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TRENDS IN AMERICAN PUBLISHING

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Kathryn Luther Henderson

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VOLUMES IN THIS SERIES

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- The Nature and Development of the Library Collection* (No. 3), 1957.
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- The Library as a Community Information Center* (No. 4), 1959. \$2
paper; \$3 cloth.
- The Role of Classification in the Modern American Library* (No. 6),
1959. \$2 paper; \$3 cloth.
- Collecting Science Literature for General Reading* (No. 7), 1960. \$2
paper; \$3 cloth.
- The Impact of the Library Services Act: Progress and Potential* (No. 8),
1961. \$2 paper; \$3 cloth.
- Selection and Acquisition Procedures in Medium-Sized and Large Li-
braries* (No. 9), 1963. \$2 paper; \$3 cloth.
- The School Library Materials Center: Its Resources and Their Uti-
lization* (No. 10), 1964. \$2 paper; \$3 cloth.
- University Archives* (No. 11), 1965. \$2 paper; \$3 cloth.
- The Changing Environment for Library Services in the Metropolitan
Area* (No. 12), 1966. \$2 paper; \$3 cloth.
- Federal Legislation for Libraries* (No. 13), 1967. \$2 paper; \$3 cloth.
- Trends in American Publishing* (No. 14), 1968. \$4 cloth.

NOTE: The papers from Institutes 2 and 5 have not been published.

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FOREWORD

The publishing industry is experiencing great growth and major changes. Books and periodicals, the familiar tools of the world of learning, have been joined in recent years by a variety of new media and new forms of publication. The publications explosion has touched every aspect of librarianship from selection to circulation. It was the intention of the Fourteenth Annual Allerton Institute sponsored by the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library Science to describe some of the current trends in American publishing and to assess their implications for the future. The conference was held from Sunday, November 5, to Wednesday, November 8, 1967, at Allerton Park, the conference center of the University of Illinois.

Some eighty people from Washington state to New York state; from Minnesota to Puerto Rico, gathered as registrants for the conference and were joined by other members of the local library community and the Library School. They were afforded the opportunity to continue with the questions and discussion which were begun during the more formal scheduled sessions, since we were fortunate in having many of the speakers with us throughout the conference. In this published volume, we can share only the results of the formal sessions. The results of the more informal sessions are recorded only in the minds, lives and future contributions of those who were active participants in these other learning experiences. The records of the two panel discussions are presented in summary form later in this Foreword.

The first paper presented in this volume is Dan Lacy's opening address, "Major Trends in American Book Publishing." In it, he identifies two principal forces which have produced dramatic changes in American book publishing in the last fifteen years; the large number of children born annually since World War II and the changing pattern of American education. In "Current Trends in American Publishing," Charles Madison presents the background to the numerous recent mergers, and to the entry of the electronics corporations into the publishing field, whose implications cannot be fully seen at this time. Robert W. Frase discusses the allied topic, "The Economics of Publishing," including the part that libraries and other educational agencies play as consumers of published works.

The aspects of the proposed copyright law which may affect libraries are indicated by Abe A. Goldman: fair use, requirement for and placement of copyright notice, duration of copyright, effects upon the copying of manuscript collections, and use of copyrighted works in computer-based systems. "The Role of Computers," as it has

penetrated the publishing world in respect to one firm, the R. R. Bowker Company, and as it may be seen in relation to others in the future is discussed by Daniel Melcher.

Robert J. R. Follett takes a look at educational publishing. Existing to serve education itself, it is very much influenced by two major trends in American education: (1) the shift to thinking of education as an investment rather than as an expense, and (2) the change in the emphasis of education from teaching to learning.

As the only librarian among the writers of the formal papers, Edwin Castagna looks at the publisher-librarian relationship, considering them as two groups which "share in the crucial responsibilities of maintaining our country's information network." From the vantage point of his own personal experience as a bookstore owner and operator of long standing, Louis Epstein discusses "Bookstores: A Main Distribution Agency for Books." Yet another aspect of American book publishing is presented in Emily Schossberger's account of the growth in size and importance of "The American University Press" in the past two decades to which she adds a prediction of its future role and responsibility.

A panel composed of Herbert Goldhor (Director, Graduate School of Library Science), moderator, and Emily Schossberger, Edwin Castagna, Louis Epstein, and Charles Madison discussed the role of paperback publishing. Some points from this discussion are presented here:

1. While the heyday of the mass-market, popular paperback seems to be over, the quality paperback can be expected to increase in the future. Quality paperbacks can be defined as those paperbacks handled by book dealers and jobbers rather than through magazine distribution agencies.

2. Because of the impact of education on all aspects of life and the increase in the number of students of all kinds, paperback books have come to fill a need not only in the lives of individual purchasers but in libraries as well.

3. Libraries will need to continue to buy paperbacks for several reasons: (a) in some cases, paperback is the only form in which the book can be purchased; (b) better methods of binding paperbacks are now available; (c) paperbacks provide a less expensive means of purchasing multiple copies of books which may be needed for short periods of use; (d) since a paperback often carries a connotation of being a "less scholarly" publication and less a reminder of "school" or "study," it introduces some readers to library materials who might otherwise resist them and (e) since paperbacks are more expendable than hardback books, they can be introduced in greater quantity, with little or no processing, into newly-organized or experimental programs.

4. The bookseller has to find a way to sell paperbacks. The

availability of so many different titles in paperback form makes it difficult to choose from among them when space for paperback stock is limited. Needs of users are difficult to determine and often much of the stock must be returned to the distributors.

5. Although, as mentioned earlier, some books now appear originally in paperback form, reprinting still makes up a sizable amount of paperback publishing.

Throughout the conference, it had been reiterated that the results of a conference such as this could not be known for some time to come. In an attempt to summarize some of its implications and to make suggestions for the future, a second panel discussion formed the concluding session. Rolland E. Stevens of the Graduate School of Library Science of the University of Illinois served as moderator. Representatives of special, public and academic libraries included William S. Buddington, Librarian, The John Crerar Library; Robert D. Franklin, Director, Toledo (Ohio) Public Library; and Kenneth W. Soderland, Assistant Director for Preparations, University of Chicago. It was not possible for the representative of school libraries to take part, but frequent contributions were made by many of the other participants in the conference.

Discussion centered around the following concerns:

1. The entry of the electronics industry into the publishing field may result in the curtailment of the publication of reference books and other tools needed by only a limited number of special users. On the other hand, this may be counter-balanced by the fact that the electronics firms have a deeper sense of the needs resulting from the information explosion and therefore may be able to make special records more quickly available through tapes, microforms, etc.

2. In the past, book selectors, especially in the nonfiction area, have relied upon the reputation of the publisher for the selection of materials when reviews are lacking or not yet available. With the entry of new interests into the publishing world, and the changing complexion of the entire publishing scene, this may no longer be as reliable a means as it has been in the past. Librarians may need to be more keenly aware of this fact.

3. At a time when libraries must perform new functions and when personnel shortages are at their highest, there has also been an increase in publications without a proportionate increase in library personnel. Therefore it has become impossible for many libraries to give the attention to book selection that once was done. If, indeed, a closer scrutiny must be given in the future to the output of publishers, book selection will become increasingly difficult for many libraries. In view of these difficulties, it was suggested that a cooperative selection or reviewing service formed by the

library profession itself might be helpful in alleviating these problems—although it was realized that such a venture introduced new problems of its own.

4. Possible complications resulting from the proposed copyright law were seen to come primarily from the removal of copyright notice from stated places in the publication. The possibility of not knowing the date of appearance of the content of a book is of particular concern to the special library, where copyright date is essential information. Complications arising from the confusion over the applicability of copyright to computer technology, facsimile transmission, etc. were seen as another area of real concern. The extension of the time limit for copyright that will result in uncertainty in many cases about date of death plus fifty years was another concern.

5. A continuing need was seen for reprints in various subject areas as new libraries come into existence and materials in old ones need to be extended or replaced.

6. The fear was expressed that, although "the book is here to stay" in principle, the problem of deteriorating paper often makes this a questionable statement in practice. Advances in paper technology have been made and some publishers are using durable "permanent" papers. However, it may be necessary to make some investigations about the added expense or the real need for more extensive use of such paper for library copies. While not all publications will need to "last forever," librarians expressed an interest in having more of a hand in the possible selection of titles for which "permanent" paper might be important.

7. It was concluded that only through cooperation between librarians and publishers could many of the fears be alleviated and many of the goals achieved. Since both groups have the goal of making information available where it is needed, it was hoped that this conference would lead to increased understanding and communication.

No conference and its resulting papers come automatically into existence. A number of people in the Library School and the University have had a hand in this conference and in preparation of this volume. First of all should be mentioned Herbert Goldhor, who was responsible for many of the details of this conference. The rest of the Planning Committee is grateful for his leadership. Mrs. Frances B. Jenkins, a member of the Committee was helpful in many ways before, during and after the conference. The Committee was also fortunate in having Miss Eleanor Blum, Assistant Professor of Journalism and Communications Librarian, as a member; without her knowledge of the publishing world, our task would have been much more difficult. We are also grateful to Rolland E. Stevens and other members of the faculty for their help during the conference.

The annual Allerton Park Institute was planned and presented in conjunction with the Division of University Extension. Timothy Sineath is the Academic Coordinator, Extension Library Science, Division of University Extension. He deserved a special note of thanks for his effective handling of the many details involved in such a conference. Those who administer the facilities at Allerton House made our stay a pleasant one and we wish to thank them for this.

Nevertheless, the conference owes most to the papers prepared by busy people and to the attendance of the participants. If it has helped any of us to see more clearly our role as handlers of the world's information and has given us new insight and understanding into the cooperative efforts needed in the future to carry out this role, it will have fulfilled its purpose.

April 1968

Kathryn Luther Henderson
Chairman, Planning Committee

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