

**Dowell, Arlene Taylor.** *AACR2 Headings: A Five-Year Projection of Their Impact on Catalogs.* Littleton, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 1982. 146p. \$22.50 U.S./\$27 elsewhere. LC 82-9927. ISBN 0-87287-330-7.

Arlene Taylor's dissertation (published under her former name) has received much public attention. Her presentations and dissemination of the preliminary and final findings, and the timeliness of these, may have left some librarians feeling that reading the finished product is unnecessary. This impression is a mistaken one. Taylor was able to give the library community some needed information, but this work is much more than a way to answer the question, "How much might AACR2 and desuperimposition cost my library?"

The work makes several major contributions to library practice and research. One is the clear description and analysis of the problem that confronted libraries in implementing AACR2 while using Library of Congress cataloging in the current *card catalog* environment. The careful description of the problem and the development of hypotheses, choice of methodology, and analysis of data, provide insights into the dissection of a complex problem. The result is the information needed to analyze the problem in the reader's own library.

On a more general level, the work addresses the problems faced by the cataloging administrator who must look at the complex bibliographic environment, and improve the relatively rudimentary ways by which most of us continue to provide bibliographic access. It suggests some means of analyzing this environment toward increasing our understanding of the forces at work in maintaining a catalog. The work also looks at the entire question of costing library services. Research that looks at costs and describes alternative models is still at a basic level. Taylor's work has moved us closer to planning with facts rather than planning primarily by instinct.

One of the early discoveries made by Taylor was that librarians know very little about the proportion of types of headings in the card catalog. Taylor has docu-

mented the disproportionate number of personal names in our catalogs. Her discovery, that sampling theory may not produce samples of a sufficient size to measure the characteristics of other kinds of headings, is an important one. As research into catalog use proceeds, it becomes more and more important for us to understand the inherent biases of the catalogs we build, so that we can interpret our research findings correctly. Taylor has laid a foundation for studies into the nature of modern catalogs.

The work is easy to read, and not overly "cataloger-ish" in its approach to the problem. It is clearly a landmark study and should be read by all professionals.—*Nancy R. John, University of Illinois at Chicago.*

**Chen, Ching-chih, and Herson, Peter.** *Information Seeking: Assessing and Anticipating User Needs.* New York: Neal-Schuman, 1982. 205p. \$22.95. LC 82-6320. ISBN 0-918212-50-2.

This book is an important contribution to an ever growing body of literature on the needs of information users. Breaking new ground in methodology (first time use of telephone survey), the study covers a wide geographic area (six states). The investigators place information seeking in context, distinguishing between occupation related and nonoccupational information needs, and view the library as one of many competing information providers.

Use of the telephone survey technique allowed a very large sample to be surveyed at low cost: 2,400 persons were contacted in six New England states. Analysis of the data revealed that respondents drew heavily on interpersonal providers for most of their information needs, and that libraries constitute a secondary and often unimportant resource. Although libraries were consulted by 17 percent of all respondents (a figure higher than prior studies conducted in Baltimore, Seattle, and California), libraries ranked only ninth among all information providers.

This conclusion is not surprising considering the wide diversity of information needs and information seeking covered by these studies. The decision of the present