: Its Impact on Information Users* (Mansell, 1987). The stated goal of this project is to examine the effect online systems are having on information-seeking behavior among those nonlibrarians who perform their own searches in Great Britain. What it has accomplished is no doubt valuable, but more modest.

Given the immense scope of the project, an eclectic approach was adopted to gather the necessary information. The research team employed surveys, interviews, case studies, analysis of two mailings of questionnaires administered for management purposes, and literature reviews where it deemed appropriate. The project population eventually included the newspapers, broadcasting media, financial institutions in the City of London, academic departments in the universities

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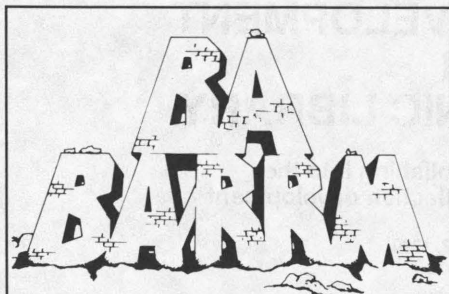
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and polytechnics and industry as represented by several chemical and pharmaceutical concerns. This ambitious repertoire was hampered by a number of methodological and conceptual difficulties.

To begin with, since judgment samples were usually chosen; to use the authors' own words, they cannot claim that their findings are "representative" but rather "indicative." Second, in spite of its focus on end-use, the majority of the research was done through the eyes of the information intermediary such as the online specialists, who the authors described as possessing "an imperfect knowledge of online use." Neither economy nor the librarians' willingness could justify this approach. Such treatment is analogous to researching a physician's diagnostic behavior through a survey of nurses; it is just not as reliable as would be a direct evaluation. The fact that the research team explicitly excludes CD-ROM technology also weakened its relevancy. The shortcoming of this omission was revealed time and again through all the case studies where conversations always led to the emerging optical storage technology. The respondents, according to this report, frequently expressed their interests in this new medium and yet this concern was considered to be outside of the present study.

The strength of the present study lies in the pioneer nature of this comprehensive yet empirical treatment of the topic. Useful and concrete conclusions regarding the current state of online practices and the future of end-use in Great Britain were offered. Based on the evidence provided, information consumers such as journalists and researchers have adapted very little of their work habits to take advantage of online information systems. End-use in British higher education was sporadic; financial and investment personnel were found more accustomed to the real-time systems (in the mode of the traditional telex machines) for quotes and statistics; and journalists their telephones and their library of newspaper clippings. In the final analysis, the end-users' reluctance is partly attributable to the imperfection of the available databases. Be it full-text or bibliographic,

online systems are not comprehensive and up-to-date enough, and where retrospective materials are concerned, they do not go back far enough. The readers were also advised that adequate training for beginning users was essential to overcome initial resistance. More importantly, unless library professionals become more aggressive and more involved in the planning and implementation of online projects, they would increasingly lose control over online services in their organizations.

It is regrettable that little attempt was made to pull all the data together across the wide spectrum of applications. However, readers would be impressed and amused by the descriptions of many intimate case studies, notably the newspaper industry. I believe more can be gleaned from these interviews, and more interviews should be attempted. The reproduction of the research team's interview schedules or questionnaires would have improved the overall quality of the report.

While data in percentage format, lists and charts were occasionally provided, the current study was mainly qualitative in nature. Examples of imprecise language and irrelevant editorializing are too many to mention. The following example is illustrative: When an information manager was cited as having suggested that the low demand of a certain legal database was due to a lack of perseverance on the part of the end-users, it was gratuitously introjected that this intermediary "runs half-marathons and, this, no doubt, influences his thinking!" This detailed study calls for a better focus and self-discipline.—*Sidney Eng, Borough of Manhattan Community College, the City University of New York.*

Fiction Writers Guidelines: Over 200 Periodicals Editors' Instructions Reproduced. Comp. and ed. by Judy Mandell. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1988. 316p. \$20.95 (ISBN 0-89950-249-0). LC 88-42506.

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