

book. Instead of listing 1,300 libraries, it would have been more helpful to devote two or three pages to a description of the Superintendent of Documents Classification System (SuDocs). Even a brief outline of SuDocs and the arrangement of the various relevant publications would have given the researcher a major advantage. Goehlert mentions SuDocs, but he does not outline the system or its role in libraries or the research process.

Furthermore, though Goehlert discusses the Serial Set, no one unfamiliar with it could possibly discern its relationship to materials and the tracing of legislation. In fact, the index to the Serial Set, the *Numerical Lists and Schedule*, is not even mentioned. A serious drawback is that citational interrelationships are not clearly explained, such as, for a report, its place in the Serial Set and how to locate it.

There is useful information in this book, but it is not pulled together in a way that most laypersons (and librarians) could easily understand. If one is already familiar with legislative research, the text is helpful; unfortunately, for the beginner it is confusing. If additional space were devoted to some of the problems enumerated and extraneous materials omitted, *Congress and Law-making* would be a more useful book.—Alan Edward Schorr, *University of Alaska, Juneau*.

Cherns, J. J. *Official Publishing: An Overview*. An International Survey and Review of the Role, Organisation and Principles of Official Publishing. Guides to Official Publications, V.3. Oxford, New York: Pergamon, 1979. 527p. \$40. LC 78-41157. ISBN 0-08-023340-6.

This ambitious survey of publishing activities and information transfer processes in nineteen countries with representative or parliamentary forms of government, nine major international organizations, including the UN family, and three private publishers is both a historical account of the development of publishing and a current assessment of the "forms of organization, the policies, and the objectives associated with official information and publishing."

This is not a bibliographic work nor one that librarians would keep handy to assist in

bibliographic searching or answering reference questions. Instead, it should be read to increase understanding of the field by all librarians dealing with foreign and international documentation. Students of the printing and publishing efforts of the United States and Canadian governments will also find it of value for the comparisons offered.

Even though the United States is probably the best-developed country in dissemination of publications, much can be learned from the trials and errors, successes and failures, and shortcomings and achievements of other governments.

For the practicing librarian, information is presented on historical quantity and quality of government publishing and its availability through bibliography as well as sources of supply. Occasionally, actual publications are listed in the text or as an appendix for purposes of illustration (e.g., Hong Kong Fact Sheets, page 169).

Organization charts showing the structure of each government's information and publishing or printing apparatus and working definitions currently in use increase the value of the work for purposes of comparison and idea generation. Differing attitudes toward copyright versus public domain also offer a basis for further exploration of this complicated and controversial area of public policy. Important differences in theory of information dissemination other than through publication are explored and conclusions drawn regarding their relative success or lack of it.

The volume is organized into three parts, including the scope and importance of official publishing, the survey itself, and the general review and conclusions from the study. While the format is a reproduction of the authors' original typescript for economy and timeliness, neither the type style nor the few typos encountered distract from the topic at hand.

The coverage from country to country is somewhat uneven, but necessarily so given the diverse nature of government publishing. Each country does include many of the following topics: population, constitution and form of government, information organization, publishing organization, range of government publishing, history of development, policy, parliamentary publishing, ref-

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erences, and relevant appendixes. One appendix (page 400) does make an attempt to compare information and publishing activities in each country in chart form. The work does not include discussion of scientific and technical information dissemination.

Presenting the text thus in a broad and flexible format, Cherns has, for the most part, avoided making generalizations unsubstantiated in the text. Use of footnotes, however, is somewhat uneven. A reference to the United States, "public and congressional printing, because of its position on the fringe of the political area, was the subject of speculation, jobbery and scandal," appears undocumented, while the source of "an examination . . . [that] disclosed serious logistical and control deficiencies in the handling of orders" is duly noted.

Many of Cherns' conclusions found throughout the text and especially in part III should be further explored by librarians and government policy makers. "The right to know needs to be matched by the desire to inform" and "Useful information may be passive simply in the sense that nobody knows it is there or that there is a deliberate decision not to publish it" are among the many thoughtful observations that should give rise to additional study in each country surveyed.

This work is recommended for library schools and libraries dealing with foreign and international documentation and to students of public policy in the field of information generation and dissemination.—*Joan G. Kerschner, Nevada State Library, Carson City.*

Hu, Shu Chao. *The Development of the Chinese Collection in the library of Congress*. Westview Replica Edition. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Pr., 1979. 259p. \$20. LC 79-1741. ISBN 0-89158-552-4.

While the amount of literature on American library history has been mushrooming in recent years, a monographic study devoted to the historical development of the largest Chinese-language collection in the West, that at the Library of Congress, did not appear until the completion of this dissertation.

The history of the Library of Congress' Chinese collection began in 1869 with some