tents provide background on, and a good overview of, the evolution of off-campus services since the first conference was held in 1982.

Topics covered at the conference include design of Web-based tutorials; collaboration between universities, and between traditional and virtual universities, faculty and librarians, and main and satellite campuses; instruction on library resources via a variety of methods, including television, e-mail, and video, as well as other forms of computer-mediated communication; administration of distance-learning programs; enhancement of catalogs for remote access; promotion of off-campus services; consideration of collection development issues; evaluation and assessment of services; and provision of remote reference. Particularly interesting are the numerous papers on collaborations forged not only between traditional institutions, but also between virtual universities and physical universities as demonstrated by the agreement between Walden and Indiana Universities.

This collection of conference proceedings is a valuable tool for anyone participating in the provision of off-campus services. The papers on practices and procedures will be especially valuable for any library initiating services of its own or enhancing current services. The discussion of the complexities involved in providing off-campus service should be especially useful in informing librarians and administrators for purposes of future planning. In addition, as the wealth of topics discussed in the collection demonstrates, off-campus or distance learning affects all aspects of librarianship—from reference to instruction to collection development to cataloging to administration. As more students enroll in distance education programs, expectations will increase for remote access to the library and to all the resources it has traditionally provided.

One minor complaint: organization of the proceedings by theme or subject or the inclusion of an index would make browsing through them easier for those interested in particular topics within distance learning. Despite this minor complaint, the Off-Campus Library Services Conference continues to be a valuable forum for librarians active in distance learning. The examples provided by those who participated in this conference are exemplary in their initiative and leadership in this field.—*Barbara J. D'Angelo, Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, LA.*

Grimes, Deborah J. *Academic Library Centrality: User Success through Service, Access, and Tradition*. Chicago: ACRL (ACRL Publications in Librarianship, no. 50), 1998. 154p. $30, alk. paper (ISBN 0838979505). LC 98-19628.

Academic Library Centrality is based on a study aimed at identifying ways that academic libraries achieve centrality in the university's mission. Grimes discusses old conceptions and misconceptions regarding the status of academic libraries and seeks a new metaphor for libraries that is more appropriate at the turn of the century. In doing so, she demonstrates the need for librarians to improve their understanding of the larger academic community. In addition, she provides evidence of what leaders in academia expect of librarians and libraries. This study argues that librarians must move beyond the "heart of the university" metaphor and should examine the library's actual organizational relationships by using the concept of centrality.

"The library is the heart of the university." This claim has been made in publications, conferences, and public discussions for more than a hundred years. Grimes examines the use of this statement in historic accounts as well as in recent publications, and outlines discrepancies between what is implied by the metaphor and actual campus realities as demonstrated by teaching faculty who do not integrate the library into their instruction, by students who use the library as a study hall, and by administrators who fail to see the potential of librarians as instructors.

Both the status of library instruction programs and the authority granted library directors are central to Grimes's ar-

gument. She describes the emergence of bibliographic instruction as a distinct professional activity that has transformed the way that college and university librarians define their roles. Despite the large number of students and librarians who are involved in BI, school administrations often fail to understand the role of the librarian in instruction. The author's argument, that libraries do not function as the "heart of the university," also involves the roles played by library directors. Most directors are not involved in campus decisions on information technology; no do they participate at the highest levels of the university's administration.

Grimes presents concepts of centrality through an examination of organizational theory and through studies on resource allocation and retrenchment. In an attempt to find out what chief academic and executive officers think of library centrality, the author conducted a survey of five universities. She describes the universities and discusses their leaders' responses. The results of the survey show that most administrators believe that the metaphor of the library as the "the heart of the university" is an exaggeration. They emphasized that library centrality can only be based on the library's contributions to the university's mission of teaching and research, as well as its national recognition or ranking.

The strength of Grimes's analysis is in her use of powerful theoretical and historical models to analyze higher education. Although she admits that there are weaknesses in the use of grounded theory methodology, she uses it successfully to generate conceptual categories from facts. Grimes has been very successful in identifying concepts and theories that reflect views of academic library centrality in actual library experience. *Academic Library Centrality* contains a wealth of references for those interested in pursuing this topic in greater detail. It is highly recommended to library administrators who hope to achieve library centrality at their own institutions.—*Constantia Constantinou, Iona College, New Rochelle, NY.*

Kilgour, Frederick G. *The Evolution of the Book*. New York and Oxford: Oxford Univ. Pr., 1998. 180p. $35, alk. paper (ISBN: 0-19-511859-6). LC 97-14430.

The advent of electronic communication has triggered a boom in studies on the history and future of "the book." For much of the 1990s, it has been one of the major growth areas in humanities scholarship, invading disciplines and posing new questions of old material. "The book" has become code for anything and everything involved in the creation, production, dissemination, and reception of texts: authors authoring, scribes scribbling, printers printing, booksellers selling, readers reading. We have a veritable armada of monographs and articles on "the book" confronting us, much of it sensitive to new types of evidence appropriate for new questions and issues.

That being said, the appearance of a new monograph on "the evolution of the book" would seem to require some compelling justification. Professor Kilgour believes he has precisely that: "Through historical analysis of the societal needs that have invoked the transformations of the book, and the technologies that have shaped them, *The Evolution of the Book* aims to shed light on the present emergence of the electronic book." He finds his light in technology, and his monograph is a compact summary of successive technologies of nonverbal communication from the Sumerians to the present. His argument is, baldly put, that every improvement in the technology of the book has resulted in the speedier production and dissemination of knowledge and information. The problem is that neither the focus nor the argument has anything especially helpful to offer by way of a compass for the present.

Reducing the history of the book to a history of technology conveniently ignores the wealth of social, cultural, and economic evidence we now have available on the topic. Moreover, Kilgour's "bullet train" approach to the history of book technologies is an odd reprise of a style of history writing that I had thought