

# Review Articles

## Space for Study

*Student Reaction to Study Facilities, with Implications for Architects and College Administrators; a report to the Presidents of Amherst College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College, and the University of Massachusetts. . . .* [Prepared under the auspices of the Committee for New College.] Amherst, Mass. 1960. 60 p.

A first reading of this report leaves me with some uncertainty as to whether I want to laugh or weep: laugh because the report is so well done; weep because every single conclusion the committee arrived at has been well known to those of us who have worked with the problem of college library buildings since the war. Those of us who live in the hinterlands have learned to expect a fair amount of provinciality among New Englanders, just as we have learned to accept the fact that many of our ideas aren't respectable until Harvard comes along and rediscovers them, but, really, this report is just too much!

There isn't the slightest bit of evidence in this report that its authors have any conception that dozens of librarians and architects have wrestled with these problems for fifteen years, that much has been written on the subject, that dozens of modular libraries have been built and all kinds of experiments have been attempted with conclusions that are already well known to most of us. For example, I have been saying for years that 80 per cent of the space for readers should be in the form of reading room carrels and only 20 per cent in the form of flat tables. I could list library after library that has been organized along the lines of the conclusions this committee discovers. What kind of scholarship is this that blandly ignores the record?

Foundations will read this report and will soon be preaching the gospel to us innocents who haven't had access to the latest research! Amen.

Having paid my respects to the committee for its bibliographic manners, may I now congratulate it for conducting a good, clean-cut experiment and for having arrived at

conclusions that are sound, wise, and helpful. This is a report that every college and university librarian should read because it will give each of them "scientific" evidence to back up what he already knows about how to analyze the problem of planning study space for a campus.

The validity of the study for comparative purposes is limited by the lack of all kinds of facilities in the colleges included in the study.

The summary of twenty-seven findings on pages 40-42 of the report will give the college librarian the ammunition he needs to combat the wishful thinking of campus planners who have the idea that empty classrooms and dormitory libraries will solve the problem of providing study facilities on the campus. For this help we should all be grateful. Also, this report will bolster the courage of those librarians in charge of modular buildings who haven't dared subdivide their reading room spaces along the lines of the committee's findings.—*Ralph E. Ellsworth, University of Colorado Libraries.*

## Building, Shelving, and Storage

*Buildings*, by Ralph E. Ellsworth. *Shelving*, by Louis Kaplan. *Storage Warehouses*, by Jerrold Orne. (The State of the Library Art, Volume 3) New Brunswick, N. J.: Graduate School of Library Service, Rutgers, the State University, 1960. 3v in 1. \$5.50.

The only thing really wrong with this book is that, for the most part, it simply does not cover the subjects named in the title. Everything in the book is on the subject, but for two out of three of the parts, the material covers only a portion of the much broader headings. The majority of the book (151 pages) is supposed, by title, to cover "Buildings," but it is perfectly clear that the author, Ralph Ellsworth, is not attempting to do this. As a matter of fact, he starts his introduction by stating: "The problem of hous-

ing research library collections and of providing suitable space for readers . . . ,” going on from there to cover, in a most thorough fashion, research library development. Public libraries are mentioned only incidentally, and there is one extensive quotation from Wheeler and Githens, but in very few cases are public libraries drawn upon for illustration or to support a point that occurs in the text. There are a few items in the bibliography which are not used extensively enough to justify inclusion for a work such as this *handbuch* type. There is very little use of college (as opposed to university) library history and evaluation; and the colleges used have such large book collections as to classify, as far as book-housing problems are concerned, with the university library.

There are approximately six hundred junior colleges in this country, and they are not even mentioned. School libraries have been excluded also, but perhaps with more justification, since they usually occupy only part of building. This, of course, is also true for many, perhaps most, junior college libraries.

It is immediately evident to the reader that Ellsworth thinks he is covering the subject assigned, and you can see that he feels he is on solid ground, and he most certainly is. Keyes Metcalf is probably the only other person in the country who could do this job with as much certainty and good results as Ellsworth. With his selection of the most pertinent literature, few could quarrel. The fact that he has left out many, many items is to his undying credit, because most of the literature, of course, merely echoes—or at best merely expands—the few significant items extant.

Those who know Ralph Ellsworth will be greatly impressed not only with the fine job he has done, but particularly with the restraint he has used in approaching the problem of working toward the *handbuch* ideal: that of citing the significant literature in terms of the present-day state of the art without comment of a subjective nature.

In the second part of his presentation he has attempted to evaluate the literature in terms of whether or not the statements are valid from a scientific or research point of view. With his evaluation this reviewer finds little or no fault. Toward the very end of this section we do get a few Ellsworthian

flights into subjectivity, which add considerably to the interest and value of the contribution. An Ellsworth writing under German reference-editorial restraint is hardly Ellsworth at his best, but since Mr. Metcalf is busy with his own book just now, who else could have done it?

The editors are to be congratulated upon this wise selection for this section of the book. The editors, however, are traditionally and often contractually those responsible for titles, and this title is quite misleading. Naturally, most of us in college or university library work would prefer to have the work as Ellsworth has done it, but I am sure he would be the last to claim that he has covered total library buildings, as the title of the handbook series implies.

The second portion of the book (occupying 41 pages) is by Louis Kaplan and is presumably on shelving. Actually, it is not on shelving at all, but is on storage, and primarily on compact storage as affected by micro-copies and storage of other non-book materials. All Kaplan attempts to treat is storage, and again the reader gets the impression that this was the assignment, but the title, “Shelving,” is much, much broader—so much broader, in fact, that it can be said that nine-tenths of the libraries of this country occupying separate buildings would have no interest whatsoever in storage (as treated by Kaplan) problems, because they do not have those problems. Shelving, on the other hand, is something that concerns all libraries. This section, however, has not one word on shelving in the sense of free-standing bookcases or ranges as we find them in practically all of the new libraries today. As with the Ellsworth section, the moment you start reading Kaplan you realize that he is treating carefully and expertly the subject he thinks is his. He starts off with storage and he ends with storage, and not only has no words on shelving, but has no thought of shelving—shelving, that is, in the common use of the term. Once again the reader finds himself impressed with a thoroughgoing job (on one phase of the subject given in the title) handled in such fashion as to elicit admiration for the effort and few quarrels with the conclusions.

Kaplan, too, has lighted upon the most pertinent literature and restricted his citation to only the most conclusive. When one

considers the mass of boresome printed materials which he must have had to comb through to come up with the significant items in this extremely important but, to most of us, terribly boring phase of library buildings, too much thanks would be impossible. The editors again have selected the best man for the subject, one who is patient, tireless, and yet enthusiastic. Again, one hardly knows who to criticize for the misleading title, but it is inconceivable that Louis Kaplan thought he was writing on shelving and then turned out such a fine section on storage.

The third part (52 pages) of the book on storage warehouses is by Jerrold Orne, and, for a change, it is on storage warehouses, which he covers both extensively and intensively. The readers of *CRL* saw a large portion of this study in the November 1960 issue of this journal under the title, "Storage and Deposit Libraries."

Because of this fact, comments here will be more limited than on the other two parts. Orne's use and treatment of the literature in order to reveal the current state of the

art have already been evaluated by most of us. Actually, this reviewer thinks he did his customarily fine and scholarly job, but his proposal as to how the problem of storage ought to be approached basically is much better substantiated and appears much more logical when read in its fuller form. Oddly enough, although Orne seems to have been able to adapt himself to the *handbuch* method even better than Ellsworth and Kaplan, he takes off further in flight in the recommendation not only for areas of needed research but in proposing possible solutions. He does this, however, in the section of his part where this is permissible, for each of the three have a section which deals with "targets [or directions] for research." The Council on Library Resources, it seems to me, should be quite pleased with the sections all three authors have under this "Targets . . ." heading. Kaplan's suggestions are most sound; Orne's are, as already stated, even more sweeping than we had expected; and, of course, in Ellsworth the profession has one of its truly great imaginations.—*William H. Jesse, University of Tennessee Libraries.*

## Comment

### Classification and Indexing

We are by now so accustomed to Mortimer Taube's ill-informed and splenetic outbursts that we usually ignore them. The farrago of misrepresentations and nonsense statements masquerading as a review of Vickery's *Classification and Indexing in Science* is such an extreme example, however, that it calls for a mild corrective.

I will try to keep this short, but to explain all the points I have marked would require many pages. First of all, I must say that not only are we in Europe aware of the value of American intellectual contributions, but that the whole point of Vickery's work is to increase our awareness; naturally, we also hope that his book will have a two-way effect.

It is clear that Mr. Taube neither under-

stands nor intends to understand the "facet analysis" type of classification; no doubt he thinks he is the only one entitled to coin new terms. He writes of the "general lack of impact of Ranganathan's work on librarianship, outside of India." Ranganathan's work is known and appreciated all over the world. He has visited the U.S.A. several times, and during the last two years has—in his late sixties—visited the U.S.A., U.K., Brazil, France, Germany, Poland, Russia, and Japan; at least four of these countries by invitation. Where has Mr. Taube been during this time? Mr. Ranganathan is a vice-president of both IFLA and FID, and a member of the editorial boards of *Libri* and of *American Documentation*. These are only a few examples of his "lack of impact."

To discredit an opponent ascribe to him a ridiculous statement that he did not make. Mr. Taube does this very well. Mr. Vickery