

the introduction of automation or were instituted to encourage the effective utilization of new computing and telecommunication technologies. Paula Kaufman, formerly Acting Vice President for Information Services, describes the evolution of Columbia's Scholarly Information Center as an organizational unit that functionally integrates library and computing activities. Authors of the section on the University of Illinois relate how that school contributed to the development of ILLINET, the statewide library network dedicated to resource sharing.

Most librarians, computing professionals, and administrators should find this book surprisingly readable despite its often technical subject matter. Jargon and acronyms are kept to a minimum, and a glossary provides concise, meaningful explanations of library and technical terminology. Important concepts are emphasized throughout the book by enumerating them in sections separated from the text. This stylistic practice, along with liberal use of tables and charts, enables the reader to focus readily on each author's essential points.

Although the book is well edited, there are a few weaknesses. First, it suffers somewhat from attempting to address multiple audiences. Most librarians will be familiar with the information in the chapters on OCLC and RLG, while computing professionals may find discussions of technology elementary. Second, the format of the university chapters becomes somewhat tiresome as each author relates the history of automation at his or her institution. Third, various authors forecast the future of library services and electronic information. By the time the book was published, however, some of the future had become the present, and readers who keep up on the literature will be aware of important developments not covered in the text. These weaknesses are minor and do not seriously detract from the value of the book.

Campus Strategies for Libraries and Electronic Information is an important book for decision makers committed to afford-

ing faculty and students the most advanced information services possible. I highly recommend it to administrators and computing professionals who need to become familiar with issues surrounding the application of computer technology in libraries. I do not recommend the book to those looking primarily for advice on selecting an integrated library system or other specific computer-related products. Although there is certainly ample discussion of specific integrated systems, there is no direct comparison of systems currently being marketed. This is not a failing of the text, because its purpose is to encourage sound planning as a process, not to influence technological decisions.

The publication of *Campus Strategies for Libraries and Electronic Information* at the beginning of the new decade is more than fortuitous. As noted by the president of EDUCOM, Kenneth King, it is part of EDUCOM's continuing effort "to promote the rational and effective use of information technology in higher education." This book is a noteworthy contribution toward that goal and should be read by decision makers who will shape the scholarly information systems of the 90s.—Randy J. Olsen, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

Frank, Francine Wattman, and Paula A. Treichler. *Language, Gender, and Professional Writing: Theoretical Approaches and Guidelines for Nonsexist Usage*. New York: Modern Language Association, 1989. 341p. paper, \$14.50 (ISBN 0-87352-179-X). LC 88-38161.

After almost a decade of discussion and debate, the Executive Council of the Modern Language Association adopted in October 1980 a revised statement of editorial policy for the Association's major journal, *PMLA*. The new guidelines "urge[d] contributors to be sensitive to the social implications of language and to seek wording free of discriminatory overtones." Those deceptively simple sentiments opened the floodgates of reaction and response to the adoption of these new guidelines for

nonsexist usage. In *Language, Gender, and Professional Writing*, Francine Frank, Paula Treichler, and the other contributors outline the terms of this debate. In so doing, they shed light on what might otherwise be dismissed as arcane academic arguments by providing a social as well as a linguistic context for language. A thoughtful and thorough reading of this text should have a profound, if occasionally chilling, effect on how we speak and write.

As the subtitle indicates, the book itself is organized into two distinct, yet interrelated, sections. Part one provides a theoretical examination of the debate over language and sexual equality, while part two offers practical guidelines for nonsexist usage and outlines some of the special problems associated with academic or scholarly writing. Although this book is occasionally difficult, particularly for a nonlinguist, the struggle to grasp ideas that are at once academically objective and politically charged results in an understanding of how rules of "good" usage become canonized—and by whom. Two articles in particular, Sally McConnell-Ginet's "The Sexual Reproduction of Meaning: A Discourse-Based Theory," and Susan J. Wolfe's contribution, "The Reconstruction of Word Meanings: A Review of the Scholarship," allow the nonspecialist to gain insight into the social and sexual construction of language, in which gender plays a major role in how people assign meanings to words. Because both articles refer extensively to the current literature in the field, those who desire to immerse themselves further in the debate need only refer to the lengthy list of works cited or the collection's fine bibliography to locate a treasure chest (or perhaps a Pandora's box) of additional readings.

Librarians approaching this collection may be especially struck by Paula Treichler's essay "From Discourse to Dictionary: How Sexist Meanings are Authorized." As professionals who not only use dictionaries ourselves, but purchase them and recommend them for others to use, librarians can learn a good deal from Ms. Treichler. Lest we fall into

the trap of believing that words arrive, unmediated, onto the dictionary's printed page, Treichler poses such compelling questions as: "Where do meanings come from? What does a 'meaning' formally consist of?...How does the weight of prior discourse constrain the production of future meanings? Whose discourse? Whose future?...Who may authorize meanings?" A task many of us take for granted—adding one more dictionary (or encyclopedia, for that matter) to our reference collections—becomes a considerably more pressing and important responsibility when we begin to think in terms of the production and reproduction of meaning, or, as Treichler puts it, when we realize the extent to which "dictionaries have generally excluded any sense of women as speakers, as linguistic innovators, or as definers of words."

Part two, "Guidelines for Nonsexist Usage," consists of two essays addressing very specific problems. Those of us who teach as well as write should find the discussion of the concept of the generic "he" particularly enlightening. Building on a discussion of "pseudogeneric" words touched upon several times in the theoretical portion of the collection, Treichler attempts to provide readers, writers, and speakers with a range of alternatives to one of the "most notorious...discriminatory practices, the use of male-specific words as generics." While Treichler acknowledges that not all solutions to pseudogenerics render equally successful results (the authors represented in this collection have hardly embarked on a campaign to destroy "good" writing), she provides numerous illustrations of the problem: the supposed inclusivity of the word "he," the universalizing of the term "man" and its variants. Further, and more importantly, she demonstrates an array of linguistic possibilities which permit the writer/speaker to exercise social and cultural sensitivity while avoiding ambiguity.

Libraries, as the cliché goes, are storehouses of culture. Cliches aside, they are, in a very concrete sense, repositories of

the words which give meaning to our collective experience. Although not specifically aimed at librarians, *Language, Gender, and Professional Writing* gives us another tool with which to examine a range of assumptions about libraries and what they do—and do not—contain. Along with offering practical solutions to daily communication problems, the collection provides the theoretical framework for us to enter intelligently into the debate about language and usage and to analyze how we, as librarians, may also effect change.—Ellen Broidy, *University of California, Irvine.*

Hernon, Peter. *Statistics for Library Decision Making: A Handbook.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1989. 200p. \$35 (ISBN 0-89391-586-6). paper, \$19.95 (ISBN 0-89391-605-6). LC 89-6744.

Slater, Margaret, ed. *Research Methods in Library and Information Studies.* London: Library Association, 1990. 182p. \$35 (ISBN 0-85365-908-7).

The London *Times* once classified research under three headings: "the proof of the blindingly obvious;" "the great leap sideways" towards an irrelevant or unjustified conclusion; and the "we'll prove it if it kills you" presentation of incomprehensible statistics intended to overcome any criticism by quantity alone. On the other hand, as Sherlock Holmes said, "Data, data, data!...I can't make bricks without clay." The two books under review offer guidance to library managers, library school students, and other researchers in finding the clay for the bricks of "action research," which Peter Hernon describes as applied research through data collection and analysis for decision-making concerning library programs, collections, services, operations, and staffing.

The two books complement each other and are complemented by a third recently published book: Arthur Hafner's *Descriptive Statistical Techniques for Librarians* (Chicago: American Library Assoc., 1989). Hafner's is an introduction to de-

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