

presented more and more in the literature. Plans for analyzing library services and other activities through economic models are suggested to replace the more typical and straightforward approach to budgeting that many librarians follow, i.e., using the collective judgment of library administrators to construct a budget request based on perceived needs and demands. These judgments have been based on observation and supplemented by routine statistics of size or number of transactions.

This volume takes a different approach. It looks at the "economics" of library service, applying hard quantitative analysis to most aspects of library financial management. The science of economics is brought to bear on decision making for libraries. The first half of the volume discusses microeconomic theory as it relates to areas of library management. The flavor of the text is economic, not bibliographic. Chapters on consumer preference, market demand, library production, and equilibrium analysis present areas for library management through microeconomic models. The second portion of the book provides further analysis of library decision making through actual examples—collection adequacy, waiting-line time at a service desk, and correlation between circulation rates and inventory.

This is definitely not casual or easy reading for most librarians. Selected sections include properties of isoquants, indifference curves, rules of probability, and production with multiple variant inputs. Concepts are expressed in the language of the economist, with formulas and graphs. While librarians know well that books should not be judged by their covers or by the look of their texts, this volume has the appearance of one that most humanists would avoid after leafing through for only a moment.

A more relevant consideration, however, is the value of the text in library decision making. It may be compared with Stephen Roberts' *Cost Management for Library and Information Services* (C&RL 47:520-22 [Sept. 1986]), which also presents a formal, quantitative approach to resource allocation. Those librarians and managers comfortable enough with

economic theory to utilize its quantitative approach as an aid to decision making may find value in this material. How one balances the numbers approach to equally valid library concerns of professionalism, politics, and other unquantifiable factors is critical. One must assume, however, that to implement the approach presented here is beyond the training or experience of most librarians. As in the Roberts book, the basic methods for obtaining the information to aid in the decision-making process may not be possible for most library situations and existing staff. The volume presupposes at least some familiarity with the concepts and mathematics of economic theory; better yet, an academic background in this area would be of great assistance. Beyond the ability to set up and collect the economic information discussed here (which would involve considerable effort), the library administrator must have the ability to integrate the information gathered into overall planning.

A system of information gathering that demonstrates the cost of alternatives to administrators is probably as good aid in decision making. What must be considered, however, is the amount of effort required to gather the information in relation to its usefulness. Such decisions can only be made on a case-by-case basis. The economic analysis of library operations presented here may be useful in some situations, but the method for obtaining the information is probably inaccessible to most library administrators.—*John Vasi, Library, University of California, Santa Barbara.*

American Books Abroad: Toward a National Policy. Ed. by William M. Childs and Donald E. McNeil. Washington, D.C.: The Helen Dwight Reid Educational Foundation, 1986. 309p. \$35 (ISBN 0-916882-05-5). LC 85-17540.

The foreword by Jeane J. Kirkpatrick boldly sets the ideological and political framework for the reader: books are tools both of democracy and development; freedom of thought requires that ideas be communicated; the Soviet Union is far ahead of the United States in disseminating its own books abroad. In the introduc-

THE RESOURCE AUTHORITIES.



"For the first time, we are capturing the quality programming of WNET/New York in Microform, so students and others can easily access the information."

— Vicki Dawson
Manager, Thirteen Research Library

Award-winning WNET/NY Public T.V. enters your library for the first time.

Informative, entertaining, invaluable referencing for students, journalists, and the general public. Research Publications has sought out the finest Public T.V. programming, and brought it to microfiche for quarterly delivery to your library. Plus a quarterly print index, cumulated annually, that enables users to quickly pinpoint subjects, names of personalities and program titles. In addition to current annual subscriptions, backfiles are available, complete with a cumulated index.

From Bill Moyers' Journal and Adam Smith's Money World to the celebrated MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour—your library patrons can have access to unbridged information never before available through libraries. We consider it a breakthrough in library science.

For further information, utilize the form below. Or call 1-800-REACH-RP (1-800-732-2477) to place your order now. From Connecticut, Alaska and Canada, call collect 203-397-2600.

Please send me information on the products and services checked:

- Other Television News Transcripts and Indexes
- International Newspapers on Microfilm
- Newspaper Indexes
- Journals in Microform
- Research Collections in Microform
- U.S. and International Patent Documentation
- Patent Search and Awareness Services
- Reference Books

rp infofile #13

research publications®

12 Lunar Drive/Drawer AB
Woodbridge, CT 06525
Toll-free: 1-800-REACH-RP
TWX: 710-465-6345
FAX: 203-397-3893

- Please send me your brochure.
- Have a representative call me.

Name _____	Title _____
Institution _____	
Address _____	
City _____	State _____ Zip Code _____
Phone _____	

For further information, or to place your order directly, call 1-800-REACH-RP (1-800-732-2477).

1-800-REACH-RP

tion, coeditor William Childs continues the theme of American books as "neglected ambassadors," explaining that the work at hand has its most immediate historical basis in the commission given by the United States Information Agency (USIA) to the Reid Foundation to examine the U.S. "book gap" question and suggest solutions. The results of the Reid Foundation Task Force findings are incorporated into the seventeen essays by eleven contributors that constitute *American Books Abroad*. Childs and Donald McNeil are major contributors to the collection, which is divided into six parts.

Part 1, "The American Book World," records the recent history of the American publishing industry and describes current activities of that industry, both domestic and international. As a free-enterprise or market-driven system, the specific objectives of American foreign policy are, of course, not being met. Cultural and legal (including copyright) complications abound for all concerned, with piracy taking a tremendous toll. Part 2, "Economics and Finance," describes the American agencies and organizations that have facilitated the export of books, cites such problems as currency barriers (specifically, the lack of dollars), and points out the need for low-priced books for Third World readers. Part 3, "Introducing Books to Their Markets," discusses the value of book reviewing tools, book fairs and exhibits, and donations and gifts. Part 4, "International Education and Market Information," underscores general American ignorance of overseas markets and proposes courses and seminars for prospective traders to help overcome this obstacle and to provide for meaningful market research in the field. Part 5, "Institutional Responsibilities," weighs the relative merits of public versus private efforts in supplying American books abroad and reviews the preeminent role of the USIA in this endeavor. Questions pertaining to suitability of content are raised, and procedures for selection of materials are examined, with the recognition that the USIAS understandably acts in accord with the dictates of "national purpose." Part 6, "A National Policy," details the

book publishing/distribution activities of the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, France, and Spain and calls for appropriate similar action by the U.S. government.

Throughout the maze of programs, agencies, and commissions that have—with greater or lesser success—served to facilitate the distribution of American books abroad, the points elaborated are very clear: (1) A multitude of obstacles and complications conspire to impede the distribution of American books overseas, especially in Third World countries; (2) The United States is consequently losing an intellectual and ideological war with the Soviet Union; and (3) Corrective action by the U.S. government is urgently needed.

The arguments adduced are convincing, and one is left with the distinct impression that the "war of ideas" potentially waged via the export of American imprints has not been a high priority of American foreign policy. Given the massive economic, legal, and cultural obstacles described, it seems seriously debatable that the objectives set down in the present study will ever be realized. And, indeed, the extent of the USIA's role in disseminating works deemed appropriate to American "national purpose" will continue to be suspect. The questions of intellectual freedom and censorship are close to the hearts of librarians and many others as well, and propaganda even in the national interest will not likely find much support in the library community, as a recent editorial ("Propaganda, the USIA, and ALA," *Library Journal*, Dec. 1986) suggests.

This collection of essays is informative and readable, though at times repetitive. It is a well-documented and useful study of the problems facing the export of American imprints.—Charles E. Perry, *Central College Library, Pella, Iowa*.

Toward Foundations of Information Science. Ed. by Laurence B. Heilprin. White Plains, N.Y.: Knowledge Industry for the American Society for Information Science, 1985. 232p. \$34.95 (ISBN 0-86729-149-4). LC 85-12612.

As described in its foreword, "This volume is based on a series of papers delivered in four consecutive annual sessions