

Letters

To the Editor:

I am one of "those idealistic librarians . . . who espouse both unionism and participation," to quote Richard De Gennaro's *CRL* editorial for May 1972, "Participative Management or Unionization?"

While De Gennaro perceives unionization and participative management as a dichotomy, I feel that the two trends are not mutually exclusive. The advent of unions on college campuses has led to staff involvement in library decision-making where often none existed before. Similarly, the growth of collective bargaining has by no means reinforced the conventional hierarchical structures; the situation at City University of New York is but one example of this.

Some of De Gennaro's sweeping generalizations about white-collar unions are invalid and reflect his obvious managerial bias. Not all labor unions are conservative and authoritarian, with but "a veneer of democracy." One should consider the recent emergence of AAUP as a bargaining agent.

There is a need for impartial research to determine the effects of collective bargaining upon participative management in libraries. If the facts were known, I believe that the benefits would outweigh the disadvantages of unionization.

Leonard Grundt
Director of Library
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To the Editor:

Ellis Mount and Paul Fasana con-

clude their May 1972 article "An Approach to the Measurement of Use and Cost of a Large Academic Library System: A Report of a Study Done at Columbia University Libraries" by stating, ". . . preliminary analyses have already provided the librarian with significant results which are beginning to affect the libraries' policies and attitudes." Such a conclusion is outrageous. First, the results are not significant, in fact, they are seriously biased. Second, the effect upon the equity of user services could be disastrous.

Hidden among all the fairly objective surveys conducted are two that really matter—literature survey, current and retrospective. These two surveys, upon which are based the Catalog Staff Survey, Space Survey, Literature Cost Analysis, Salary Survey and Equipment and Supply Survey, are entirely subjective. Librarians and faculty, "insignificant" users of library services themselves (faculty 5.9 percent of all users—Table 2), dictate values for the remainder of the user population of over 90 percent. The basis of their judgment: an intuitive sense of the popular versus the esoteric.

The article begins simply enough. The aim of the study was to determine "the relationship between library costs incurred to support research and those incurred to support instruction." A user survey of all users in all units of the libraries was conducted on four separate days—a total of 15,302 survey forms completed. Subsequently, a special user survey was conducted to define "in greater detail that segment of the li-

baries' user population involved primarily in noninstructional activities." Unfortunately, over 40 percent of the users in the sample of 15,302 are excluded arbitrarily from the special user survey. Excluded are undergraduates, non-degree students, other staff and non-Columbia. The assumption seems to be that undergraduates and others work on a superficial basis, i.e., they only study. Graduates, on the other hand, well-adapted as they are to the system, can be relied upon to state positively, "Our work? Well, it's research of course." Indeed the most significant fact about the special user survey is the nonresponse factor of 56 percent.

The literature surveys conclude that over 80 percent of all materials are in support of "Research." Thus, the collection seems overwhelmingly in support of the research activity of groups which number well under 60 percent of the user population. It now appears that library services are going to be further tailored to meet the needs of the research groups. Someone is being short-changed!

Finally, considering the number of instructional-related materials in the collection (less than 20 percent), the undergraduate body of users, comprising more than 25 percent of all library users, can not be faulted and are making good use of that collection. Moreover, the primary effort should be to attract more undergraduates through the acquisition of more relevant materials.

"Yes, but the research funds?"

"Oh, 'tis a pity."

Charles Martell
Doctoral Student
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To the Editor:

Although I found Mr. Holley's paper "Organization and Administration of Urban University Libraries" (*CRL*, May 1972) interesting reading, I would like

to correct a possible false impression. On p. 186 it is indicated that union organization at the University of Chicago library has been "dropped for the present." On the contrary, library unionism is alive and well and living at the University of Chicago library!

Mr. Holley correctly states that the NLRB dismissed the original petition of Local 103—Distributive Workers of America, in the spring of 1971, on the grounds of supervisory participation. In that proceeding the question of who should be deemed a supervisor was not litigated in detail.

Since the dismissal of the original petition a number of events have occurred. The original Local 103 no longer exists, as the presence of professional and nonprofessional staff in the same unit was one of the factors involved in the supervisor problem. There are presently two locals functioning in the library: Local 103A for professionals and Local 103B for nonprofessionals. Local 103A has been involved in representational hearings before the NLRB since the beginning of 1972, and the final determination of the issues will probably determine the limits of the right to organize in private academic libraries. The transcript of the hearings already runs to 1,200 pages, and much more is expected, although the hearings are presently in adjournment pending a decision on an unfair labor practices charge filed against the university. The two key issues being litigated are who is a supervisor and who is a professional within the meaning of the National Labor Relations Act, as amended. It is the contention of the union that the criteria for supervision cannot be applied in the same manner to professional workers in an academic context as they can be applied to industrial workers. In recent cases involving university faculties, such as *Fordham University* and *Adelphi University*, the NLRB has tended to agree with this position, and

we expect that the University of Chicago case will set the standards for librarians. In the meanwhile the union remains very active in the library, and can take credit for a number of policy reforms which have taken place in the library over the last two years. The path of change is never easy, but fundamental changes in the governance of libraries must occur. If more library administrators, wiser than ours have been, recognize that fact the experience may turn out to be considerably less painful.

Patricia S. Coatsworth
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To the Editor:

In his discussion of the formula for collection adequacy devised by Clapp and Jordan,¹ McInnes² fails to define the term "adequacy," as they did. It seems reasonable that such a definition is essential to the development of a formula designed to provide a theoretical measure against which the size of library collections can be judged. I suggest that adequacy should be defined as the capability of the library to respond within a given time to a given percentage of book calls in general, and to given percentages for different types of material (monographs, periodicals, etc.) and different levels of content (introductory, advanced, etc.), immediately. It is apparent that a larger collection will be required to fill 95 percent (say) of book calls immediately, than 80 percent, and that a collection adequate to fulfill the latter requirement will be inadequate to satisfy the former. Trueswell has shown that a general characteristic of inventory in business and industry—about 80 percent of transactions are satisfied from about 20 percent of the items stocked—is also exhibited by libraries.³

In 1971, I undertook partial tests of the Clapp-Jordan formula applied to

the collection at Sir George Williams University,⁴ based on use surveys of social science and humanities monographs and periodicals in hard copy. Although the tests are not conclusive, they are suggestive. Application of the 80/20 rule to a random sample of monographs showed that had 80 percent of the calls been satisfied by 20 percent of the volumes sampled (instead of the 28 percent that did), the sample would have been 40 percent larger. The total real collection of monographs (including science and engineering) was 221,775, and the Clapp-Jordan "collection" was 310,300, for a deficit of 88,525; the collection should therefore, have been 40 percent larger, to meet the limit of adequacy defined by Clapp and Jordan. *For the library concerned*, if the validity of the 80/20 rule is accepted, there is some evidence that the formula is valid for monograph volumes. The test for periodicals was undertaken by considering the title: volume ratio, assuming that it was desirable to satisfy 90 percent of use from volumes not in storage. Application of the 80/20 rule showed that the social sciences and humanities collection should have included 1,315 titles, compared with the 3,100 titles held, and that the total collection should include between 2,000 and 2,500 titles, against the 1,500 required by the Clapp-Jordan formula. Consideration of the title: volume ratio indicated that there should be between 40,000 and 45,000 volumes in the collection, rather than the 32,000 required by the formula, or 50,000 actually held. *For the collection concerned*, there is some evidence that the formula underestimates the number of periodicals by title and volumes required for an adequate collection.

These observations indicate that the validity of the Clapp-Jordan formula and its derivatives could be tested by controlled experiments, in a number of libraries, provided levels of satisfaction are set.^{5, 6} These levels could be: (a) for

undergraduates, 95 percent of book calls satisfied immediately—on the basis that it is generally agreed that universities should provide for their own undergraduate needs without calling on other libraries, save in exceptional cases, and that it is not unreasonable to anticipate that on occasion a student will have to wait for a heavily used volume; (b) for graduates and faculty, 95 percent of calls for basic research materials satisfied immediately, 80 percent of calls for materials related to the specific project satisfied immediately, and 10 percent satisfied within a week.

A factor neither McInnes nor Clapp and Jordan take into account is obsolescence, although McInnes does suggest that some collections are larger than they need be because the institutions regard the preservation of material as a valid function. Numerous studies show that use of volumes declines at a statistically determinable rate (e.g. Brookes⁷), so any formula for adequacy should take this into account, by a "devaluation" factor related to the age of volumes. This factor would vary with the type of material and with the discipline, but an average or weighted average could be developed.

McInnes dismisses as lacking credibility the result of his regression analysis that only nonscience doctoral programmes are significant in determining collection size. My work on the application of the Clapp-Jordan formula to the Sir George Williams University collection indicates that the introduction of doctoral programmes has a very significant effect on the required size of collections.⁸ One would expect this, since it appears likely that collection size is probably more nearly related to programmes offered, and their level, than to the number of individuals involved—whether one or 100 persons are involved, the same titles would be required, and the number of volumes would not be changed significantly. An indication of this is the find-

ing of Clapp and Jordan that the ratio of monograph titles to volumes is about 1:1.2 (the excess of volumes over titles is partly accounted for by multivolume sets, and partly by the provision of multiple copies), and of periodical titles to volumes 1:15. A way of determining the influence of the size of the faculty and student body would be to examine the percentage of titles held, on average, in multiple copy, since the main justification for multiple copies is the need to satisfy coincident demand by two or more individuals.

I suggest, in conclusion, that a viable formula for the determination of an adequate collection for the normal teaching and research activities of an academic library collection should take into account: (a) the level of service desired, in terms of immediate satisfaction of demands for volumes; (b) the rate of obsolescence of volumes; (c) the publication rate of relevant material by level of content and discipline; (d) the need for multiple copies to satisfy coincidental demand for heavily used material.

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