

## Book Reviews

### *Guide to Technical Services Resources.*

Ed. Peggy Johnson. Chicago: ALA, 1994. 313p. \$60 (ISBN 0-8389-0624-9).

At first glance this book appears to be a very large, perhaps overwhelming bibliography of material about the technical services. Its structure and content contrive to provide something else entirely—a workable guide to the most current sources for a wide range of library and information activities. While acknowledging important differences, the introduction to this volume cites the *Guide to Reference Books* as a model, a work that generations of reference librarians have turned to for guidance in identifying the best current sources. This new book is intended to provide a parallel function with the information needed to develop and organize library collections. Its orientation is functional. It is not a literature review: it is neither exhaustive nor retrospective. The arrangement and annotations set the citations in a useful context. Sources across various fields and formats are well integrated to better support their use.

All the major traditional technical services activities are covered: acquisitions, cataloging (including copy cataloging), subject analysis, serials, collection management and preservation. Sections are also provided for smaller and for newer areas: authority control, filing and indexing, reproduction of library materials, and access services (including circulation). Marginal areas of interest are also included, for example, short lists of sources on problem patrons in relation to access services and fund-raising as an aspect of collection development finance. A separate chapter is provided for each major area of technical services. Within each the sources are presented from general to specific, moving from

guides, dictionaries, and periodicals to specialized topics and specific formats. Brief essays introduce the scope and context of each chapter and major section. A preliminary chapter covers sources that provide an overview of the technical services. This includes material on technical services administration such as decision making, costs, and a special section on expert systems.

Brief descriptive annotations are provided for each item with emphasis on its use. Addresses and other contact information are given for organizations and vendors of bibliographic services. For electronic discussion groups, computer network addresses and subscription instructions are included. In one case a fax number is provided for obtaining updated status on a NISO standard. Various formats are included as appropriate, such as the video recording *Slow Fires* in the chapter on preservation. Frequent reference is made to professional associations, conferences, ongoing periodical columns, and e-mail lists as the most current sources of relevant information. Traditional library-oriented publications are brought together with new sources of expertise such as an Arpanet contact for Project SMART, which experiments with automatic methods for text analysis.

A high degree of currency is reflected in every aspect of this book. Nevertheless some information given will be rapidly outdated. Supplements and cumulations to update the present edition are projected. Guidance is given for obtaining current information through newsletters, discussion groups, and electronic communication. In addition to an author-title index, there is a subject index which effectively brings together related items from across the chapters

for topics such as academic libraries and research libraries. Internal cross-references are also provided for items cited in more than one chapter.

This guide constitutes a valuable resource for practicing information professionals not only in the technical services but also in library administration and bibliographic systems. Initially the notion of a technical services parallel to the *Guide to Reference Books* appears artificial and arbitrary. However the implications are tantalizing. Perhaps only time will tell whether the *Guide to Technical Services Resources* has the capacity to fill the niche it attempts to create. The imagination found in its creative solutions for bringing a measure of order to a dynamic, interdisciplinary body of knowledge is heartening.—J. Brad Young, *University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia*.

***The Black Librarian in America Revisited.***

Ed. E. J. Josey. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow, 1994. 382p. (ISBN 0-8108-2830-0).

When University of Pennsylvania law professor Lani Guinier withdrew her nomination for assistant attorney general for civil rights, she called on all Americans to recognize the importance of a "public dialogue on race in which all perspectives are represented and in which no one viewpoint monopolizes, distorts, caricatures, or shapes the outcome." E. J. Josey similarly challenges librarianship in *The Black Librarian in America Revisited*, a new collection of essays by a range of African American voices in the library and information science community representing different generations, work environments, and geographical regions. What ties these essays together is the theme of race and profession in the 1990s.

This new volume does not displace its predecessor, *The Black Librarian in America* (1970), or a companion volume to the original work, entitled *What the Black Librarians Are Saying* (1972). In fact many of the essays here represent the work of a generation of African Americans who were inspired by the original collections to enter the fields of library and information science. And they are an impressive

group: administrators, faculty, and front-line librarians and allied information professionals in industry, colleges and universities, government, and in public libraries serving large and small communities. It is sobering to realize that the enduring racism in American society and among professions makes it necessary to revisit many of the same issues more than twenty years later.

Stories of professional success seem to be among the most vibrant of the essays with some authors using narrative approaches to relate the individual self to both community and profession. Examples are the essays by Mary Lenox and Marva DeLoach, who use autobiography as a vehicle for understanding their educational choices and their experiences on campuses, in communities, and in professional associations and the impact of these on their careers. Vivian Hewitt reveals how personal drive and resilience formed the basis for her election as president of the Special Libraries Association and as a leader in improving the climate for African Americans in special libraries. Casper Jordan's essay on the career of Virginia Lacy Jones transcends the boundaries of the biographical sketch as he reconstructs her life as a library and information science educator who, through a commitment to razing racial barriers, "worked untiringly to make librarianship a better profession for all."

Of particular interest is the section "From Academia," which is the most cohesive of the entire collection. Jessie C. Smith returns to her theory of the "four cultures," an idea inspired by C. P. Snow that she explored in the earlier volume. Smith's four cultures—as a librarian, woman, African American, and southerner—create a web of gender, race, professional, and geographical identity that becomes a framework for understanding the nexus of personal and professional worldviews that shaped her career as an academic librarian. It is also a framework for getting the most from the essays that follow, particularly the juxtaposition between the essays of a library dean at a historically black col-