

Ulysses S. Ricard Jr. detailed the successes of Creole blacks in Louisiana, slave and free; of the latter, he maintained that their "accomplishments in military, economic, literary, and artistic endeavors were not matched by any other free blacks in the United States." Ricard expressed the hope that the archives he worked with at the Amistad Research Center "can be used, directly and indirectly, to combat racism and prejudice."

Like all the participants in the Louisiana meeting, Marcia Gaudet grew up in the culture she discusses, in her case that of the Cajun culture, whose history she outlines and describes as being a diverse group defying "one-dimensional" stereotypes. She recognizes, but has difficulty in working through, the complexities of folk traditions being revived in the flare of media attention and local promotion; her example is the Cajun Mardi Gras. She quotes folklorist Barry Ancelet's view that the colorful masked ritual really "invert[s] reality and mock[s] the observer." Gaudet indicates that documentary material and folklore studies are essential in moving to a multidimensional understanding. The striking photographs of the Cajun Mardi Gras by Irby Gaudet III, reproduced in the book, are eloquent documents of a tradition continuing to evolve in the 1990s. Another very direct expression is Irvan Perez's actual singing of *Decimas*, the old and new topical and lyric songs of the Spanish-speaking south Louisiana Isleños community in which he grew up. Preceded by a brief history of his culture, the songs are the real heart of Perez's presentation.

Probably due to the necessarily limited focus of the meetings that produced the papers here published, some important topics are not dealt with: folk material culture and visual art (these are usually in the domain of museums rather than libraries and archives); new modes of documentation such as self-docu-

mentation of families, groups, cultures, through video; and the computer revolution as it documents and proliferates information about previously localized cultures (e.g., Georgia's McIntosh County Shouters, practitioners of the coastal slave ring-shout tradition, now have their own Web site). If new conferences and publications covering these topics are as insightful and well edited as this one, they will be doing a great service to the library and archiving profession, the general public, and especially the groups whose histories and cultures need to be both preserved and better understood.—*Art Rosenbaum, University of Georgia, Athens.*

Eshelman, William R. *No Silence!: A Library Life.* Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow, 1997. 340p. \$59 alk. paper (ISBN 0-8108-3241-0). LC 96-53095.

My old friend Eshelman's memoir works best if you read it the way it appears that he wrote it, back and forth in time and picking and choosing events and places to build emphases and relationships for yourself. It may be that age and experience, plus an ample dose of the "library press" as practiced by him, Eric Moon, Kathleen Molz, Art Plotnik, Gerry Shields, and others is a prerequisite for full understanding. Hold on, though, this is no *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, it is primary source material in library history, and you have to mine it to get the ore. I did not begin at the beginning, although that early life and the hardships of a pacifist, conscientious objector in World War II gives the reader perspective on the rest of the story.

I looked for material that would enrich my own memory and understanding of all that has happened. I wanted to smelt and refine out the metal of some professional and personal history I had lived. I wanted to test some sympathetic, but not identical, perspectives from a point of view with which I agree, against

my own memories of what I think was a period of incredible change in our field and our society.

I got what I wanted from Eshelman—and more. It was more interesting and more accessible than other memoirs with which I have struggled. Indeed, this one was fun. I again was exhilarated by the battles: for racially integrated libraries and library service (there were still segregated libraries in our lifetime!), for a more open and democratic ALA, for principle tempered and hardened by ideological unity. I found the victories and defeats, plus a more mellow Bill Eshelman, still standing firm, still cranky, and still perturbed, still seeing every event of a lifetime through the lens of his stalwart, unswerving adherence to a humane pacifism and progressive politics, but it is a quieter, more circumspect view than I expected.

Insights are abundant. Get the true inside view of the struggle of academic libraries, those institutions within institutions, to deal with campus activism, dissent, and downright revolutionary upheaval in the now revised-beyond-recognition 1960s. Review that earlier struggle between the then young turks of ALA's social responsibility movement and the older purists of the intellectual freedom establishment over that nasty piece of work, the ALA film *The Speaker*. Read the story of the decline and tragic death of the *Wilson Library Bulletin* from its most angry editor, who was refused an editorial page in what may have been the worst compromise in his career (it was restored for all three of his successors, but no one knows the rules by which they were forced to abide). Then ponder the inside look at the workings of the H. W. Wilson Company during the long period when it was run by benevolent despots.

Equally revealing are the characters when viewed through the old editor's eyes. See the young and mature Bob

Wedgeworth, the mentors Eric Moon, Larry Powell and Bob Vosper. Enjoy, too, the friends—from the Drinnons to Ward Ritchie to Ben Bagdikian, Zoia Horn, and many more. You get a new look, an insider's closeup of many of the people who shaped modern librarianship, and you can tell the good guys from the bad, though sometimes even their absence is an obvious comment.

There is rich historic ore to be mined in Eshelman's memoir. He tells it modestly, albeit with an occasional boast, and more quietly than I would have expected. He tells it truthfully too, and that makes the memoir a must read for any library historian of the period. Despite the shallow review you may have seen in the June 15 *Library Journal*, Eshelman's book deserves a far better critique than to be written off as "nostalgic." It gives you a living view of the people and events of the last half century of librarianship, a period in which, as Eric Moon puts it in the work's foreword, the "principles and philosophies of the profession" were tempered and hardened. Eshelman, who was a major participant in that work, provides a unique memoir of that work, and the people who made it happen.—*John Berry*, *Library Journal*.

Kaser, David. *The Evolution of the American Academic Library Building*. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow, 1997. 208p. \$36 alk. paper (ISBN 0-8108-3219-4). LC 96-36032.

One of the foremost authorities on planning and building academic libraries has provided us with a concise, lucid, and well-researched history of the way that American academic libraries have evolved from the one-room facilities of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to the large and complex structures characteristic of the twentieth century. In doing so, he offers a useful antidote to the nostalgia for certain styles by reminding us why they are less practical than contemporary modu-