Two apparently mutual irreconcilable concepts characterize rare book librarianship—custodianship and exploitation. The one can be best explained in light of the historical precept of entail; the other, in terms of restrained or responsible utilization, rather than selfish or base utilization. Actually, the congruent factor, common to both concepts, is that of responsibility. It holds them together in an uneasy balance and is what rare book and special collections librarianship is all about. A consideration of some of the problems associated with these two concepts is what Rare Book Librarianship is all about.

For some years now Cave has been associated with the Department of Library Studies at the University of the West Indies, Jamaica. This book, however, is said to be distantly related to a series of unique sources for comprehensive data on the U.S. health care delivery system.

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should be of interest, therefore, to prospective specialists and novices, rather than to experienced practitioners already involved in maintaining the delicate balance between custodianship and exploitation. If nothing else, Cave's Rare Book Librarianship reminds those beyond the pale that even today, in the time of the "now" generation, some of us continue to regard our professional responsibilities as threefold in nature—to the past, to the future, as well as to the present.—John F. Guido, Head of Rare Books, Archives, and Special Collections, State University of New York at Binghamton.


"What do librarians do when they are doing well as librarians?" Out of this general perspective the author conducted a study of beginning librarians in eight University of California libraries to learn about the nature of their work. Among other questions he asked them, "Which of the tasks you are asked to perform on your present job would you define as less than professional?" The survey was conducted in early 1970; the dissertation which grew out of it earned a Ph.D. in 1972; and the book was published in 1975.

Four of the seven chapters report that survey; the other three are an attempt to place the study in a larger historical perspective. The canvassing results are interesting though hardly surprising; the larger perspective is very surprising though not terribly interesting.

The larger perspective is, in fact, nothing else than a review of the literature concerned with library professionalism. The weakness in this, of course, is that one faces the very real possibility of capturing a somewhat limited view of the real library world. What would happen years from now, for instance, if someone attempted such a perspective on university library administration largely based on all the articles on this subject by library science faculty?

I have other criticisms of the work. For one, the author has on too many occasions proffered conclusions which are wider than the premises established in the survey. What is true of beginners is not necessarily or even often true of seasoned veterans. Neither can one conclude that the computer is not playing a significant role in the professional work at the University of California libraries just because it is not significantly part of the beginner's role (page 66).

For another, in dealing with a definition of professionalism, he spotlights the sociologist's criterion of a body of knowledge in any valid profession. The author asserts that the only valid body of knowledge which would fulfill the definition of professional for librarians is that which a subject specialist would have.

The book has value in its limited area of concern, viz., the types of functions which beginning librarians are allowed to perform. It raises serious questions for those beginners, their supervisors, and administrators, just as it does for library educators. The author suggests that the beginner's inaugural period be clearly established as an

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