

HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE METROPOLITAN ENVIRONMENT

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Other papers prepared for this significant conference on the "Changing Environment for Library Services in Metropolitan Areas" do an admirable job of describing the population characteristics of our large urban centers, and of delineating changes in the social structure, employment patterns, and public school systems. All of these, appropriately, relate directly or indirectly to the vital role of libraries and librarians in the perplexing yet exciting setting which the great metropolitan centers of our country represent.

It is my privilege as a university dean in the central office of The City University of New York to participate in the administration of a publicly supported multi-campus institution with some 142,000 students, most of them full-time students in tuition-free programs at the undergraduate level. During the past few years our well-known and traditionally liberal arts-centered colleges (City, Hunter, Brooklyn, and Queens) have been joined by a Graduate Center which awarded our first Ph.D. degrees last spring, by a baccalaureate degree-granting College of Police Science, and by six two-year community colleges, offering both transfer as well as job-related career programs. From this vantage point—some call it a precarious perch—I am made aware daily of the unique role of the urban higher institution today: what ought to be done, the pitfalls and road-blocks, and the possibilities of success.

I would like to offer some introductory comments on the role of urban higher education (I shall use the term *metroversity*) and then pose three major questions:

- A. What are the expanding roles which urban-based higher education institutions are seeking to fill?
- B. What steps may be taken to accelerate change and provide innovation toward achieving these roles?
- C. What implications are there for libraries and librarians related to metropolitan colleges and universities?

Let us turn first to some concepts of what a higher institution—particularly a university—may be. Cardinal Newman, in his Idea of a University, speaks of the university as needing to be venerable, beautiful, and useful. Clark Kerr in his The Uses of the University

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perceives that the university is the major source of that "invisible product, knowledge, [which] may be the most powerful single element in our culture, affecting the rise and fall of professions and even of social classes, of regions and even of nations."¹

To these I would add my own concept of the dream of a "Metroversity," the new type of higher education complex without which our great cities of today and tomorrow cannot live. This modern urban university must be useful, and in so becoming, achieves a kind of practical beauty, even though its campus lacks stately elms and its red brick walls are a bit soot-stained. In Kerr's words, it must create knowledge. At least some of this knowledge should be related to the solution of its city's problems. It must, like the ancient god Janus, look inward and outward simultaneously. It must add to the concept of research, the idea of service. Yet it must not let itself become bogged down, in the words of the late President Lotus Coffman of the University of Minnesota, into becoming merely an academic service station.

The role of great cities in the United States does not need long description here. Population density and "layers" of government are both amazing! Benjamin Chinitz notes in the special September 1965 issue of Scientific American that in New York City, the Borough of Manhattan population density ranges as high as 77,000 people per square mile.² He observes 550 separate municipal governments within the New York metropolitan region with its twenty-two counties including 16,139,000 residents in three states. Solon T. Kimball and James E. McClellan report that urban population rose to seventy percent of the United States total in 1960.³ Yet, as they point out, "eleven of the twelve largest cities (Los Angeles was the exception) declined in size." Suburban population increased almost three times faster than the rate for the nation as a whole!

Kimball and McClellan view Los Angeles as a pattern toward which other metropolitan areas are moving.⁴ Los Angeles should not be dismissed, they remark, as it was in a New York Times article which described it as "a horizontal monster crawling almost endlessly from the sea to the desert and mountains!"

With an increasing percentage of the total United States population living in metropolitan areas of one type or another, it is high time that we as citizens, librarians, scholars, and professional educators, take a look at what this urbanization of living—and of learning—really means now and in the years ahead.

We turn now to the first of the three questions.

A. What are the expanding roles which urban-based institutions are seeking to fill?

Observation indicates that there are at least a half dozen major roles. Your knowledge and experience may suggest even more!

1. The expansion of facilities to accommodate more students in traditional fields of baccalaureate and graduate study. This means, to oversimplify a bit, doing a lot more of what traditional colleges and universities are already doing. I place this first so as to avoid underemphasizing. Whether the institution is public or private in terms of basic support, there is the financial problem of providing instructional and administrative staff, physical plant (including laboratories), and of course libraries. Much of the expansion can be linked to the growing college attendance pattern all over the United States. Time magazine for October 15, 1965, for example, included in the cover story on U.S. Commissioner of Education Francis Keppel a chart (p. 62) reminding us that by 1970 close to fifty percent of the population age seventeen will be enrolling in college.⁵ The importance of keeping the college doors open for qualified students of low income must be stressed in the traditional arts and science programs. It is even more important in ways to be described in a moment.

2. Community colleges have an increasingly vital role in big cities. At one time there were those who thought that junior or two-year colleges were just for small towns not big enough to boast a four-year college. Neither Chicago nor New York believes this myth! Following closely on the heels of Joliet Township High School where the public junior college was first conceived in 1901, the Chicago public schools began in 1911 what became the oldest big-city system of public community or junior colleges in the United States. With one notable depression-year interruption, the system has continued ever since. While Los Angeles has probably passed Chicago in terms of total enrollment, the pioneering pattern of the Chicago City Junior College in the development of both transfer and terminal (or career) programs was a harbinger of significant development which gained momentum in various California cities after World War I, and in the past five to ten years has made educational history in New York, Miami, St. Louis, Cleveland, and other major centers. While friendly critics such as Grant Venn⁶ and Leland L. Medsker⁷ point out that many community colleges fail to provide sufficient variety or depth in technical and job-related curricula, the growing range of jobs for which the two-year college may be the gateway suggests more action in the years just ahead.

As a result of various stimuli, including federal assistance, community colleges all over the country are developing new job-related curricula and revamping old ones. To date, much attention has been focussed on such clusters of programs as those in engineering-related, business, and paramedical fields. A fourth cluster appears to be developing under the general heading of "social technology" which includes preparation for employment in the fields of correction administration, child care, recreation leadership,

urban development, and a variety of other jobs related to community agencies and city government.

3. Discovery of submerged talent among the disadvantaged. For some Americans, as the Educational Policies Commission recently pointed out, barriers to personal advancement have never fallen.⁸ These are the culturally, socially, and economically disadvantaged. Many of them live in the big cities. Many of them are Negroes or of Spanish-speaking background. For them, what is higher education's role? The traditional pattern has been, in many parts of the country, to establish qualitative barriers to college attendance based on verbally-related "objective tests" and grade-point averages in high school. These criteria are reasonably good predictors of academic success in college, but, as one staff member of the College Entrance Examination Board has pointed out, they tend to limit educational and thus social mobility for disadvantaged youth. Newer approaches to testing, special remedial programs (many beginning in the public schools), extra guidance and tutoring have already helped thousands of aspiring but disadvantaged students gain entrance into college and eventually graduate. Additional financial assistance also plays an important role.

4. Newer approaches to professional education for urban employment. Mention has been made of traditional liberal arts type programs and to newer developments in the two-year community colleges. It is now appropriate to note in passing the vital role of the urban college or university in the educating or re-educating of those who teach in big city public school systems, those who serve as social workers in both public and private agencies, and those police officers who seek to maintain law and justice in what is sometimes thought of as the asphalt jungle. (By actual count, our university is now engaged in conversations with at least nine separate parts of the government of The City of New York on the subject of initiating or enlarging collegiate programs of a specialized nature for their personnel. Most programs are now of an in-service nature, but I foresee a growing concern with pre-service education.)

5. Sub-collegiate programs as added responsibilities for metropolitan colleges and universities. Broadening college opportunity as suggested above is important, but even so it is unlikely that one hundred percent of the college-age population desires to attend college as we now know it or could profit from what are traditionally thought of as college-level programs. Until recently, the higher education enterprise paid little attention to those who couldn't get in. While there are only a few signs of a beginning trend, I see for urban colleges and universities a growing role in the improvement of education for a greater portion of the citizenry, not only through the myriad adult education courses offered on many campuses and at convenient extension centers, but also through such steps as (a) working

consciously to improve the school systems beginning as early, say, as Project Head Start, (b) training leadership to work in community agencies, and (c) developing such educational concepts cooperatively with public school systems as the proposed Educational Skills Center our university hopes to open on the site of the 1965 World's Fair.

6. Cultural advantages comparable to those in foreign countries offered in urban centers. Our friendly rival, New York University, invented not long ago a special attraction entitled "The Junior Year in New York." Drawing transfer students on a one-year basis from colleges in other parts of the country, N.Y.U. capitalized on its location in one of the great cultural centers of the world and consciously built into its program not only the conventional campus academic and other activities, but also placed emphasis on museums, galleries, musical events, the United Nations, the business community, and of course the wide range of library facilities found in New York City. In Washington, D.C., the American University has devised a "Washington Semester," drawing students from out-of-town institutions who would like a first-hand look at the processes of national government. While these are but two examples, virtually every true metropolitan center has unique attractions which might make such arrangements desirable. (In turn, urban students might enjoy exchanging the hard sidewalks for a country campus for a semester or a year.) Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, is hardly an urban institution, but as a result of its off-campus cooperative program many of its students receive college credit for work performed in metropolitan centers!

We turn now to our second question.

B. What steps may be taken to accelerate change and provide innovation toward achieving new roles in urban higher institutions?

1. The change in concept. I suggested above by indirection a four-fold change in concept for the urban institution. For brief clarification I repeat it. The urban institution, if it is really to serve its people, must:

- offer traditional instruction for more people
- provide remedial services, financial assistance, and imaginative admissions procedures for the disadvantaged
- devise new or substantially modified curricula for fields of employment (most of it in the public sector) indigenous to the city
- assist those concerned with providing education at the sub-collegiate level

All of this can be done only if the university or college believes in the "Metroversity" concept of being more than a traditional institution, has the skilled and motivated leadership and other personnel to do the job, and has the public's support. This sounds like a huge

task, and indeed it becomes a paradoxical one. In many cases, the entrenched faculty members would like to go on doing what they're doing (the traditional instruction!), while the public in general and city government in particular are lighting a fire under the college or university to get going on the other three phases of the concept! This is related to the steps which follow.

2. The need for a new breed. Running a metroversity makes unusual demands on the people who teach and on those who serve in other ways. While the role of the teacher in teaching may not be too different (he sticks to his field, be it Latin or urban planning), he may become a "grantsman" seeking foundation and governmental research for his work. Particularly if he is successful, he starts living in two worlds and must plan even harder than before to see that his teaching does not suffer on the campus while he helps City Hall (or the White House) solve problems on a seemingly larger scale. The chief administrator—and quite probably the librarian—has already been living in this double world for some time. He must convince His Honor the Mayor that the institution would be glad to help solve problems of water supply and/or pollution at the same time that he must assure the faculty (and occasionally his deans) that the university is not going to overexpand or become "non-academic." It takes people of fortitude, character, and ingenuity. Perhaps we should work even harder to train up a new generation to carry on in these increasingly gruelling roles!

3. Organization and location. It was allegedly Robert Maynard Hutchins who suggested that a university was merely a bunch of buildings held together tenuously by a loyalty to the same sewer system. Whether this was ever so, I suspect that this last remaining link is becoming passé. Several trends are becoming evident which indicate higher education's adjustment to the current urban scene:

- a) Branch campuses are springing up in the suburbs, or, in the case of a suburban institution, downtown. Northwestern University, for example, has been in Evanston for at least a century, but operates extensive programs in Chicago proper. Our City University will be soon adding Richmond College, an upper division unit, the first of its kind in our part of the country. It will have no freshmen or sophomores and will concentrate on serving community college graduates.
- b) New institutions start at once with a multi-campus arrangement. The new junior college of St. Louis and St. Louis county began operation simultaneously on three campuses—one urban, two suburban.
- c) Great state universities have finally discovered the big city. Through its Medical Center and Navy Pier operations, the University of Illinois has provided a variety of services in the Chicago area. The new and exciting Congress Circle development is

another strong step in the direction of meeting urban needs. The University of Missouri, formerly prairie-oriented in Columbia, now has major campuses in both Kansas City and St. Louis; the University of Wisconsin has discovered Milwaukee, and the State University System of Ohio is developing a major center in Cleveland.

d) Institutions supported locally from public or private funds in big cities are becoming state institutions. In Philadelphia, Temple University has moved further along the road toward becoming a state institution. A few years ago the privately-financed University of Buffalo was merged into the State University of New York system. And in Detroit, Wayne University (formerly locally supported) has become Wayne State University.

e) Greater utilization of resources becomes possible, and future planning of facilities more logical, through state-wide master planning. With only a few exceptions, states clear across the nation now have at least a rough idea of what demands will be made on higher institutions in the years ahead, what facilities both public and private already exist, and as a result, what remains to be done. It is not a simple matter of arithmetic to predict the future, however. Policy decisions need to be made as to whether colleges are to be expanded or new ones built near where the students live, thus obviating dormitory costs but increasing parking lot sizes; or whether it is desirable through indirect subsidy in some cases to provide the twenty-four hour experience of going away to college.

f) Renovation of existing buildings makes new space available faster for instructional uses. Developing a network of campuses—small or large—throughout a city brings college closer to students, avoids excessive institutional size. Neighborhood colleges might become undesirable, however, if they encouraged limited horizons or perpetuated segregated patterns already existing in housing.

4. Funding. The pendulum has already swung far in the direction of publicly supported institutions carrying an increasingly large part of the enrollment load. But every one of you here can name a few large private institutions in urban settings which draw much if not a majority of their support from federal grants. It looks, indeed, like a mixed economy, even in higher education! While corporation giving and gifts from individual donors have reached new heights recently, it is apparent that federal and state sources will have to meet increasing costs. Enlarging federal attention to urban problems would augur well for the metropolitan college or university. How a state legislature still rurally oriented might vote could be another matter, however.

5. The idea of an innovation shop. College faculty members are often reluctant to go along with a new idea ("I don't follow all those fads!") unless they believe they had something to do with its development. This discovery, plus an honest recognition of the talents of uncounted college professors, has led to a variety of somewhat institu-

tionalized ways of fostering innovation in higher education, and has encouraged experimentation with new approaches to various problems—including urban ones.

Our university, as an example, has set up a Center for Urban Development. Cooperatively with seven other major higher institutions, the Center operates under a Federal grant and is engaged in such projects as: an evaluation of the educational aspects of urban welfare and antipoverty agencies; studies into the cognitive and intellectual development of pre-school children; probes into the conflicts created by school integration; feasibility studies into the application of computer-assisted instruction in big-city school systems; a revision of English-language teaching methods in urban schools.

Let us turn to the third and last question.

C. What implications are there for libraries and librarians related to metropolitan colleges and universities?

(At this point I shall stick out my neck and probably reveal some of my ignorance in regard to library matters. Please be kind! In return, I shall refrain from mentioning the "explosion of knowledge" by that term, in spite of the fact that I was a student on the Wesleyan University campus in Connecticut when Librarian Fremont Rider was wringing his hands over the gigantic future expansions of the library contemplated at Yale, and as a result in 1944 or thereabouts invented the microcard.)⁹

1. There will be increased blurring of the line as to what's college and what isn't. This may make some of us uncomfortable, but we might as well get used to it. Several examples may be cited.

a) In those large cities with good public library systems, college students rely less on the college library (especially if it is inadequate) than would otherwise be the case. Obviously this puts greater burdens on the public library in terms of collection, space, and service. As a result, state aid to public libraries should, in my opinion, be markedly increased.

b) Some of the new students in colleges of the future will be less proficient at reading than we wish they were. While librarians should not be called upon to become remedial reading teachers, libraries will probably need to stock books that are quite easy to read but are on adult subjects.

c) If use of home study grows (with or without recordings, programmed instruction, or television), as many people think it will, there will be a run on library collections by those seeking college credit via the proficiency examinations already in use in some states, and probably to be made available nationally by the College Board people in the near future. What does this do to demands on libraries? Are these "seekers" to be treated as college students?

2. The growth of commuter colleges in metropolitan areas will

find thousands of students without sufficient study space at home or elsewhere. Everyone knows what this means! College administrators will do well to provide study space for commuter students to use between their classes, where they can work effectively and possibly in close access to library collections. It may seem pointless to use expensive library space strictly for "study hall" purposes, but on the other hand, it is bad educational business to make libraries so hard to get into that use of books beyond basic student-owned texts is discouraged. Commuter students enrolled in independent study programs will most certainly need to have carrels or other appropriate study space provided.

3. The growth of existing colleges and establishment of new ones will provide opportunity for development of exciting new libraries. As a consumer rather than operator or designer of libraries, I see no reason why college and university libraries cannot be comfortable and efficient at the same time. If freshmen are scared away from using libraries, it may not be entirely by the long lines at term-paper or exam time, but by the rather forbidding exteriors, the hard chairs, or the poor lighting. I am not suggesting that all libraries fit this category, but I do rejoice when I find students who look interested, happy, and comfortable all at the same time. Of great importance also is sufficient, well-organized library staff work space. Librarians know more about this than I do. I am merely suggesting that they take advantage of new campus plans to get what good libraries need.

4. New occasions breed new headings. The study of urban problems, to cite but one example, will probably bring forth a goodly supply of monographs, bibliographies, and mimeographed papers that are worthwhile and up-to-the-minute, but may be hard to classify or at least to circulate. Librarians now have the answer for what to do when a mimeographed report with no hard cover comes in, and right behind it a request for wide circulation. The answer is the wonderful Xerox copier! By means of Xerox, new material can be sent to the binder and copies can be made available. By means of this machine, new material does not have to go at once to the binder where it becomes "old" if procedures become delayed.

5. Talent can be recruited. It is apparent that the number of library positions in metropolitan college and university libraries already on the increase, is going to make it more difficult to recruit and hold good people unless there are some long overdue promotions. For my part, I hope that the growing trend to recognize appropriately prepared members of professional library staffs as bona fide members of the regular academic instructional staff with academic ranks and titles will continue. Dean Downs and I have had several interesting conversations on this point. His recent consulting work for the City University libraries has helped to make possible some great

differences in career possibilities in the libraries of The City University of New York. Training support as suggested in the Higher Education Act of 1965, to cite but one source, will also be of assistance, in attracting and improving library personnel and procedures.

I would express the hope that everyone in academic administration will come to have the rich and pleasant experiences I have had in getting to know librarians as they really are and not as a hard-dying stereotype portrays them. Modern librarianship, as my colleague Hal Bousfield points out, is a dynamic profession and this must be recognized when recruitment is contemplated.

Now to conclude. I have attempted to touch on some of the expanding roles which urban-based higher institutions are seeking to fill, to delineate some of the steps which lead to accelerated change and innovation, and to wind up with a few implications for libraries and librarians.

At the inauguration of the Chancellor of our University just a year ago this week, the Mayor of our City recalled the historic role of the University's colleges over the years of the past. Looking toward the future, he noted, "We must look to our City University for help in solving some of [our] problems or even, to begin with, to help us define them We must now look to the City University to help us find answers to the difficult questions which beset us in the fields of sociology, of urban transportation, of urban financing, of urban planning and regional management to mention a few. The City University must be an arm of the city in thought and action on the problems of the city. It must be our laboratory, our arsenal of academic expertise."¹⁰

I like to think that the spirit of these challenges will energize higher institutions in metropolitan settings all over our country. And in the midst of this arsenal of academic expertise I look forward to finding wise, dedicated, and active librarians. The seriousness of urban problems, as our Chancellor, Dr. Albert H. Bowker, has pointed out, commands attention from the entire scholarly community.¹¹

Note: While the author assumes full responsibility for his own opinions and any errors, he is appreciative of constructive help from his CUNY colleagues: Professor H. G. Bousfield, Brooklyn College; Professor Bernard Kreissman of the City College; as well as Dean Harry Levy, Mrs. Rebecca Straus, Mr. Raymond Bacchetti, and Mr. Robert Birnbaum, all of the CUNY central staff.

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