

the first, paperback edition. The bibliography is, however, updated by the inclusion of approximately fifty new titles. Missing in both editions are references to fire prevention economics and to types of fire insurance that may be available to libraries.

The book is not a vade mecum of fire prevention or salvage operations. Rather, it is a plea for a paradoxical, yet unavoidable strategy facing the librarian: to invest the fast depleting budget in an expensive fire preventive system and to limit a very essential free access to book collections, by tightening security measures—all in order to decrease a statistically moderate fire risk. This paradox parallels the equally paradoxical concept of modern fire prevention strategy to fight library's deadly enemy, the fire, with an equally evil enemy, the fire-extinguishing water.

The book should be purchased by every library. A second copy could be given to the organization's risk manager, who may be as impotent in trying to include the coverage of library in the institution's fire insurance as is the librarian, trying to persuade superiors to install a fire prevention system in the library before, not after, it burns down.—*Joseph Z. Nitecki, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh.*

Corkill, Cynthia, and Mann, Margaret. *Information Needs in the Humanities: Two Postal Surveys*. CRUS Occasional Paper, 2. BLR&DD Report Number 5455. Sheffield: Centre for Research on User Studies, University of Sheffield, 1978. 135p. \$15 (including postage overseas); £6 (including postage in U.K.) ISBN 0-906088-01-1. ISSN 0140-3834. (Available from: Centre for Research on User Studies, Univ. of Sheffield, Western Bank, Sheffield S10 2TN.)

This survey of information needs in the humanities is part of a wider project under way at the Centre for Research on User Studies, University of Sheffield, in conjunction with the British Library Reference Division. Preliminary investigation at Sheffield and a longitudinal study still in progress at that university give focus and direction to the survey at hand.

Hypotheses about the humanities scholar include: heavy reliance on library materials,

need for access to a large number of titles, greater relative importance of older materials, and the propensity of the humanities researcher to work alone. The five areas chosen to represent "humanities" are English, French, history, music, and philosophy.

Following a pilot survey, separate sets of questionnaires were sent to Ph.D. students and to academic staff (faculty) in thirty-five selected universities in the United Kingdom. There were 612 codable questionnaires returned by the academic staff and 203 returned by the Ph.D. students, giving overall response rates of 64.4 percent and 76 percent respectively. Both questionnaires dealt with the respondents' academic background, current research in progress, degree of difficulty experienced in obtaining research materials, extent of use of the British Library Reference Division, and methods of keeping up to date in one's field. Replies were analyzed by computer and reflected in the sixty-two tables, which comprise over half of the work itself (p.62-135).

The discussion of the methodology, procedure, tabulation, and interpretation of the responses is highly detailed and informative. A frank attempt is made to reveal potential flaws and problems in each stage of the study. One especially distressing response of the Ph.D. students as a group was that fewer than half of them had asked their own library staff for help or advice in doing their research; those who *did* seek such aid were mainly interested in interlibrary loan services and not in consulting subject/information specialists for their expertise (cf., p.38, 56).

Comments made in responses of the academic staff would sound familiar to their counterparts in the United States: neither sufficient time nor money for research activities, necessity to travel extensively in order to consult needed materials, delays in receiving items through interlibrary loan, inaccessibility of some materials altogether, high cost of books and journals, and general problems of keeping current. The two humanities areas illustrating extremes in the responses proved to be history and philosophy, with history researchers making very heavy use of libraries other than their own,

and those in philosophy being much more inclined to find needed material at their home university or in their own private collections.

This study tends to confirm the hypothesis that information in the humanities does not readily go out of date. There is, however, considerable variation within the five humanities areas studied as to extent of library use, and types of materials used by researchers in these areas.

Composed of some sixty pages of text and seventy-four pages of tables, plus appendices that include the two sets of cover letters and questionnaires, this study reflects thoughtful and meticulous scholarship. Many of the findings are of the "impressions confirmed" nature, and the confirmation is itself of obvious value.

The step-by-step discussion of the preparation, method, procedures, and findings is readable and enlightening. The survey has clear implications and usefulness for similar investigations in the U.S. and could serve as a model for future researchers in this (and related) areas.—Charles E. Perry, North Texas State University, Denton.

Compaine, Benjamin M. *The Book Industry in Transition: An Economic Study of Book Distribution and Marketing*. White Plains, New York: Knowledge Industry Publications, Inc., 1978. 235p. \$24.95. LC 78-7527. ISBN 0-914236-16-4.

Ben Compaine begins *The Book Industry in Transition* by saying, "This report was written 47 years ago under a different name." So he compares the work with Cheney's *Economic Survey of the Book Industry 1930-1931* (New York: National Association of Book Publishers, 1931). And in fact Cheney's work has been the primary reference on the book industry for almost half a century. The present work is a direct result of market research activities conducted by Knowledge Industry Publications (KIP) on behalf of book industry clients. Compaine, a KIP officer, has a background in marketing and communications, and this background is evident throughout the report.

It should be pointed out that this book was previously issued as *Book Distribution and Marketing, 1976-1980*, in 1976. At that

time the price was \$450, or \$395 to subscribers to KIP publications. Compaine describes the differences between the 1976 report and this 1978 publication as being a matter of price and minor updating of statistics. The high price of the original report, while perhaps appropriate for KIP's book industry clients, was evidently unacceptable to most libraries. The OCLC data base indicates only a handful of holding libraries. On the other hand the \$24.95 price for the 1978 book has evidently permitted numerous libraries to acquire essentially the same book—albeit two years later.

An updating of Cheney's survey is long overdue. And *The Book Industry in Transition* accomplishes this quite well—at least in the areas of book distribution and marketing. The author identifies five results of the study. First, there is an analysis of the general status of the book industry, its history, and its direction. Second, the study presents a description of the way general books are marketed and distributed. Third, there is a sharing of techniques, innovations, and experiments that will hopefully benefit the industry as a whole. Fourth, the study provides an outsider's evaluation (Compaine's expertise in marketing and communications) of the effectiveness of certain distribution practices and marketing programs. Fifth, the study provides a sense of direction in regard to solving long-standing problems in the book industry.

The problems of the book industry today are much the same as those identified by Cheney in 1931. Distribution of literally hundreds of thousands of unique products (titles) is a problem not faced by any other industry. Market research, an essential element in production and marketing for most other industries, is not widely used in the book industry—and then primarily by the mail order publishers. These and related problems are the focus of the author's concern as he surveys how the book industry is organized, who buys books and why, how books get to readers, and comments over and over again on the economic factors that are unique to this industry.

Each of fourteen chapters provides a succinct description of a particular aspect of the book industry. Four chapters are devoted to "Getting Books to the Reader"—one chap-