

versities without presses as participants in scholarly publishing, (9) broadening the role of foundations, (10) collaborating in management by scholarly presses, (11) establishing an office of scholarly communications, and (12) continuing discussion related to the intelligent use of technology.

In summary, the report affirms that "the goal to be pursued is not a continuation of business as usual, but rather the development of new ways to meet the needs of scholarship" (p.11).

The Report of the National Enquiry provides an important assessment of the problems, needs, and future options for scholarly communication in the United States. It deserves thoughtful reading, discussion, and response by all concerned individuals in the academic community.—*Kenneth G. Peterson, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.*

Use of Library Materials: The University of Pittsburgh Study. By Allen Kent and others. Books in Library and Information Science, V.26. New York: Marcel Dekker, 1979. 272p. \$25. LC 79-11513. ISBN 0-8247-6807-8.

Ranganathan's famous five laws of library science can be rewritten to fit the traditional research library:

- Books are for collecting
- To some readers their books
- To some books their readers
- Waste the time of the reader
- The library is a growing mausoleum.

The University of Pittsburgh study both sheds light on the extent to which these laws are observed and casts doubt on their validity. Its impact ought, and deserves, to be profound.

This book in fact reports three studies. Parts of all of them have previously appeared as articles, but these were mainly previews.¹⁻³ The first study, conducted in the Hillman Library ("a central research library emphasizing the Humanities and Social Sciences"), is a remarkable longitudinal study of books acquired in 1969. By the end of 1975, 40 percent of these had never circulated, and a further 14 percent had circulated only once. If a book had not circulated in the first six years, the chances of its ever being borrowed were calculated as one in

fifty. Three-quarters of the books used in the library had also been borrowed, so that borrowing is a good measure of total use. Weeding books unused after seven years would extend the life of the building by twenty-one years. This study is much the most important part of the book, partly because of its originality of approach and partly because the findings are of such importance.

The second study, on the use of journals in six science and engineering libraries, is not as interesting because its methodology is less original and its findings largely reinforce existing knowledge rather than add to it. It is also, along with its appendix, the longest part of the book. Use in these libraries was generally low, and highly concentrated on a relatively small proportion of the collections. Browsing was mainly in current and recent volumes; the great majority of older volumes were approached through specific references. There are striking differences among the six libraries, presumably explicable by local conditions (but unfortunately not generally explained). The methodology of the sample study, intended as a possible model for other libraries, nevertheless seems hardly less cumbersome and time-consuming than other methods.

The third study consists of a very detailed analysis of the costs of library use and a cost-benefit model of library operations. These are some of the most detailed and best such analyses in the literature.

The three studies are preceded and followed by brief, but thoughtful, open-minded and incisive contributions by Allen Kent and his colleagues.

The book is not perfect. It barely hangs together, mainly because the different parts have different authors. Some of the detail, especially in the journal use study, is not only unnecessary but of doubtful value (the numbers in some cells are too small to support conclusions drawn from them). Adding 25 percent of the subscription costs of each journal to allow for other costs is far too crude, since these other costs vary greatly according to journal size and frequency of distribution. The fact that most books lent to other libraries were also circulated locally hardly supports the argument for resource sharing, since there must be a good chance

that books requested will be in use at the time. We are not told *how* books were selected for the Hillman Library. And so on.

The fact that the book asks at least as many questions as it answers is a tribute to it. Would the books used only once have been used at all if they had not been acquired—were they picked up by browsing? If so, this could argue either *for* their acquisition (because they may have proved valuable to their readers) or *against* (because they were not specifically identified as needed).

Is it possible to select the books that are likely to be used, or must it be accepted that selection is necessarily imprecise? If so, can one not conceive of a large intake—large outflow model, in which acquisition is as extensive as possible, processing is as cheap as possible, and all books not used after *n* years are discarded, a sort of empirical stock building?

How does concentration of demand differ according to the size of a library? If stock is underused, should the librarian buy less, or try to increase use? How far can resource sharing in its various forms improve the availability:cost ratio?

Readers will ask their own questions: let us hope some of them seek their own answers, by conducting similar studies in their own libraries.

Allen Kent states in his preface that not all of the original objectives of the study were met, that many other analyses of the data could have been made, and that the book must be considered as only a "first edition." While hoping that there will be a revised edition not only containing new data but presenting the existing data in a more selective and cohesive form, we must be grateful that the publication of this version was not delayed longer for it is a major contribution to our knowledge and understanding of libraries.—*Maurice B. Line, British Library Lending Division, Boston Spa.*

REFERENCES

1. Stephen Bulick and others, "Use of Library Materials in Terms of Age," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 27:175-78 (May-June 1976).
2. Thomas J. Galvin and Allen Kent, "Use of a University Library Collection," *Library Jour-*

nal 102:2317-20 (Nov. 15, 1977).

3. Jacob Cohen, "Book Cost and Book Use: The Economics of a University Library," in Allen Kent and Thomas Galvin, eds., *Library Resource Sharing* (New York: Marcel Dekker, 1977), p.197-224.

Editor's Note: In July 1979 the Senate Library Committee, University of Pittsburgh, issued a forty-nine page *Report on the Study of Library Use at Pitt by Professor Allen Kent, et al.* The committee states that it undertook its evaluation at the request of university faculty, administrators, and librarians for several reasons: the "very strong statements" made by Kent and his associates about the nonuse of books and journals at Pitt; the national publicity given to the statements; the controversy engendered both locally at Pitt as well as nationally; and the policy implications of the study, both for Pitt and for other academic institutions.

The committee's evaluation is based upon several preliminary reports of the study as well as the final report that was issued by the National Technical Information Service, prior to its publication by Marcel Dekker.

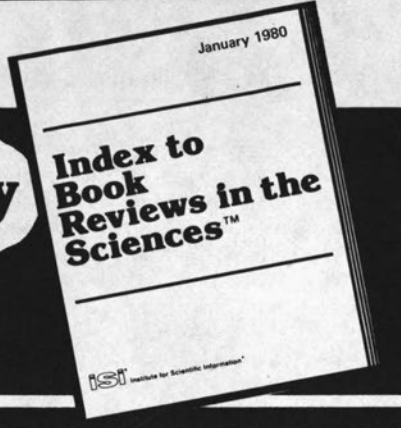
The report criticizes the study on numerous matters: its deficiencies as a case study (p.8-11); its structure, in text and footnotes, which makes "careful investigation in reporting on it a difficult matter" (p.12); its "manipulation of data" on books and journals, in terms of holdings, use, and costs. Accordingly, the study's "results do not support the validity of its root hypotheses that 'much of the material purchased for research libraries was little or never used, and that when costs are assigned to uses, the cost of book use will be unexpectedly high'" (p.40).

The report concludes that the study represents "a clear threat and a present danger" and urges that "university administrators and librarians not be influenced by the unfounded criticisms and unwarranted recommendations expressed so forcibly by Professor Kent and his associates in their several reports" (p.46).

The committee has submitted its report for inclusion in the ERIC data base through the Clearinghouse on Information Resources, and, if accepted, the report will be available with other ERIC documents.

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