

Letters

The Undergraduate Library

To the Editor:

It was in order to meet the criticisms of the traditional undergraduate library that Mr. Wingate is making now (Jan. 1978 *C&RL*) that Yale designed an intensive use facility, the Cross Campus Library (CCL), which has been operating with notable success since January 25, 1971. It is unfortunate that Mr. Wingate did not delve more carefully into the distinctions which are quite apparent between the design and operation of CCL and those undergraduate libraries he is considering.

The term "intensive use collection" bears more attention than Mr. Wingate admits. Cross Campus Library is not "based on the same tenets," nor does it "serve the same purposes" as the traditional undergraduate library. By operating an intensive use library intended to fulfill the requirements of the entire Yale community, the Yale library has recognized that undergraduates may not be so "homogeneous" that they require separately oriented library services and book selection criteria. The Sterling Memorial Library (SML) intentionally centralizes services which the undergraduate cannot do without: reference, newspapers, microtexts, serials, and the union catalog for Yale's forty libraries and collections. It is precisely this organization of the main collections which distinguishes Cross Campus Library from an undergraduate library.

An intensive use library avoids the two problems which Mr. Wingate highlights. Book selection is made both as a result of faculty recommendations for undergraduate and graduate courses and on the judgment of three librarians who assess books on the basis of anticipated use, rather than on the intellectual or scholastic level of the user.

Except in rare cases, editions of books held in the Cross Campus Library are not duplicated in Sterling. An SML book needed for reserve is transferred permanently into the Cross Campus collection.

Multiple copies are purchased for CCL in response to increased use of copies already held. A book no longer receiving intensive use is transferred to SML to be held there for research purposes.

Duplication of circulation staff is unavoidable in a separately housed facility. Space limitations in the main library may, however, only be resolved by building anew. Inconvenience in Yale's case has been minimized by a tunnel connection between the two buildings allowing a one-minute walk from CCL to all of the services and resources of Sterling. Costly duplication of reference service and bibliographic instruction is avoided by centralizing these services in Sterling; only "ready reference" is available in CCL.

User statistics bear out the distinction between CCL and a traditional undergraduate library: of the 736 books charged the day of this writing (a typical mid-semester day), 46 percent went to undergraduates, 35 percent to graduate students, 8 percent to faculty, and the remainder to other borrowers. These figures do not include either overnight or closed reserve charges. Furthermore, use of CCL books in all circulation statuses has increased steadily over the seven years of operation.

The concept of intensive use allows CCL another benefit which Mr. Wingate's article did not address: a flexible, and, I feel, unique approach to reserve books. The intensive use character of the entire collection permits CCL to consider all 125,000 volumes to be on "2-week reserve" (the longest circulation period). In response to course needs, 40,964 books were on overnight reserve and 2,645 books (few of which were CCL's) and 7,454 pamphlets were on closed reserve in 1976-77. No moving of materials was required, and no additional circulation stations are provided, keeping the budget oriented toward collection development, not toward maintaining cumbersome reserve operations.

Finally, the name "Cross Campus Li-

brary" was not chosen, as Mr. Wingate implies, to avoid the term "undergraduate library." The facility is located underground, beneath the grassy quadrangle on the Yale campus named the Cross Campus.

It is hoped the above information will help readers place Mr. Wingate's remarks in some perspective.—*Susan E. Crockford, Senior Public Services Librarian, Cross Campus Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.*

Adequacy of University Libraries

To the Editor:

I believe Michael Moran has done a disservice to the profession of academic librarianship by giving budget administrators ammunition for slashing appropriations because standards aren't certain enough for him (*C&RL*, March 1978). Aristotle's admonition should be understood in its dynamic sense: as subject matter allows, more certainty must be sought.

We have just had a decade or more of educational malpractice by teachers who refuse to measure educational quality; he is suggesting library malpractice by refusing to recognize standards though finally admitting that comparisons are honest.

A professional should never make the pusillanimous concession: "If the library is not given the resources it would like, it should be taken as the educational decision of the university." Universities are complex and political enough to act against their own educational principles if professional librarians don't defend their standards. By American standards, a four-year liberal arts college library serving one thousand students is pretty certain to be inadequate if it has less than fifty thousand volumes, regardless of their quality. Likewise, most professionals would agree on the adequacy of some of the finer collections. Between such extremes, the same collection's adequacy or inadequacy may depend on whether you are a faculty member proposing a new course or a reference librarian trying to help the twelfth student with the same term paper topic. I might consider my library adequate at the catalog but inadequate on the shelves, due to security and overdue deficiencies.

The adequate-inadequate designation is as inadequate itself as pass-fail and as much in need of specifications, which a professional must be able to provide.

The subject matter of librarianship allows certainty to about the same degree as other social sciences, which are changing in response to statistical study through electronic data processing. We are going to know which books most libraries order and which books students use, among other facts, in the age to come.

We need less of these philosophical treatises and more good solid data to advance our science. Where would civilization be if all measurement were abandoned from lack of certainty?—*William A. Garrabrant, Science Librarian, Savitz Learning Resource Center, Glassboro State College, Glassboro, New Jersey.*

Response

To the Editor:

My paper describes the present state of affairs, not the dreamy future in which all human pursuits become measurable and the computer solves all. Maybe that day will come. In the meantime Mr. Garrabrant fails to tell us exactly when the library is adequate. He is "pretty certain" that 50,000 volumes makes a college library adequate. Why the "pretty"? Does it or not? If it does will he refuse further budget appropriations? Or will he, like Voigt, switch the issue to current acquisitions?

His description of different views of adequacy in the same collection actually argues for, not against, the point of my paper. Come on, Mr. Garrabrant, the profession is still waiting. Use whatever technology you wish. Just tell us: *when is a library adequate?*—*Michael Moran.*

To the Editor:

According to Michael Moran in his essay, "The Concept of Adequacy in University Libraries" (*C&RL*, March 1978), it is not possible "meaningfully" to apply this idea to a university library collection. By such a statement he means that the adequacy of a collection, although seemingly a quantitative matter, is not in fact subject to measurement, and this for the simple reason that the library's actual contribution to education

is undefined and, if it could be defined, immeasurable. However, he recognizes that, despite the theoretical invalidity of the concept of adequacy, some kind of practical use of the term is both helpful and necessary, principally in regard to budgetary allocations.

The merits of this article, I think, outweigh its defects. I would agree with the author that adequacy is primarily a practical concept and not a "scientific" one, but this by no means suggests that it cannot be applied "meaningfully" to a university collection. Not all "meaningful" statements are the result of measurement, as Moran's article itself bears evident witness. Questions of adequacy are eminently practical questions, i.e., questions whose locus of meaning is the concrete, individual case involved. In actual practice it is very possible "meaningfully" and objectively to declare that a collection of books in one respect or another is inadequate for a particular purpose, but Moran seems to be quite right in remarking that the source of such "meaningful" judgments can never be found in standards or models whose "fundamental flaw," as he puts it, is their abstractness and universality.

If universal standards, then, are not the ground for determining adequacy, what is? Answer: the mature and professional judgment of the collection development librarian. It is disappointing that the author just mentions this fact without stressing it. My own suspicion is that for most university libraries adequacy is dependent upon careful book selection, whether by teachers or librarians, and not upon any formula regarding budgetary percentages, enrollments, the size of the collection, or the rate of growth. In collection development, as in all practical affairs, the crying need is always for the insight and judgment of the competent man, and the implications of this for university libraries should not remain without emphasis.—*Paul Schuchman, Catalog Librarian, St. John's University, Jamaica, New York.*

Response

To the Editor:

It is true that not all meaningful state-

ments are the result of measurement, but all meaningful *quantitative* statements ("This library is adequate") must be the result of some kind of numeration or measurement. Mr. Schuchman's collection development librarian declares that a particular collection is adequate. What is the basis for such a statement? Why is it more valid than the ACRL standard? We are all perfectly justified in considering both pronouncements as "blowing in the wind."—*Michael Moran.*

The Periodicals Collection

To the Editor:

With fewer dollars available to libraries, the elimination of unnecessary subscriptions becomes an increasingly important decision in the proper allocation of funds within a library budget. Bolgiano and King's method (*C&RL*, March 1978) illustrates some of the problems in selecting titles for elimination.

Their periodical "profile" consists of four parts. Initially, titles were examined to determine their accessibility through indexes and abstracts or their placement on bibliographies of recommended titles. Positive results in this kind of test will not necessarily be indicative of future use and certainly do not reflect local patterns of use. They next requested faculty members to access the value of currently received titles. Such a method may be valuable in getting a group of primary users involved in library activities, but reliance on this method would make your periodical collection reflect the idiosyncrasies of faculty members.

Their third phase was analysis of interlibrary loan statistics to determine if any titles needed to be added. Close examination of loan records is a necessity, especially with the recent copyright law. Finally, the journal citations of an unknown number of master's theses were examined to determine the availability of materials needed by "research"-oriented users. The theses were for the most part from only three departments, so one must wonder how indicative they were of total use of the library.

Only these last two categories measure directly the use of the periodical collection. Of the many tools available to the librarian, direct measurement is the most accurate

way to evaluate the usefulness of the collection to library patrons.

The enormous effort expended in a study of this type might be better put to a periodic sampling of journal usage within the library as previously discussed by a number of authors, as shown in such contributions as:

B. C. Brookes, "Optimum P% Library of Scientific Periodicals," *Nature* 232:458-61 (Aug. 13, 1971).

William Goffman, "Bradford's Law and Library Acquisition," *Nature* 226:922-23 (June 6, 1970).

E. F. Hockings, "Selection of Scientific Periodicals in an Industrial Research Library," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 25:131-32, (March-April 1974).

D. H. Kraft, "A Journal Selection Model and its Implications for a Library System," *Information Storage and Retrieval* 9:1-11 (1973).—Jeffrey M. Garvey, *Librarian, Mercy Hospital, Watertown, New York.*

Response

To the Editor:

Mr. Garvey makes several valid points which should be considered by anyone designing a study geared toward decreasing the total number of periodical titles received. Most of these points have been ad-

ressed in the body of the article. The selection of titles for cancellation was neither the final nor the only goal of our study, and therefore direct use of the collection was not the only kind of measurement necessary for our purpose. We were attempting to regain an overall picture of our collection after a period of very rapid growth so that limited future monies might be rationally directed toward identified weak areas, and consequently were interested in several other characteristics of the collection besides direct use. One result of our study was the cancellation of some subscriptions; another was a clearer understanding of the scope, accessibility, and limitations of our collection in relation to the academic programs of our institution. Hopefully this kind of understanding will contribute to better collection development decisions in the future.—Christina E. Bologiano and Mary Kathryn King.

Editor's Note:

Interest and concern for the library's periodicals collection—the use journals receive and the composition of the collection—are shown in the number of manuscripts on that subject submitted to C&RL. From them we select those which, in our judgment, can help in a better understanding of the subject. In this issue we include a new statement on the subject in the article by Carol A. Johnson and Richard W. Trueswell.