
Preface

Of the nine chapters in this nineteenth volume of *Advances in Librarianship*, six deal with emerging futures for the profession and its services and with the technology as well as the economics that is shaping those services. Two others discuss management issues, such as the availability of management statistics for academic libraries and the continued efforts to obtain quality improvements, while one provides an international perspective on cooperation in cataloging programs.

Lance and Boucher in "Decision-Making by the Numbers" identify major sources for general statistics, benchmarks, performance measures, and cost analysis results. Sources for data on specific topics, such as automated systems and networks, buildings, electronic access to information, fiscal trends, and salaries, are also given. Quality, timeliness, and utility of existing statistics are assessed, and the promise of emerging studies is critically reviewed. The expertise of the authors, who compile statistics on behalf of the Colorado Department of Education State Library and Adult Education Office, is reflected in the concise but thorough format, which should make this review a very useful tool for academic library managers as well as others involved in the assessment of outcomes and benchmark exercises.

Gosling et al. chronicle how the University of Michigan's library, in partnership with other campus information providers, is developing new methods of information delivery. The institutional environment and the information technology environment are described, as are specific projects.

Boelke in her review of "Quality Improvement in Libraries" covers the general characteristics of TQM and related approaches, lists background publications and bibliographies, and analyzes the applications of various elements of TQM as reported in the library literature. The relationship of TQM to current library organizational issues, and some of the pros and cons encountered in actual applications, are considered throughout, making this article extremely useful as a realistic and thorough introduction to the subject. A summary section on training opportunities, electronic resources for TQM discussion, activities in professional associations, and developments in selected countries outside the United States will also be helpful to those seeking ongoing sources for monitoring further developments.

Every present and future academic librarian and library administrator as well as library educators should read Creth's scenario for "A Changing Profession." As even a cursory review of the professional literature will reveal, academic organizational structures are changing and key traditional library services are being rethought in response to developments in technology, as well as increased pressures for reform of higher education and its components. Creth reviews why it is essential for library professionals to recognize the changes that will and must occur in their role and responsibilities, and makes clear that it is they who will need to redefine the requirements for academic librarianship and to lead in establishing new partnerships. Her article is particularly valuable in that it provides a checklist of new knowledge, skills, attitudes, and expectations needed to make the required changes to ensure a central role for academic librarians in creating and maintaining the information future.

Issues relating to the economics of information are critical to librarianship, as they affect our survival as institutions. Braman, in a fascinating article which should be a "must read" for everyone in the profession, defines the emerging broader field of "information economics," explains its terminology, and reviews major theories. It is recommended that librarians articulate an "enriched network economics perspective," if they are to be potential players in the emerging international information economy.

Public library systems, established in most if not all the states by the late 1960s, have made major progress in achieving one of their primary goals: extending access to library services. Their role in the 1990s is changing, and the changes range from a shift in emphasis of mission and work performed to questions of whether the role of systems can and should be absorbed by other entities. Long discusses the genesis of systems, past and present system configurations, external factors, and funding issues affecting library systems today, and suggests possible futures. Her extensive use of the interview method in addition to a literature review has resulted in the inclusion of a wide variety of viewpoints, which should make lively and provocative reading for those who wonder with the author about "Systems, Quo Vadis" in a time when one of the most successful structural models in the development of public libraries is changing.

The major operative change agents affecting the current operations and shaping the potential future of technical services in academic libraries are discussed by Allen and Williams, who provide an extensive review of the literature coupled with a thoughtful analysis. They conclude that while a new order for dissemination of information is certain, libraries in the transitional roles will continue to be central to the delivery of information, expanding and changing, but not obviating the need for the traditional technical services function of organization and integration.

As full text delivered over computing networks is becoming increasingly available, implications for collection development, bibliographic control, preservation, and direct user services, as well as copyright questions, are becoming more complex, and disciplinary differences are beginning to emerge. Gaunt specifically addresses electronic literary texts, a group for which the move from print to electronic form is much more than just a change in production and delivery systems, but rather a change that will alter the very definition of "text," de facto forcing a reconceptualization of the very field of literary study itself. The literature and major projects and implications are reviewed and new directions indicated.

In the international arena, Lambrecht discusses how far we have come in gaining international cooperation in cataloging, and how much more work it will take to attain the ideal of international cataloging based on universal standards. He reviews the standards designed to achieve international cooperation, discusses problems and conflicts, and concludes with specific proposals for improved cooperation in the future.