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BOOK REVIEWS

Myrick, William J., Jr. *Coordination: Concept or Reality? A Study of Libraries in a University System*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow, 1975. 175p. \$7.50. (LC 74-22456) (ISBN 0-8108-0776-9)

This is an important book, not so much for what it tells us about City University of New York (CUNY) as for what it tells us about library cooperation. If libraries in a multicampus university system find coordination this difficult, how do looser consortial groups fare?

This book, based on Myrick's doctoral dissertation, is an account of CUNY's attempts to "coordinate the activities of the libraries, and of establishing uniform practices among them." The early chapters report the development of CUNY and its libraries from the opening of the Free Academy in 1849 (later to become City College in 1866) and Hunter College in 1870,

through the period of the College of the City of New York (1929-61 when the main member colleges were City, Hunter, Brooklyn, and Queens) to the creation of CUNY in 1961 and the period of growth from that time. The detailed account ends with activities taking place in 1972, with a status report and the occasional footnote reporting data from 1974. There is not, of course, a report of the recent dramatic events following the fiscal crisis of the city (and the state) and their impact on the libraries.

From this base, Myrick then examines the attempts at coordination of the libraries, with chapters on the coordinating agencies, union catalog and interlibrary loan, further aspects of coordination, an account of the office of the dean for libraries, 1969-71, and a chapter on the affiliation with New York Public Library.

By and large, the tale is a sorry one. Myrick reports four major factors which have impeded the development of coordination.

They are institutional autonomy, librarians' negative attitudes, lack of library support by the university central administration, and the lack of a full-time central coordinating agency empowered with line authority, direct access to appropriations, and recourse to statistical data. These conclusions emerge inescapably from the evidence in the narrative. For example, Myrick reports that in 1971 a simple one-card union catalog was started at Hunter, a procedure which is, as Myrick notes, almost identical to a proposal made by Margaret Rowell in 1955. Four reports from different consultants (and a proposed resolution from the CUNY Librarians' Association [LACUNY]), submitted over a period of five years, proposed the creation of some form of coordinating office.

All were, in the first instance, rejected. When the dean's office finally was created, it lasted less than two years, 1969-71, and the post has not been filled since. In 1966 the university commissioned a study by Felix Reichmann and Irlene Stephens on the feasibility of centralizing technical processes. The resulting report listed sixty-seven specific recommendations. By the time it had been revised and rewritten in response to comment and criticism by the Council of Librarians, "there were now thirteen recommendations, not one of which had any direct connection with technical services. Of the remaining 66 recommendations, only three had been implemented by July 1974," LC conversion, application to (and denial by) ARL, and the union catalog at Hunter.

What of CUNY libraries now? All the senior colleges are in OCLC, and technology will clearly solve many of the mechanical problems which so beset the early attempts at library coordination. But the real problems will remain. How will the libraries respond to the crisis? By pulling together or by tugging apart? Will the university (librarians and administration) now realize and act on the need for strong central coordination?

Libraries must coordinate their activities if they are going to survive, and it is my view that libraries in a multicampus university have a better chance or opportunity than anyone else. Not that the problems are less difficult or the politics any easier, they are not. But at least the goal should be

more clearly definable. Multicampus libraries should be the pathfinders, not the laggards, for if they can make library coordination work, then there is hope for the independent campus library. If they can't, our fate is deserved.

But it is easy to be critical. The terrible truth is that while there are heroes and heroines, there are no villains (although some are shaded grey); only doubt, fear, unawareness, disdain, and other human frailties.—*Glyn T. Evans, Director of Library Services, State University of New York Central Administration.*

Welsch, Erwin K. *Libraries and Archives in Germany*. Pittsburgh: Council for European Studies, 1975. 275p. \$4.95, U.S., \$5.95, foreign. (Order from: University Center for International Studies, University of Pittsburgh, G-6 Mervis Hall, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260.)

For American researchers planning an itinerary of German libraries and archives, Welsch's "handbook" will become as much part of their baggage as a railroad schedule or the *Michelin Guide*. Those who have studied in Germany can only regret that this work was not available earlier, for Welsch's book can save the student much time and inconvenience.

The author lists almost every major research library and archive in the Federal Republic and, to a lesser extent, in East Germany. While the emphasis is on the social sciences, the author touches upon all disciplines. A seven-part format for each institution includes the address and the name of its director (it is advisable to write in advance and state one's special needs). The American traveling abroad will appreciate information concerning library hours and the vacation periods observed. The author tells us which libraries have *Sachreferenten* (subject specialists) who can render helpful and expert assistance.

In the U.S. we have become accustomed to quick access to the resources in libraries and archives, but public admittance to stacks is still relatively unknown in Germany. It has only been in the last decade that German institutions have adopted our philosophy of "readers' service."

There is a location guide listing the subject-area responsibilities of German librar-