able to respond to technological change despite budgetary constraints. The University of Georgia experience differs from the other three in that the library has opted to maintain the university's own locally developed system, MARVEL, with a batch mode to reduce cataloging cost, and to cooperate closely with the campus computer center to develop its programs. It responded to its own institutional needs by being a partner with the computer center.

To respond to and capitalize on one's own unique institutional environment with its specific and special needs and capabilities is perhaps the key to the survey findings. As the report concludes in its overview,

it is important to recognize that management processes and automated systems of these organizations were developed within unique sets of environment factors... the benefits of these case studies lies in noting how each institution and its library responded to technological change within the context of its institutional goals, objectives, and priorities.

The report has another cautionary note. Automation does not result in reduced operating costs. And perhaps more serious yet, the true costs are difficult to ascertain. The four case histories provide interesting, indeed illuminating, albeit brief, descriptions of four success stories of how these libraries responded to the challenge by meeting their respective institutional needs within their specific institutional environment. The cases illustrated administrative savoir faire and professional vision as well as expertise, but the cold facts of cost estimates and cost-benefit analysis remain elusive. If one may wish for more from this very useful study, perhaps it would be that not only success stories are studied. If only some libraries would instruct us with their stories of thwarted hopes and failed experiments! So often we learn more from failures than from successes.—Y. T. Feng, Harvard College Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts.


Whatever one wishes to call it—a collection of collections, a library of libraries, the world's largest privately supported library, an international collection, or simply many tubs sailing the bibliographical seas on their individual bottoms—the Harvard University Library is a phenomenon that commands admiration and respect. After 350 years of existence it celebrated its many achievements with this catalog to an exhibition documenting its course into the contemporary world. The reader quickly perceives the library's evolution from a struggling provincial outpost to a period of unprecedented collection building beginning in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The story concludes with Harvard's approach to the preservation of all that it has so assiduously gathered during its long history, and its need to control its collections with the use of automation and its own library information system. Harvard, in effect, has seen it all, as is made clear by this careful gathering of incidents and personalities from the copious records of the library's past.

The message is clear. This mighty institution has a past to be reckoned with. In its long life, it has participated in more than one kind of revolution and has instigated, on the bibliographical side, quite a few of its own. With its own rich historical experience—one might say lineage—the Harvard University Library can take on whatever comes its way. One of the virtues of this volume is that it gives a broad perspective of change and durability within a unique institution from which the thoughtful reader can draw the lessons of history, or at least the history of libraries.

The presentation is simple and direct, enabling the reader to become engaged at any point that attracts an interest. More than eighty years were selected to establish the inevitability of Harvard's greatness. Each chosen year signifies an event that melds into the ultimate character of the institution and presumably affects it forever. It is a persistent gathering of strength and diversity with only a trace, here and there, of puffery or unnecessary hyperbole. The Harvard library becomes, as one moves through the years, truly the
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sum of its parts, and then some.

Each date and its selected topic is followed by a short essay. These vary in length and tone as they develop individual themes that crisscross the library’s history, usually supported with a good lacing of facts and anecdotes. A high level of interest is maintained through the copious use of illustrations, adding to the sense of destiny embodied in the era of Justin Winsor and the great period of collection building that followed. The collection at this point begins to dominate the scene and remains the focal point despite the inevitable need to be operationally and physically up-to-date.

The range of the chronologically arranged topics places the Harvard library and its manifold collections in their many worlds. “A Harvard Library Book Helps Defeat the British” is an appropriate wording for 1775. “Harvard’s Librarians Begin to Act Professionally” signals an early awakening, certainly for 1827, among the librarians, although there is relatively little to be told about the great mass of staff which made the library work day in and day out. The inevitability of fund-raising for a private institution was noted in 1842 with “Harvard First Successfully Raises Funds to Fill Gaps in the Collections.” Institutional inventiveness is heralded with “The First American Card Catalog for Users is Proposed” in 1860. The anniversary year of 1986 is marked by five essays, illustrated with a grim view of Harvard’s storage library set forlornly in a wooded area. Throughout these engaging short pieces we are able to capture glimpses of Justin Winsor, Francis James Child, Charles W. Eliot, Archibald Cary Coolidge, William A. Jackson, Philip Hofer, Keyes Metcalf and others who contributed mind and matter to the library’s greatness.

Beyond the events and individuals that have given Harvard its distinctive place, certain pervasive themes exist. Harvard, of course, has been preeminent in its attempt to capture the word, now locked into a still-growing collection of 11.2 million volumes. The need to give a wholeness to this vast number, especially within Harvard’s federated system of libraries, is a persistent motif. With books consciously placed everywhere on its campus and closely identified with their immediate audience, control defers to coordination, and ultimately, to diversity. Character, sensibility, and an awareness of history become integrative forces rather than current management theory. The Harvard library is justly proud of its ability to innovate, another unmistakable theme as well as a trait which will continue to be called up.

This volume has succeeded in making the history of one great library come alive. As an introduction it points the way to a fuller account that should come. The sources are there and the story a rich one. Until that time, this volume will serve the general reader, the historian of libraries and learning, and above all, perhaps, present and future librarians who, in turn, serve Harvard’s great library.—Robert Rosenthal, The Joseph Regenstein Library, University of Chicago, Illinois.


The first words of the introduction to this collection of articles by some twenty-eight authors assert that “as far as librarianship is concerned, nationalism is dead and internationalism has replaced it.” This thought, posited a decade ago by Maro Chauveinc in IFLA’s First Fifty Years, Achievement and Challenge in International Librarianship (ed. by Willem R. H. Koops and Joachim Wieder. Munich: Verlag Dokumentation, 1977), is certainly arguable today if one takes the United States as one’s point of reference. Patel, Schick, and Harvey himself (coeditor) point out in their chapter titled “An International Data and Information Collection and Research Program” that the 1980s have seen a shift in cooperation and information exchange from developed to developing nations. It is now the economically emerging areas that, perforce, have an international out-