



Recruiting in Urban University Libraries: Some Suggestions

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LIBRARIANS RECOGNIZE that recruiting is now more than ever their business—that they must attract to their profession able young people for whom librarianship is a positive choice, made in the full knowledge of what it has to offer and of what resources of intelligence and personal force they can bring to it. Because librarians in urban colleges and universities have access to the largest concentrations of student population, they have a particular responsibility for launching effective recruiting programs.

City universities and colleges, located in the neighborhood of a library school, can establish vital traineeship programs. Talented and ambitious graduates enroll in those programs for advanced study in which they can support themselves.¹ They exist on meager stipends as graduate assistants, reading papers and teaching large classes, during the grind that produces the doctorate. Libraries can more than meet the competition of other departments by paying adequate salaries for these subject-trained students. Imaginative attention to their work assignments so that their skills are challenged will make them valuable as employees during their period of professional education and will ultimately send into the field mature, experienced new librarians. Furthermore, librarianship still has the advantage of offering—a rarity in the learned professions—a marketable degree at the master's level. The work-study period need not be unduly prolonged, and the graduate enters his profession early.

Urban university librarians can work with guidance personnel on their own and on other local campuses. Their campaigns to inform directors of the variety of opportunities in librarianship and of the breadth of talent and educational background useful in their field

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may be aimed at many sources. Placement officers are grateful for suggestions which help to solve the career problems of liberal arts majors of broad, rather than narrowly channeled intellects. They need to be informed that majors in the humanities, social studies, and natural sciences, in education, business, and other professions, can be placed in college and university, special, public, and school libraries. And they need to be told that libraries are not the last refuge of the introvert—that they are dynamic, rather than static institutions.

University librarians working in a city have unparalleled opportunities for conducting public relations programs. Radio and television stations and transportation systems will carry messages about library careers as public service features. Clubs of all kinds welcome well informed speakers from academic institutions. Newspapers print releases which explain the library world. Urban university librarians are in a position to speak authoritatively through these media to large numbers of parents who influence the career choices of their sons and daughters. In city universities especially, librarians can raise their voices and be heard.

Reference

1. For enlargement on this point, see Berger, D. P.: Recruitment for the Profession: Librarianship's Position in the Seller's Market. *Journal of Education for Librarianship*, 2:42-46, Summer 1961.