

ume of requests increases, it would be very difficult to justify the use of facsimile with the machinery currently available.—*Marion G. Hess, State University College, Potsdam, N.Y.*

**A Report on the Consumer Survey of New Serial Titles.** By A. Frederick Kuhlman, made for the Joint Committee on the Union List of Serials, Inc., and the Library of Congress under a grant from the Council on Library Resources, Inc., August 1, 1967. 84p.

*New Serial Titles*, in the words of one reference librarian, "is one of the most important bibliographical aids ever devised." The purpose of NST is three-fold: (1) to list promptly information about serials which began publication after 1949, as an aid to acquisition; (2) to supply locations of these serials in libraries in the United States and Canada, to expedite interlibrary loan; and (3) to provide data for cataloging. The publication itself has been designed to supplement continuously the *Union List of Serials* and to eliminate the need for another edition of this massive work.

After the publication of the third edition of the *Union List*, the Joint Committee on the Union List of Serials, Inc., initiated a study of *New Serial Titles* (NST) to determine the degree of "consumer" satisfaction and to elicit suggestions for its improvement. With financial support from the Council on Library Resources, A. Frederick Kuhlman, assisted by an advisory committee, conducted a comprehensive study based largely on questionnaires and interviews with librarians who subscribe to and/or contribute to NST.

The *Report* of the study cites an extremely high level of approval of the performance of NST. The scope was considered to be satisfactory by 93.7 per cent of those responding; 84.7 per cent felt that it is sufficiently representative of all fields of knowledge; 89.4 per cent indicated that the locations cited can meet interlibrary loan requests; 81.8 per cent reported that its record of bibliographical changes was adequate; and reactions to other aspects were also favorable. In spite of a general

satisfaction, the participants in the *Consumer Survey* offered suggestions and implicit criticism from which Dr. Kuhlman has extracted a number of constructive proposals for the improvement of NST.

Although consumer satisfaction with the scope of NST was almost unanimous, there was strong support for including more government publications. There is already wide coverage of this type of serial, but Dr. Kuhlman recommends that municipal publications should also be included. An increase in coverage for other types of government publications actually is a matter of more comprehensive reporting by libraries in categories already included. This same principle should, he recommends, be applied to other types and subject categories of serials for which reporting is presently inadequate. To accomplish this, he suggests that the number of subscribing and contributing libraries should be selectively increased. The Special Libraries Association, the American Theological Library Association, and the various divisions of ALA should, he feels, take the initiative in any such attempt at increasing the number of libraries which contribute to NST.

Other suggestions in the *Report* include the prompt reporting of all changes in policies for lending serials; the preparing of entries from the advance printer's copy of national bibliographies, resulting in faster bibliographical control of foreign serials; and the inclusion of LC classification and card numbers when available. Of particular interest to the user of NST are the recommendations that bibliographical changes should be included in the same alphabet with new titles, and that monthly issues should be cumulated. It is notable, however, that the expansion of the list to include pre-1950 titles is not recommended.

The *Report* is obviously of great value to all of those who are concerned with the policies governing NST. As Dr. Kuhlman remarks in his recommendations, NST should be considered to be "in its formative years," and changes in its scope and organization are a natural condition of its growth and of the changing needs of li-

baries. To date, Robert D. Desmond, its editor, and the Library of Congress have done an outstanding job of developing this tool. With the help of this survey they should be able to enhance the value of NST for the effective bibliographical control of serials in the future.—*Joseph H. Treyz, University of Michigan.*

**Bookplates for Libraries; Contemporary Designs for School, Public, College, and University Libraries.** By Edward H. Shickell, with an introduction by William R. Holman. Austin, Texas: Roger Beacham, 1969. 69p., illustrated. \$12.95.

The evolution of bookplates since the fifteenth century, and particularly their collection, categorization, and admiration since the latter part of the nineteenth, occupies a substantial literature, much of it privately printed. Add to this a smattering of earlier books on bookplate design, and this handsome new volume of original designs for libraries stands out as unusually fresh and attractive.

It is to some degree complementary to Mr. Holman's *Library Publications*, a 1965 Beacham publication distributed by John Howell Books, and is, like this larger and earlier volume, published to stimulate more interesting and imaginative printing for libraries and their clientele.

Mr. Shickell's seventy-two specimen plates make use of a number of the better typefaces and his own skillful calligraphy rendered in four colors suitable to library plates. Although their range of both color and form is limited by the fact that they are one man's work, he is both imaginative and eclectic, and his variety and taste cannot but be stimulating to librarians seeking to design bookplates.

Mr. Holman's introduction presents both encouragement and practical advice, including the suggestion that if all else fails to produce a work of art the reader may violate Mr. Shickell's copyright a little by lifting a design direct from the book. The type faces used are carefully identified, and an index leads you to the plates in which they appear.—*David Heron, University of Kansas.*

**Evaluation of the MEDLARS Demand Search Service.** By F. W. Lancaster, Bethesda: National Library of Medicine, 1968. 276p. (available from NLM Office of Public Information).

Of all the automated information retrieval systems which are currently in operation, the MEDLARS (Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval) System of the U.S. National Library of Medicine has perhaps most captured the world's imagination and attention and has put both the United States and medicine as a subject discipline in the forefront in the use of computers as an aid in solving problems in information transfer. MEDLARS is a machine system designed to serve several purposes including the monthly production and printing of *Index Medicus*, one of the world's primary medical indexing media. It has as well the capability to produce and print subsets of a large file of literature citations either on a continuing basis for special subject groups or on demand for individuals. The system inherently must, therefore, possess some of the trade-offs that are inevitable in any multi-purpose system.

This study is not an evaluation or description of the entire MEDLARS system; (such a description is being currently published by the National Library of Medicine, under the title: *Description and History of MEDLARS*). It is rather an attempt to evaluate its "demand search module," a component designed to produce, by computer, comprehensive bibliographies on many-faceted subjects on request. Nevertheless, in the process of studying this report, a reader can learn much about the construction and use of the entire MEDLARS system. In fact, some of the problems and prerequisites explored in the study have relevance to all kinds of literature searching, manual as well as machine.

There do not seem to be any particularly new methodological approaches offered in this study. They are essentially modifications and refinements of those developed by Cleverdon and others. Nevertheless, the misgivings expressed by Alan M. Rees