

**American Music Librarianship: A Research and Information Guide.** By Carol June Bradley. New York: Routledge, 2005. 328 p. \$95.00 US. ISBN 0-415-97291-4

In 2003, the Music Library Association announced the creation of the Carol June Bradley Award in recognition of Bradley's research career as the foremost historian of music librarianship. The annual award supports studies in the history of music libraries or special collections. Bradley published nearly two dozen books or articles while she was associate director of the music library at SUNY Buffalo. With James Coover, she was also co-director of the institution's double master's program in music and librarianship from 1967 until her retirement in 1999.

*American Music Librarianship* is an immense, 3700-item bibliography, a systematic documentation of the field. The preface calls attention to "the identification of articles descriptive of activities at individual libraries" and states Bradley's primary goal: to "encourage more historical research into the development of individual music libraries." The two chapters on libraries and librarians account for about forty-five percent of the citations, and demonstrate her exhaustive and unrivalled mastery of this literature, widely scattered as she shows it to be in Library of Congress and other individual library and university bulletins; music, equipment and general library journals; monographs, essay collections, encyclopedias, dissertations and even newspaper articles.

The remaining six chapters have topical headings such as Cataloguing and Classification, and Education for Music Librarianship. Four of them, including General Studies, are further

subdivided. Within each division, items are listed alphabetically. They date from the earliest writings—for example, a library description from an 1858 issue of *Dwight's Journal of Music*—up to the year 2000.

In these chapters the criteria for inclusion are less clear despite the specifications in the preface. The latter states, "Articles about music printing are excluded," but the subject/name index includes Music Printing—followed by six citation items, although one of them in fact deals with manuscripts. "Universal interest" is given as the criterion for inclusion of any publications from outside the US. The arbitrary selection of only two of the series of repertoire catalogues issued by the Canadian Music Centre (Bradley 230 and 231), a couple from Scandinavian Music Information Centres (125, 428), and two similar articles from *Fontes* (lists of materials from Hungary (333) and Japan (542)) is not explained. Ireneus Zuk's survey of Canadian piano concertos (419) appears in the section on acquisition guides; the existence of other major Canadian bibliographic dissertations (e.g., Elliott on string quartets, Maloney on wind ensembles) is not recognized.

A review of Bradley's earlier 1973 compilation, *Reader in Music Librarianship*, commented gently that "there are some lessons to be learned from foreign practices."<sup>1</sup> Bradley evidently still thinks

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<sup>1</sup> D. W. Krummel and John W. Tanno. Review of *Reader in Music Librarianship* by Carol June Bradley. *Notes* 2<sup>nd</sup> Ser., 31 (no. 2, Dec. 1974): 286-88.

otherwise, simply announcing that “only English language articles are included.” Researchers interested, for example, in the history of classification or American participation in the international bibliography projects of IAML, should take note of this significant limitation.

Annotations are terse and rarely evaluative; comments like “fine” or “valuable” are used sparingly. Most are bibliographic references (1283: “a revision of part of her thesis;” 902: “detailed manual, a companion to item 903”) or clarifications of the author’s purpose, even in many cases where the title would seem clear enough. For instance, item 402, an article entitled “Books on Black Music and Black Musicians for Juveniles,” is described as “A bibliography of books about black music and musicians,’ particularly for the young reader.” For some nineteenth- and early twentieth-century items, “Note date” is added—but whether this is intended as a caution or as admiration is unclear.

The other aim, also from the preface, is to “bring the...literature under subject control.” The Collection Development and Management chapter contains genre indexes for bibliographies and discographies. At the back of the book are author and subject/name (but not genre) indexes to all items. The historical items dealing with named individuals, collections, institutions, or a limited range of unexceptionable subjects—such as Archives, Conservatory, Public, and School Libraries—are admirably treated. For everything else, Bradley’s attempt to bring order has resulted in idiosyncratic decisions and overlapping categories of the sort familiar to every experienced user of

subject headings. Some items are indexed at Automation, some at Computer Applications; some at Acquisitions—Reprints, others at Reprints; there are entries for both microforms and microfilms. Items about books or music in the Preservation/Conservation and Physical Plant subsections of the Administration chapter are not further indexed, but items about Records—Care and Preservation and Playback Equipment are, and some of them appear in other chapters.

The publication history of this reference work is unexplained. The subtitle, *A Research and Information Guide*, with a cutoff date of 2000 for citations in a book which only appeared in 2006, suggests it may have been planned as one of the Garland series before that firm’s takeover by Routledge. But the acknowledgments give no hint of this, and there is no mention of any editorial or publisher staff.

Overall, the book is an impressive well of resources for specialists in the field. The subtitle, though, is an unfortunate misrepresentation: no guidance is given. Bradley offers no narrative context or interpretation, and there are few distinctions between useful and marginal items. Comprehensive rather than selective, objective rather than critical, *American Music Librarianship* is a monumental listing of documents sorted by topic, alphabetized and indexed.

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