

BOOK REVIEWS

The Proceedings of the International Conference on Training for Information Work, Rome, Italy, 15th-19th November 1971, edited by Georgette Lubock. Joint publication of the Italian National Information Institute, Rome and The International Federation for Documentation, the Hague; F.I.D. publ. 486; Sept. 1972, Rome, 510 p.

Let's face it: there is something about any *Proceedings* that elicits a very personal reaction in many of us: "Here are papers that either, a) got their authors a trip to the conference city; b) tell how we did good at our place; or c) unabashedly present H.B.I.'s—(half baked ideas)." I personally like *Proceedings* that have many papers under category c); such papers make me think (or laugh). The great majority of papers in these Rome *Proceedings* fall basically under category b), i.e.—'how we done it good,' and some quite obviously under a), i.e.—'have paper will travel'—well it was Rome, Italy, after all. However, there is a smattering of papers that fall under c), i.e.—H.B.I.'s. So for those interested in the topic, these *Proceedings* offer among other things some food for speculative thought. For these other things let us start at the beginning.

The contents consists of prefatory sections, one opening address, sixty-six papers, a set of twenty brief conclusions, three closing addresses, a summary of work at the conference, an author index, and a list of participants and authors' addresses. The papers are organized according to two major sessions: one on "Training of Information Specialists" (nine invited and forty-two submitted papers) and another on "Training of Information Users" (six invited and nine submitted papers). The larger number of papers on training of specialists *vs.* training of users probably represents a good assessment of real education interests in the field.

The conference was truly international: authors came from four continents, twenty countries and four international organizations. Most represented were: Italy as host country with fifteen papers, USA with eight, Great Britain with seven, and France with six papers.

The concern for information science education is indeed worldwide, however, if the presented papers are any measure, such education is in big trouble, because one is left with the impression that information science education is in some kind of limbo: the bases, relations, and directions are muddled or nonexistent. But then isn't all contemporary higher education in big trouble, and in limbo?

The conceptions of what information science education is all about differ so widely from paper to paper that the question of this difference in itself could be a subject of the next conference. It is my impression that the differences are due to a) widely disparate preconceptions of the nature of "information problems," and b) incompetence of a number of authors in relation to the subjects. Accomplishments in some other field or, even worse,

a high administrative title does not necessarily make for competence in information science education.

The *Proceedings* offer a fascinating picture of information science education by countries and by various facets. It also offers frustration due to unbelievably unhygienic semantic conditions in the treatment of concepts, including a confusion from the outset of "training" and "education." The first business of the field should be toward clearing its own semantic pollution; such a conclusion can be derived even after a most cursory examination of the papers.

My own choices for the three most interesting papers are:

- V. Slamecka and P. Zunde, "Science and Information: Some Implications for the Education of Scientists;" (USA)
- S. J. Malan, "The Implications for South African Education in Library Science in the Light of Developments in Information Science;" (South Africa)
- W. Kunz and H. W. J. Rittel, "An Educational System for the Information Sciences." (Germany)

The editing of the *Proceedings* is exemplary; the editors and conference organizers worked hard and conscientiously. The *Proceedings* also provide the best single source published so far from which one could gain a wide international overview not only of information science education but also of information science itself, including implicitly the problems the field faces. In this lies the main worth of the *Proceedings*. Tefko Saracevic

Computer Processing of Library Files at Durham University; An Ordering and Cataloging Facility for a Small Collection Using an IBM 360/67 Machine. By R. N. Oddy. Durham, England: University Library, 1971. 202p. £1.75.

The task of the book is to guide the reader in the use of the LFP (Library File Processing) System developed by the Durham University library. The LFP System orders items and prints book catalogs in various sequences for a small collection of items with the aid of an electronic digital computer. The system is batch with card input and printed output; the programs are written in PL/1. "The LFP System was designed to be flexible and easy to operate for small files, and is less suitable for files larger than 10,000 items because there are then other problems which it does not attempt to solve." (p. 10).

The book fulfills its assigned task well; it is an excellent example of explanations and instructions for the personnel charged with the day to day operations for the particular system described. The book includes excellent introductory chapters on job control language, how computers operate, file maintenance, etc. Outside of the Durham University library, however, the book has little use except as a model of a well done operations guide.

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