annotation. This format makes the otherwise handsome volume harder to read than it should be.

The authors of the bibliography are to be congratulated on a splendid job dealing with a complex subject. This study will most certainly be appreciated and very widely consulted.

PAUL G. Socken
University of Waterloo


What is the relationship between the history of the book and library history? Are they separate fields of study or simply facets of the same field? Is one hierarchically superior or inferior to the other, and if so which is which? What about their methodologies and attitudes toward internal analysis and external context?

These questions must be asked since the two fields intersect in numerous ways. In addition, library history possesses a large and growing body of scholarly writing of which a high proportion relates to public libraries. Even so, comprehensive histories are hard to find, despite some notable examples: Alistair Black's *A New History of the English Public Library: Social and Intellectual Contexts, 1850–1914* (1996), Lorne Bruce's *Books for All: The Public Library Movement in Ontario, 1850–1930* (1994), and Thomas Kelly's *A History of Public Libraries in Great Britain, 1845–1975* (1977). Interestingly enough the United States, with the world's largest and most developed public library system, has yet to produce a comprehensive history. Various periods and aspects have been chronicled, of which Lowell Martin's volume is an important example.

This study of the public library in the United States during the present century is intriguing for many reasons, not least for purporting to carry the narrative through 1999, although published in 1998. Equally intriguing is the realization that Martin's very slim book has managed to straddle all three major types of history: scholarly/academic, commemorative, and public policy. The book's scholarly nature can be seen in its footnotes and bibliography as well in Martin's academic credentials: a Ph.D. and at least fourteen monographs. During his professional career, which began 60 years ago, he has achieved distinction as a librarian, library educator, consultant, and publisher. The
commemorative nature of the volume is reflected in its subtitle: the Public Library in the United States in the Twentieth Century. The public policy aspect of the book can be seen in its title, Enrichment, which reveals Martin's intention of presenting an integrated vision of the past and future.

Although Martin's vision can be found throughout the book, it is most forcefully enunciated in the final chapter. "Enrichment" he says "encompasses the most formal study on the one side and the reading of a love story on the other" (176). The library's enduring core of activities he identifies as: "the cultural mission (basic collection), information service (reference collection and staff), recreation (fiction and best sellers) and children's materials and services" (152). Yet having said this, when he looks at the three fundamental purposes of the public library — information, education, and recreation — he argues that it has never played a major role in information provision. The library's abiding mission and guarantee of survival, he argues, is as an educational and recreational "agency" (189–196). Knowledge, understanding, and appreciation are, for him, the public library's fundamental missions.

Despite its slender size, this book conveys much useful information and many complex ideas. After a brief Introduction and first chapter, "The Legacy of the Nineteenth Century," seven chapters with numerous subsections cover the century in chronological segments of varying length: 2 "The Foundation Years, 1900–1917" (Mission of the Public Library, Carnegie Buildings, Government of the Library, Open Access to Resources, Collections Organized for Use, Extension and Branches, American Library Association); 3 "The Innovative Years, 1918–1929" (Adult Reference Service, Reader's Advisory Service, Young Adult Service, Children's Service, Promotion of Reading, Service to Schools, Emergence of Professional Personnel); 4 "Depression and War Years, 1930–1945" (Intellectual Freedom, Subject Specialization, Graduate Library School — University of Chicago); 5 "Recovery and Uncertainty, 1946–1959" (Appraisal at Midcentury, Use and Users, Politics and Libraries, Standards of Library Service, Advances in Personnel, Building Collections, State Library Agencies); 6 "Promise and Disillusionment, 1960–1970" (Federal Financial Aid to Libraries, Systems and Networks, Library in the Community, Multimedia Provision, Measurement and Evaluation); 7 "Culminating Years, 1980–1999" (Reprise on Purpose, Technology and the Library, Service to an Aging Population, Planning Process, Library in the Sky). In addition, chapters two to seven begin with brief social/economic/political introductions and subsections called "Overview of Library Development." Also, chapters two and three end respectively with "Gallery of Administrative Leaders" and "Gallery of Service Innovators." The thumbnail portraits, particularly of some of the lesser known figures, are very useful and provide a flesh and bones dimension to the narrative. One wishes that similar biographical sections had accompanied chapters four to seven.
What significance does this book have for Canadian book historians and library historians? As far as library historians are concerned, they will be helped by having a work which permits comparisons with the Canadian experience. American economic prosperity and population size permitted the U.S. to assume world leadership in most — but not all — aspects of librarianship. As well, constitutional provisions have been much more amenable to permitting the American, but not the Canadian federal government from being directly involved in public library development. Martin’s book prompts one to consider unique aspects of the Canadian public library, such as regional libraries and differing anglophone and francophone traditions.

As far as book historians are concerned, they are provided with information and methodologies that may prove useful in many ways. Methodologically, this is a work of broad synthesis which emphasizes internal analysis rather than external context. *Histoire du livre* has yet to make significant gains in this field. In terms of content, Martin is greatly concerned with books — their production, library acquisition, readership, place in education and recreation, and future role. He is equally concerned, however, with the institutional, administrative, and service aspects of libraries. This interplay of the library as institution with the book as artifact is typical of library history.

In conclusion, one can highly recommend this book, which is indexed but without illustrations, as it fills an important gap in the literature with a text that is well written, organized, and interpreted. This story of how the American people developed, in the 20th century, the world’s leading public library system is at once informative, insightful, and inspiring.

PETER F. McNALLY

*McGill University*