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PROCEEDINGS OF THE 1964 CLINIC
ON LIBRARY APPLICATIONS
OF DATA PROCESSING

Graduate School of Library Science
University of Illinois

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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF LIBRARY SCIENCE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 1964 CLINIC ON LIBRARY
APPLICATIONS OF DATA PROCESSING

Held at the Illini Union on the
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FOREWORD

The papers and discussions at this second annual Clinic on Library Applications of Data Processing have demonstrated conclusively that the use of this new tool is not the wave of the future but that it is something which is already here. Over fifty university and special libraries were represented at this Clinic, and they are either already using a computer or are well along in their detailed planning for its use. And of course there is no reason to think that all libraries using computers chose to send someone to this meeting.

These papers and other publications have much to say about the technical aspects and implications of this new machine and of the approach to library operations which it requires. What should library schools do about it? Certainly it would be unfortunate if library schools generally were to ignore developments in this field, but neither should they accept the new tool blindly or uncritically.

We at Illinois are convinced that the first long step in the use by libraries of data processing will be to mechanize their present routines. This is not only more necessary and more obvious but also requires far less new theory than does information storage and retrieval, though the latter is undoubtedly of much more potential importance. In any case we here plan to emphasize this first main stage of development for the long present.

Furthermore we see our role in this field not as theorists or pioneers but as intermediaries between those who are the innovators and those who are the practitioners. We hope to utilize whatever means are open to us to translate theory into terms which are meaningful to the librarians in the field. We hope in time to develop some research projects here of our own, but many other people are doing important new work in this line of activity and we hope always to remain critical of what is being done and eclectic in what we teach.

There are several ways by which we can play our role as mediator or interpreter. For one thing we do offer one course in this field, at the graduate level. The opinion has been expressed that all our students should be required to take this course, but we have left it optional. As a matter of fact, enrollment in it has been good—so much so that we plan to offer the course every spring and every summer. The course was developed and has been taught in the spring by Dr. Frances B. Jenkins, of the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library Science faculty. Guest instructors are used in the

summer, e.g., Dr. Ralph Parker, librarian of the University of Missouri, in 1963.

A second way by which we hope to contribute in this area is by a workshop on the writing of computer programs for library operations. Such a workshop was held in the summer of 1964; it was successful and will be repeated in 1965. This is the sort of technical skill which is needed by at least one person in every library which attempts to use a computer for even routine operations. In the third place, we plan to publish in this field, e.g., the proceedings of the Clinics. In July 1964 we published John Melin's summary of library use of data processing to date, as Occasional Paper no. 72.

Fourthly, we hope to continue these Clinics on an annual basis. These conferences are called Clinics because they consist primarily of papers recording the experiences of individual libraries. We think that this emphasis on the case approach is valid and appropriate under present conditions.

I wish to acknowledge with thanks the efforts of my colleagues who helped make the 1964 Clinic a success. Dr. Frances B. Jenkins and Dr. Rolland E. Stevens served with me on the planning committee. Mrs. Maija Harris was our administrative assistant, and Miss Jean Somers helped edit the papers. Mr. Hugh Davison and his staff in the Division of University Extension handled the arrangements for the Clinic. The speakers are all owed a word of appreciation for their cooperation and their contribution. In particular I wish to thank Robert Wallhouse of IBM, for showing two films on the 360 computer. The registrants made the whole affair worthwhile by (a) coming, (b) participating, and (c) teaching us the lessons of their own experience. To all of these and others not named, my sincere and heartfelt thanks.

Herbert Goldhor

Urbana, Ill.
May 16, 1964

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