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## Book Reviews and Journal Notes

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MORTON, LESLIE T. *A Medical Bibliography (Garrison-Morton): an Annotated Check-List of Texts Illustrating the History of Medicine*. 3d ed. Philadelphia, Lippincott, 1970. 872 p. \$37.50.

This 3d Edition of Leslie Morton's classic updating of Fielding H. Garrison's early checklists of 1912 and 1933 continues to serve as the most useful single bibliographical guide or directory of important writings that mark the history and progress of medicine and all its branches.

In this edition Morton has included 7,534 references (Garrison's original list had 3,700 we are told), and with regard to the earlier G/M—as it is affectionately cited—in which there were 6,808 items, “744 have been added and 118 removed in the present edition.” Fortunately, Mr. Morton has not this time renumbered his entries as he did between the 1st and 2d edition to the confusion of everyone. Instead he has inserted them by the expedient method of decimal points whereby inserts between 751 and 752 are 751.1, 751.2, 751.3, which means that new entries are quickly seen under any subject; it is not quite as easy to spot dropped entries except by noting omissions in the consecutive numbering, such as 123, 125, 127, 128, 129, 132, but in the case of sections devoted to the histories of subjects, numbers for deleted items have been used again. A few typographical errors have not been corrected, but there are very few obvious errors or misinterpretations of fact.

On the whole this great reference work will be and should be the constant desk companion of anyone concerned with the history of science or of medicine. It is a boon to have it somewhat updated, but since it is an expensive tool smaller libraries that have the 2d edition may rightfully consider whether the comparatively few changes are worth the purchase of the new volume.

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UNISIST: *Synopsis of the Feasibility Study on a World Science Information System by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the*

*International Council of Scientific Unions*. Paris, Unesco, 1971. 92p.

Although the cry of “information explosion” is still heard throughout the land, it no longer alarms us as it once did. However, after four years of study, a joint committee of Unesco and ICSU has concluded that the problem is more serious than ever before, that the present means of meeting it are inadequate, and that the most feasible solution is “a world-wide network of scientific information services working in voluntary association,” to be known as “UNISIST” and to be coordinated through an office in the Science Sector of Unesco.

The committee's report, of which the present volume is a synopsis, makes twenty-two recommendations for the implementation of this world science information system. Those with special importance for librarians include the formulation of performance standards for scientific libraries; the development of subject-specialized information centers, preferably associated with existing library systems; improved educational programs for librarians, documentalists, and information specialists; the integration of local, regional, and national library networks into world-wide networks; and the revision of copyright laws to permit maximum availability of information.

The proposed program places heavy reliance on computer-based technology, the practicability of which is lightly dismissed with the statement “Since the limits of machine systems are unexplored, it appears desirable to err on the side of innovation” (p. 76). Perhaps—although those of us presently struggling with the limits of machine systems may have some comments on this. Unfortunately many of the recommendations and the accompanying explanatory text suffer from vagueness and over-generalization. Problems of this sort in the text are no doubt due to the process of abridgement for this Synopsis, but those in the recommendations are somewhat distressing. Too often the recommendations read like wishful thinking about the desirable characteristics of an ideal science information network rather than as “recommendations for an action programme” as the report calls them (p. 27).

One might spend much time quibbling about individual recommendations, but, imperfect though it may be in some respects, the UNISIST program is an important step forward in the development of a world science information system. As the report points out, the "productivity and intellectual satisfaction" of the individual scientist "are directly affected by the amount, pertinence and quality of the information made available to him." The UNISIST program, when adopted, should improve all of these by facilitating the sharing of information among the scientists of the world. All librarians should at least scan this Synopsis; research collections will probably need the full *Report*.

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*List 1971: Library and Information Science Today; An International Registry of Research and Innovation.* Paul Wasserman, Managing Editor. Science Associates/International, Inc., 23 East 26 Street, New York, N.Y. 10010, 1971. 397 p.

*List 1971* is intended to gather and broadcast timely information on notable work in progress in librarianship and information science. Although research activity is of major interest, exciting and prototypical work is also included. The principal objective is to construct an inventory of current research, whether methodological, quantitative, empirical, speculative, or theoretical, together with intelligence of experimental, innovative, and trail-blazing programs. The definition of innovative and experimental was left to the interpretation of the respondents. The data base was compiled as a result of a mailing of questionnaires to some 2,500 individuals, organizations, and programs known to be carrying out research and experimental programs. Included in the mailing were formal programs in librarianship, information science and computer science, national societies, international organizations, research bodies, and governmental programs, and a wide variety of individual researchers and scholars noted for their previous efforts.

The result of this extensive survey effort is a compendium of 820 different research efforts, experimental programs, and innovative activities. The total number of principal project

personnel listed is more than 1,500. Forty states in the U.S. and District of Columbia are represented, as are thirty-four foreign countries. Each entry includes information as to principal investigator, title of project, name and address of institution at which work is being performed, funding source, duration of project, and brief description. Six indexes are provided: principal investigator; organization; geographic location; funding source; title of project; and subject and key word. The work is designed to be useful to a number of audiences such as students and faculty of educational programs in librarianship and information science, administrators of libraries and information centers, government and association officers, and thoughtful members of the library and information science community.

How useful is the work? Inevitably, when the interpretation of innovative and experimental is left to the respondents, some questionable, even phantom, projects are reported. A few entries are cryptic to the point of defying comprehension. More detail as to objectives, methodology, anticipated outcome, proposed method of reporting each research project or activity would have been useful. As a means of presenting information on work in progress, but not yet reported in the literature, the inventory has some utility. It is by no means an exhaustive list. A check of the index by funding source reveals that seventeen projects are supported by the National Library of Medicine covering innovative aspects of research, training, and experimental programs in biomedical communication. Yet the actual number of grants awarded is considerably in excess of this figure. It is possible that more complete information would have been obtained by requesting from the major funding agencies lists of all grants and contracts currently active. Such information could have been used to ensure more complete coverage.

But why another list in addition to the *Annual Review of Information Science, Information Science Abstracts, Library and Information Science Abstracts*, the services of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Library and Information Sciences, and the Science Information Exchange? Certainly, only the latter concerns itself with unpublished information. Yet how important is it to be aware of unpublished,