

value as well as the appendix which gives the examination questions from previous years. Some pertinent monographs are contained in the bibliography of suggested readings, but a heavy emphasis on public library titles is evident. Despite the lucid style and a few informative chapters, the general paucity of descriptive or interpretive information makes this volume inappropriate for general library purchase. —James Foyle, *University of Denver*.

Computerized Library Catalogs: Their Growth, Cost, and Utility. By J. L. Dolby; V. J. Forsyth; and H. L. Resnikoff. Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1969.

The principal value of this book is as a catalog of considerations relevant to the design of mechanized catalog production systems. Some research results and some suggestions on specific design features are presented. The book is particularly recommended to library administrators and library systems analysts. Computer jargon is used only when necessary, and, when used, is defined for the nontechnical reader.

The "growth" in the title is dealt with in terms of the fact that libraries tend to grow at an exponential rate. Estimating the growth rate for individual libraries can be difficult because of the unavailability of reliable statistical data. A method of using imprint dates as a basis for such estimates is suggested. In addition, an original method of predicting the language breakdown of future acquisitions is presented. Using this method, the authors predict that foreign-language materials will constitute a constantly increasing percentage of future acquisitions of research libraries—a prediction that will be of interest to all library administrators.

A chapter entitled "An Analysis of Cost Factors" concentrates on hardware-related costs. It includes a particularly lucid section on the problems of choosing a programming language, and a useful comparison of input devices. The claimed potential for cost savings should be viewed warily, since it is not clear what costs are included in those presented. A brief appendix to this chapter, surveying some linguistic data manipulation languages, will probably not interest the nontechnical reader. Another chapter, on typography

and format, discusses the important problem of achieving maximum information density on the printed page while maintaining legibility.

Among other values of the book are a stimulating discussion of publication schedules for book catalogs and supplements, and a chapter on automatic error detection. It is regrettable (but easily explained by the paucity of work on the problem) that the latter does not concern itself with the more general question of automatic editing, since a hefty portion of the cost of most mechanized cataloging systems is attributable to the necessity of human editing. In backfile conversion projects especially, it appears that automatic editing routines could be devised that would profitably make use of the large amount of organization already present in catalog card data.

On-line catalogs are not discussed, probably because, for most libraries, it now is, or shortly will be, feasible to use computers to produce human-readable catalogs (perhaps in microform), while placing the catalog on line is a possibility only for the more distant future. A more serious shortcoming is the failure to discuss the use of machine-readable catalog records acquired from extramural sources. There are serious problems to be solved before local systems can make effective use of such records, but their availability will radically affect the costs of mechanizing catalog production. Nothing in the present book is invalidated when externally produced catalog records are considered, but to the extent that they are available, they must be taken into account in system design.—Kelley L. Cartwright, *University of California, Berkeley*.

Directory of Library Consultants. Ed. by John Berry III. New York: R. R. Bowker Co., 1969. 141p. \$10.75.

It seems to me that this volume will, because it is enumerative and not evaluative, serve a very limited purpose. Librarians of large libraries usually know who the real experts are for the projects for which consultation help is needed. Representatives of small libraries probably do not know this and they cannot find out

from this volume, except in very large categories, the relevant information about potential consultants. The volume seems to assume that anyone who calls himself a consultant, or who has worked on a few jobs, is one. This just isn't so. Evaluations of the work of a consultant are essential if one is to get the kind of help he needs.

A librarian needing a consultant can find a long, unevaluated list of potential consultants from this volume, but he will have to spend a great deal of time by correspondence, telephone calls, and visits

to existing libraries to find the right consultant for his problem. Dangerous and difficult though it would have been, the editors of this volume could have increased its value if they had tackled the problem of qualitative evaluations of the consultants they have listed. Perhaps without this, one would do just as well by consulting the headquarters of the American Library Association, bad though that may be at times.—*Ralph E. Ellsworth, University of Colorado.*

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ABSTRACTS

The following abstracts are based on those prepared by the Clearinghouse for Library and Information Sciences of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC/CLIS), University of Minnesota, 2122 Riverside Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404.

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Cooperative Services for "Big Country" Libraries. Report of a Survey with Recommendations for Cooperating among Libraries of All Types in Thirty-six Counties of West Central Texas. By Dorothy Sinclair, and others. Austin: Texas State Library, 1969. 176p. (ED 032 093, MF—\$0.75 HC—\$8.90).

This study was conducted to explore possibilities for cooperative library activities in the thirty-six county region of the Abilene Major Resource System which has the Abilene Public Library as the Major Resource Center. The report begins with a consideration of the region as an environment for public library service, followed by a detailed assessment of the thirty-five public libraries. In addition to a con-

sideration of the locally provided services and collections, there is a description of the Texas State Library's Major Resource Center and Area Library program as it affects the region. Consideration of academic libraries includes an assessment of services and collections and a description of resources outside the region to which the academic library group has access. The description of the school library situation includes comments on the regional centers recently established to assist local school districts and their libraries. The relatively few special libraries in the region are also described. The major needs identified are (1) publicity on the importance of libraries, (2) cooperation among existing libraries of all types, (3) establishing long-range goals for the libraries