some, the reader will want to go to more
detailed material rather quickly or to a
consultant. This is a good first book for
anyone; and except for the most experi­
enced library manager working in this
area, it is difficult to see how anyone
would not gain useful practical advice
from the more detailed chapters.—
Lawrence Miller, Florida International
University—Tamiami Campus.

A Reader on Choosing an Automated Li­
brary System. Ed. by Joseph R. Mat­
thews, Chicago: American Library

Intended to complement the editor’s
earlier publication, Choosing an Automated
Library System: A Planning Guide
(ALA, 1980), this collection of forty articles ex­
tends considerably beyond the concept of
merely choosing an automated library sys­
tem. The book’s seven sections encom­
pass topics ranging from needs analysis
and the selection process and contracts, to
installation, implementation, and the im­
pact of automation in libraries. The latter
section comprises 40 percent of the book
and contains subsections on acquisitions,
cataloging, the catalog, circulation, and
online search systems.

Although badly dated in some respects
and neglecting some applications of li­
brary automation, the selections are gen­
erally well chosen. Most derive from pa­
pers presented at conferences or are reprints from monographs or the standard
library literature representing such au­
thors as John Kountz, Paul J. Fasana, Mi­
ichael Gorman, Susan K. Martin, Richard
Boss, S. Michael Malinconico, and
D. Kaye Gaypen. In addition, there are a
handful of articles written for this collec­
tion and selections from outside the li­
brary literature. The latter include useful
essays on cost analysis and contracts re­
printed from Computing Surveys and Data­
mation.

Of the new articles, those most welcome
are Kevin Hegerty’s essays on contracts
and vendor and/or system selection, Wil­
liam F. Adiletta’s “primer” on data com­
munications (which suffers, however,
from being written prior to the breakup of

AT&T) and Nolan Pope’s article on con­
tracts, which provides an excellent ex­
planation of the RFI/RPI process, good advice
on writing RFPs, and clear explanations of
such terms as benchmarks, performance
bonds, escrowed software, and accep­
tance tests.

The editor’s introductions to each of the
sections are generally helpful in stating
the problems and setting the stage for the
articles that follow. On p. 23–24, however,
there is unfortunate confusion between
“standard bibliographic records,”
“MARC records,” and LC cataloging dis­
tributed by the MARC distribution ser­
vice. An index adds to the book’s useful­
ness although at least one entry
(Cataloging in Publication) contains only
blind references.

Considering that the earliest of the
thirty-five reprinted articles dates from
1967, and that half of the others stem from
the years 1979–80, this useful collection
can be utilized either for its historical
viewpoint or as a rapidly aging but useful
aid for library managers involved in the
automation process.—Charles W. Simpson,
University of Illinois at Chicago.

Arny, Linda Ray. The Search for Data in the
Physical and Chemical Sciences. New
150p. $17. LC 83-20376 ISBN 0-87111-
308-2.

The title of this work will pique the inter­
est of any scientific or technical reference
librarian; we are daily challenged with re­
quests for reliable data on sometimes ob­
scure properties of often obscure sub­
stances. Linda Ray Arny is an obviously
experienced reference librarian who used
a sabbatical to “investigate the nature,
generation, collection, and retrieval of
physical and chemical data in general, and
to analyze and index National Bureau of
Standards’ compilations in particular.”
The first part of her book begins by discus­
sing the nature of physical and chemical
data, the difficulties involved in locating
and critically evaluating data, and data
centers that have been established to com­
pile reliable data. Arny presents a brief but
thorough review of the problems in­
olved, and although she does not cite my
own favorite papers on the subject, "Is the Literature Worth Retrieving?" by S. A. Goudsmit (Physics Today 19:52-55 [Sept. 1966] and "Is the Literature Worth Reviewing?" by L. M. Branscomb (Scientific Research 3:49-56 [May 27, 1968], her discussion is no less illuminating for these omissions. Next she presents information on major data compilations and sources of data, with detailed discussions of the National Bureau of Standards and its National Standard Reference Data System, and briefer sections on other national and international programs. Sources of information on handbooks and data compilations, including online access to data, are also covered. In such a rapidly changing area it is to be expected that some recent developments are not included. Thus there is no mention of the online Superindex; and in discussing the problem of the lack of standardization in query languages for online systems, she suggests that a possible solution would be for commercial vendors to create interface software that would translate commands of the end user into appropriate commands for a particular file, but she does not mention that such software is already on the market (e.g., Sci Mate).

The second part, nearly half of this rather slim book, is taken up by information about National Bureau of Standards data compilation series and with descriptions of selected compilations in these series. In addition, having convincingly made the point in the first half of her book that NBS data series are not adequately indexed, Arny concludes this second part with her own index to selected NBS data compilations. Since the NBS is such a significant producer of critically evaluated data compilations, there is some justification for this section, but of course it is not and does not pretend to be a comprehensive guide to physical and chemical data. Moreover, it is evident that such indexes quickly become dated. For example, the indexes refer to Technical Note 270 for certain thermochemical data, rather than to Supplement 2 to volume 11 of the Journal of Physical and Chemical Reference Data, which supersedes the various parts of this Technical Note. (In fairness, the description of TN270 does mention this Supplement, in a note probably added late in the proof stage.) Despite this limitation the index should prove useful.

This book would be useful as supplementary reading for a course on scientific reference sources, although the lack of an index to the text detracts from this purpose. More significantly, I think that any practicing science reference librarian could profit from reading the book and from consulting its NBS index in dealing with reference questions.—Robert Michelson, Northwestern University Library, Evanston, Illinois.


This collection of pieces by librarians who are in careers outside of the traditional library organization provides exciting and important viewpoints on the options as well as requirements for success in these alternative careers. The book is divided into two sections: Part 1—"Changing Career Directions," and Part 2—"Some Career Options." There are a total of eighteen pieces, and the editors, Sellen and Berkner, have done a fine job of pulling these diverse pieces together into a well-organized and cohesive presentation.

Part 1 offers pieces that cover strategies for assessing career options, evaluating strengths, and marketing skills. The ideas and suggestions contained in these pieces represent the most direct and honest guidance about what it takes to be successful in gaining entry and then surviving in the not-for-profit sector that this reviewer has seen in the library field. The authors present a no-nonsense picture of realities of the not-for-profit world and discuss in specific terms the commitment, energy, and time that it takes to be successful. Anyone reading these pieces will go away wiser about the general expectations in alternative careers but also with specific ideas and suggestions on how to approach planning a career change. Librarians who want sound suggestions on job hunting