cusses the mixed motives of social scientists in seeking to forge stronger links between research and policy (p.25, 33, 35, 55), and the mixed benefits to society of more scientific contributions (p.61, 73). The other writers seem inclined to assume an identity between research and progress and between the interests of the research profession and the public at large, although Wilson's short piece hints at skepticism on the latter point.

The forthcoming volumes of background papers will consider federal agency funding of research, issues in the management of social R&D, and case studies in the uses of basic research.—*Thelma Freides, State University of New York, College at Purchase.*

Southgate, Robert L. *Black Plots & Black Characters: A Handbook for Afro-American Literature.* Syracuse, New York: Gaylord Professional Publications, 1979. 456p. $25. LC 78-14394. ISBN 0-915794-14-4.

This handbook helps to fill a longstanding void in the field of Afro-American literature and will undoubtedly prove a handy source of information for librarians and interested readers. But it is unfortunate that this handbook was not undertaken as a collaborative effort by two or more scholars. Although Southgate's knowledge and abilities are obvious, his choice of entries for discussion leaves much to be desired and is certain to frustrate users.

The handbook is divided into four parts. Part I, plot summaries, comprises the largest portion. One hundred significant works of Afro-American literature, including fiction, plays, poems, speeches, and essays, are described and commented on. The format is similar to that used in *Masterplots.* The summaries are well written and average nearly a page in length.

But the problem here is that while the author has chosen a number of the familiar, standard works he has failed to include quite a few very important works that most readers would expect to find, e.g., Richard Wright's *Native Son* and *Black Boy*, Lorraine Hansberry's *Raisin in the Sun*, James

Baldwin's *Another Country*, or Pulitzer Prize winners *Elbow Room* by James Alan McPherson, *Annie Allen* by Gwendolyn Brooks, and *No Place to Be Somebody* by Charles Gordone. It appears the author chose instead to include a number of less popular works from the past century and the 1940s and 1950s.

Part II is a dictionary of Afro-American literature and history with too much emphasis on the latter for what is supposedly a handbook for literature. Notable literary figures omitted are Nikki Giovanni, Addison Gayle, Nick Aaron Ford, Tom Dent, Larry Neal, Joseph A. Walker, Sonia Sanchez, Carolyn Rodgers, Blyden Jackson, and Maya Angelou. Possibly they were omitted in favor of a good many persons and things that have no relationship to Afro-American literature per se. Most entries, particularly historical occurrences, are substantial in content.

Part III, containing ninety-four author bibliographies, and part IV, general bibliographies, can assist those interested in further reading and research. Of the two chronologies following part IV, probably only the second, pertaining to events in Afro-American history and literature, is needed in this volume.

Despite its rather startling omissions and superfluous inclusions, *Black Plots & Black Characters* must be purchased, since it is unique in the field of Afro-American literature. It is hoped that Southgate will revise and expand his handbook in the near future.—*Robert Fikes, Jr., San Diego State University, San Diego, California.*

Mitchell, Betty Jo; Tanis, Norman E.; and Jaffe, Jack. *Cost Analysis of Library Functions: A Total System Approach.* Foundations in Library and Information Science, a Series of Monographs. Volume 6. Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press, Inc., 1978. 192p. + 5 fiche in pocket. $23.50. LC 77-2110. ISBN 0-89232-072-9.

A cost accounting system specifically limited to library labor costs in time and dollars developed, implemented, and continuing in the libraries of California State University, Northridge, is carefully described in *Cost Analysis of Library Functions* in an "attempt to provide a model for libraries to produce their own set of labor cost data from which sound management decisions can be made and, eventually, from which relevant and meaningful staffing formulas can be developed" (p.2). The authors also hope that their program will serve as a prototype for a generally applicable system that, when implemented in other libraries, would allow for a meaningful comparison of costs.

Four years in the making, the CSUN library's ongoing program includes an automated function cost analysis system and a manual task analysis system. The rationale, assumptions, and guidelines are succinctly highlighted by the conclusion that a complex library audit such as this must be developed in a library setting if clean, useful data are to be assured.

A systems analyst was appointed early on to coordinate the project and to be responsible for overall system design. The continuing operation of the function cost analysis costs the library, which has 400 employees and 600,000 volumes, about $8,000 a year. Unfortunately, there is no estimate of the costs for the manual part of the program or, more important, for the development of the systems.

A concise and cogent discussion of the methods used includes, in addition to definition and description, consideration of some of the problems and pitfalls met, such as staff resistance, the discovery that actual library jobs are performed at variance with stated procedures, and the frustration attendant on the definition of activities, tasks, and functions to produce valid results—so much so that the authors conclude that "installing major data systems is a slow painful process that requires unending revision and rethinking" (p.43).

Documentation of the programs includes the procedures manual for the automated system, forms, punch card formats, a monthly report, and a cumulative data printout for 1976–77. In addition, there are five microfiche with 1976–77 cost data included.

The reader is warned that the program was not designed to be used for cost/benefit analysis where standards of quality have yet to be set, if in fact they can be set at all. The system does, however, generate valid