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Current Trends in Public Libraries

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Introduction

HERBERT GOLDHOR

The purpose of this introduction is to justify publication of the papers which follow. There are at least three main reasons that such attempts to review the status and assess the trends in public library development are needed often and soon, even on the heels of the Public Library Inquiry. These are the necessity for flexibility in the face of changing social trends, the importance of a clear statement of goals and objectives, and the values potential in a program of research.

Cultural lag on the part of any institution is inevitable. The best we can do is to minimize the gap between the demand and the response; the worst contingency is that the institution will become ineffectual and in time disappear. The hallmark of our western industrial civilization is change, often rapid and overwhelming. The magnitude of the technological developments of the last fifty years staggers the imagination, and there is good reason to think that we are on the threshold of even more sweeping inventions and discoveries. These movements in themselves constitute a challenge to the library, but even more is that true of the patterns of behavior they produce. It is hard to think of any social institution which has remained static in the face of the volume and rapidity of such alterations in the last several decades, and certainly the public library has not.

Looking backward we can see occasions on which the rejoinder to new social trends was made early and successfully; but when we confront the problems of our own age, there is uncertainty both as to the nature and probable duration of various social changes, and even more doubt as to the correct course to follow. The result is that an institution often operates according to social conditions once relevant but progressively less so. To minimize this lag requires persistent effort,

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both to correct earlier views and to report new changes. There are various ways to do this job; President Hoover’s Commission on Recent Social Trends represented one way, and the Public Library Inquiry used another. This journal uses yet a third method, that of summarized and evaluative reports by qualified librarians of what is being said and done in their profession. In effect this is the method of pooled judgment, with critical remarks by an observer. One cannot read the papers that follow without getting a sense of the social changes librarians have noticed, and a review of the adaptations they are making in response. To spread this information may help to spur advance on the part of other public libraries.

A second main purpose it is hoped these papers will serve is to throw light on the goals and objectives of the public library. A clear statement of such aims is important because, correctly framed, they may be the fountainhead of policies and hence a guide to procedures and operations; they may determine the organizational framework of the institution; and, by definition, they alone can provide the criteria for measurement or evaluation. And in order to serve they must be expressed in clear, precise, and specific terms; they must be of such nature that attainment can be measured against them; they must be practical in the sense of being achievable, rather than utopian; they must deal with important aspects of the effort of libraries; and they must aggregate a unitary whole, and not remain a set of disparate items.

It takes little study to realize that public librarians have not thought through their purposes in these terms. As a result there is diffusion of aim, so that justification can be found for almost any activity; and often there is frustration, as a consequence of attempts to achieve status as an educational agency. It perhaps is little wonder therefore that such formal goals as have been defined are given lip-service but no consistent role to play in deciding library policies, in influencing structure, or in measuring. As opposed to possible formal and ultimate objectives, every library improvises for itself a set of actual goals as a result of each decision and each change in organization. The Public Library Inquiry brought out the nature of these de facto aims through an analysis of concrete operations. It made evident that if goals are not fashioned so as to determine policies, then day-by-day pursuit of policies will produce in effect the institution’s real designs, however incomplete or contradictory.
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What more than anything else makes objectives useful and viable is their phrasing in terms of expected alterations in the behavior of people. Thus and thus alone can they serve as measuring sticks; and without gauging of movement toward an end we can but drift on the sea of subjective judgment. But to strive for changes in human behavior in such broad areas as education, information, and recreation is to attempt what is far beyond our presently available resources and skills. Several of the papers in the present compilation relate to the purposes of public libraries, and such summaries of thinking and action in the field should help in appraising from time to time the current progress, beside reporting the methods being used.

It is natural that the library's goals may indicate much as to what social trends are relevant, and as to what responses or adjustments are most appropriate. It is equally clear that in striving to achieve designated aims, various avenues are open. The creation of new methods, and the correct choice of available ones, can be aided by thoughtful consideration in advance, by trial and error, and by research and experimentation. Of these, the last has been the most neglected in librarianship. Research here is thought of in its strict sense, embodying careful formulation of a hypothesis, and the devising of rigid tests of its accuracy; systematic collection of evidence; and continuous awareness of the difference between causality and correlation.

The papers following, and indeed the whole conception of Library Trends, contribute to facilitating the use of the research method, because one of the first steps in scientific investigation is to survey all relevant literature, knowledge, and experience. And that is essentially what has been attempted here. Some authors, in addition, have pointed out the problem areas most in need of attention, and indicated the most promising approaches to them. The papers have striven mainly to present a record of what has been and is, but it is to be hoped that the summary will also lighten the burden of those seeking new information through research.

There are great difficulties in the path of such investigators, but there are equally great potential rewards. The successes in the physical sciences and in the social sciences generally should encourage us to apply investigational techniques to our problems. Every paper in this collection deals with an area in need of study; and the research needed not only is greater in amount than can possibly be done at library schools, but in many cases lends itself more to treatment by practi
tioners and in the field than by students. If the public library is to be an effective agency, those directing it must be conscious continually of the major modifications in the society it serves. Such changes may be sorted out in the light of the institution's goals, and the evaluation of progress made is best done by the research method. These are the reasons the present collection of papers on current trends among public libraries is offered to the profession.
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of Public Libraries

MARIAN McFADDEN

A review of the literature of the past twenty years on the aims of the public library leads one to awareness of the truth of the adage, “There is nothing new under the sun.” Sometimes one idea is at work in a glare of light while another rests for awhile in the shade (perhaps changing costume) but the main theories, ideas, problems, and even accomplishments have altered only to a minor degree.

Shera, in a recent article, discussing the value of library history and mentioning Johnson’s The Public Library—A People’s University, says: “No one reflected that the very arguments advanced by Johnson, which then seemed so convincing, were almost identical with those employed a century earlier by Henry Barnard, Horace Mann, and others seeking to promote an incipient public library movement . . . but the popular faith in the self-education of the adult still persists, and if there has been disillusionment concerning the efficacy of ‘reading with a purpose’ and the generosity of Andrew Carnegie, faith has found restoration in the ‘American heritage’ and the benevolence of Henry Ford.”

If basic ideas in the public library field have not changed much in the last twenty years, they have at least been strong enough to survive in a world of changing forces, and mostly without benefit of Henry Ford. Twenty years ago there was a great economic depression; ten years ago civilization was locked in terrific battle; today it lives in the midst of a hot-cold war.

During these several periods alert librarians could not be accused of unawareness of what was going on. Library literature reflects a dutiful shift of attention whenever necessary. During the depression, books and articles were written on the woeful state of finances, unemployment among librarians (several went so far as to predict that, due

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to the lower birth rate, fewer children's librarians would be needed in the future), worn-out book stock, and unprecedented demand of the public for recreational reading.

Retooling for defense became the watchword in 1940, reflecting the need for acquiring technical materials to help the workingman recapture skills lost during the jobless years. Soaring costs caused continued financial worries. The employment situation shifted from an oversupply to a lack of professional and clerical workers, and the high circulation figures of the depression period came tumbling down. These trends continued through the war, and are doing so today.

The war years themselves showed the library’s interest in civilian defense and various programs geared to obtaining victory. At the same time the American Library Association, looking to the future, created a Committee on Post-War Planning, which produced a set of public library standards and concluded with the volume, A National Plan for Public Library Service. “This book,” Carl H. Milam said in the foreword, “can change the course of the Public Library Movement in North America. In particular, it can hasten the day when there will be no millions without good local public library service.”

The report of the Public Library Inquiry, its seven volumes appearing in the years 1949 to 1952 under the direction of R. D. Leigh, furnished a summary of past failures and successes, gave impetus to continued planning for action, and provided some publicity for the state of libraries in the country. For instance, it stimulated such articles as “What’s Wrong with Our Public Libraries.” Despite the furor with which it was received in some library circles, however, it did not present too much that was new; it merely placed a mirror before the public library and made clear the facts revealed in the survey.

It is curious and sometimes refreshing to look back on the last twenty years and find that some of the problems that plague the library today have been modified little, if any, during the two decades. There is always a lack of enough funds to carry out projects, as is probably true of most tax-supported institutions; and even though relief may come by consolidation into large units of service, there is little reason to believe that libraries will be affluent, even in the distant future.

During the depression there were more librarians than could be employed on curtailed budgets, but we seem to have passed from a period of too much help to too little, as have other professions. Even in the 1930’s there was much discussion in regard to separating professional
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and nonprofessional tasks in order better to utilize staff energies. During the same years and continuing to the present time, more and more mechanical equipment has entered the library and been fitted to its peculiar needs. If one dared predict a trend for the future, it might be that personnel requirements would call for a higher percentage of professional librarians, with fewer and more skilled clerks operating the machines.

Certainly if the public library is to move nearer to its objectives as set down from the beginning up to the Leigh report, there will be more and more need for trained librarians, and highly specialized ones at that. Bryan in The Public Librarian summarizes the desirable qualifications as follows: “1) The librarian should be comparable in intellectual caliber, education, and personal qualifications with other social and educational leaders. . . . 2) He should be qualified, both in understanding and in personality to integrate the library with other community activities. . . . 3) He should have not only a broad intellectual equipment but also specialized knowledge in chosen fields.” Surely the search for such personnel will tax the budget and the ingenuity of the profession for a long time to come.

Censorship seems to be a problem peculiar to the confused thinking of the era in which we are now living. But is it? A letter written by a librarian answering a complaint about a volume including obscene language found in a branch collection contained the following:

Certain books are sure to be under fire. If the Library has them, it is criticised because they are objectionable. If the Library does not have them, it is criticised for its censorship.

In dealing with this problem the Library makes a distinction between Central and branches. The branch libraries are relatively small popular collections, where all books are on open shelves to which everyone has free access. In selecting books for them a more rigid standard is observed. . . . [At the Central Library] the size of the book collection and the nature of the service require a different arrangement. There we feel freer to place books of all kinds, including some about which people may differ strongly but which they may rightly expect to find in the public library of a city. . . .

That was not the librarian of Detroit, Michigan, speaking in 1951. It was the librarian of Rochester, New York, writing in 1930. There is no indication, at least in print, that those remarks aroused a tempest in 1930.
In 1939, at the American Library Association Conference in San Francisco, a Library Bill of Rights was approved by the Council. The Bill was expanded in 1948, but the essential spirit was in the 1939 statement. The Bill of Rights has been a guide and a help to librarians. From it and within its spirit, all libraries can prepare statements geared to their own communities, which, at the same time, will give them some kind of a safeguard in those communities. It does not and cannot provide a clear distinction between book selection and censorship. With the ever-increasing mass of printed material pouring off the presses, the problem of selection itself grows greater and the conscientious librarian, sincerely wishing to present all sides of an issue and remain liberal in his viewpoint, has a hard time with his choices and his budget.

It would seem that, in the last analysis, the problems of censorship and book selection are neither new nor entirely soluble. The best hope lies in competent librarians, alert to the real needs of their own communities, courageous in their convictions, able to deal with each problem as it arises, and willing to assume responsibility for their decisions. One of the outstanding instances in which a library comes to grips with this problem appears in the 1950 statement of policy for book selection at the Enoch Pratt Free Library.

The reports of the Public Library Inquiry, especially Berelson's *The Library's Public*, caused a stir even greater than Ulveling's statement on book selection policies. Actually most of the discussion revolved around another old problem, i.e., what the people want versus the educational objective of the public library. Alvin Johnson had spoken on this in 1938, and he had carried forward the basic ideas expressed by Learned several years previously. Johnson even went so far as to suggest that libraries would probably have to get out books of their own to do the right kind of a job in adult education.

To show further that the idea of relinquishing some recreational ephemera in order to assume a more educational role was not new in 1949, here are a few quotations, picked almost at random from the literature on the subject. In 1934 Samuel H. Ranck, forecasting library service twenty years ahead, said, "First of all I am a confirmed optimist, to the extent that I believe that in the long run libraries and education generally will be financed in accordance with the extent to which the public feels that it is getting service of permanent value from these institutions; in other words, the libraries of 1954 are going
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to stress more than ever the things of permanent value to society, collectively and individually, simply because they will be obliged to in order to get adequate financial support.”

Carl Roden, in 1939, describing the library of tomorrow stated, “Standards for the book collection in the library of tomorrow will, it is predicted, place greater emphasis upon its educational function.” Also in 1939 A. J. Nock, in an article entitled “America’s Too-Public Libraries,” said, “Still less do I see why it [the public library] should stock the current best-sellers or any of the ephemeral stuff which our presses turn off in quantity, and which is of no conceivable value to anybody, except as a pastime. Aside from the book-clubs, which do a pretty good business in that sort of literature, we have no end of circulating libraries which furnish ephemera at a very cheap rate, not much more than it is worth. If a person wants something to read merely to waste his time, I cannot see why he should have it at public expense.” And in reply H. M. Lydenberg said that libraries were coming to some of the things Nock said they should be recognizing.

Libraries in general seem not to have traveled very far along this path by the time the Berelson report was published. Certainly it highlighted the problem and, if it did nothing else, led to discussion among the rank and file of librarians as to what the educational ends of the library should be. Still, to a great number of people working in public libraries today, the one purpose is to give “the people what they want.” On the surface this might seem to be the most noble aim of all, but unfortunately it is usually interpreted to mean the ephemera which Nock and many librarians decry. There is no indication that the Berelson report will bring a change of policy in many libraries, or even that this could be achieved by a study to ascertain what the library can best do to help its community. Nevertheless the shock has been healthy, and if repeated enough times will certainly have some effect. Here again, however, as in the problems of censorship and book selection, it will take more well-trained librarians, specialists in many fields, to swing the library into full action in the adult education area, which includes worth-while recreational reading.

During the last twenty years, many public libraries have definitely expanded beyond the idea that books alone were the medium with which they were concerned. Audio-visual materials, recordings, and other communication and educational media have become a part of today’s library collections, and this by no means is confined to the
larger cities. Yet, in themselves, such items are of little use unless well chosen and well used by librarians trained to select and handle them. In the end, they only make the problem of book selection—or materials selection—more difficult. Microfilm, microcards, and whatever other devices the future may hold, do and will enrich the library’s collection, saving it cost and space. Yet even they will not produce a basic change, at least for a long time to come. H. M. Lydenberg, after describing various mechanical devices which may be possible in the future, writes, “Back of the book is the spirit of the man with the message, the spirit of the reader hungry to see or hear it. That spirit has been with us long enough to make us sure that no matter whether we know what books will look like three hundred years from now, no matter whether we know how they will be shelved or read or used, we are sure that books in some form will play as important a part in the intellectual and cultural life of the community then as they do now, as they have done for the past three hundred years. And the librarian will play as important and as responsible a part in their interpretation as he has for the past three hundred years.”

Thus, some of the problems that have plagued libraries during the long past will probably continue to worry them in the long future. Primarily they seem to center in finance, book or material selection, and adequate personnel—the basic needs of any library. To a great extent the two last mentioned are dependent upon the first. This does not reduce all library problems to dollars and cents, but it does indicate the great need for stronger financial foundations. As regards advance, the situation is not hopeless. Stronger public libraries, built through expansion of areas of service and consolidation of small units, offer a partial solution. True expansion of a new idea and unifying of entrenched community ideas are slow processes, not alone in the case of libraries. Nevertheless, too much progress has been made by the public library to lead one to believe that there will be retreat in the foreseeable future; but even if it moves forward rapidly, the problems of finance, selection, and personnel will still exist and be written about. They can present a challenge for a long time to come.

If the problems of the public library and the search for its proper functions have changed little in the past, what of its over-all objectives? Have they altered, as so much in the world at large has moved, from old ways to new?

In the summary volume of the Public Library Inquiry, The Public
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Library in the United States, a list of purposes is cited, based on those proposed by the Post-War Planning Committee and approved by a group of librarians with only minor dissent. These include assembling, preserving, and administering books and related educational materials in organized collections; serving the community as a general center of reliable information; and providing an opportunity for all people to educate themselves continuously. Regarding them Leigh says:

Setting this current statement of public library objectives alongside the librarian’s historic faith reveals a strong family resemblance between the two. The individual and social values which derive from a reading of books is central to both. But in the newer statement of objectives there are significant extensions of the traditional definition of purpose. The public library’s function is explicitly broadened to include other materials of communication, including non-print materials. Perhaps more important, the faith in the mere presence of a community book collection as a power to change people’s ideas, attitudes, and tastes is now transformed into a positive program for libraries to guide, stimulate, and promote public use of public library materials for educational ends.

From the time of Melvil Dewey to the publication of the Leigh report, purposes have been stated and elaborated over and over again. Though many of the public libraries that dot the land have stumbled only slightly in the right direction, certainly the future will find a greater acceptance of the true functions of the tax-supported public library. Expansion and strengthening of service, whether begun with aid from the federal government or at the grass roots, constitute too strong a movement to be completely stopped. The public library is moving forward, though it still has a long way to go.

If trends seem to have altered little through the years, this does not mean that the library is a static institution. The explanation is simply that the original objectives were so large and distant that they call for dynamic action over an extended period.

Arthur Bostwick said something two decades ago which stands unchallenged today and can furnish an excellent credo for the future. “The library in a changing world is . . . , and will continue to be, a changing library, but no matter what happens to it, it will continue to be a collection of books and other forms of recorded thought, which it makes available in the highest possible degree not only to those who
desire to use it, but to those who need it and have not yet become awakened to that need."

References

19. Ibid., p. 19.
Adult Education and the Public Library

C. WALTER STONE

The role of the public library in tomorrow's adult education is not yet determined. Much has been tried in the past. New goals are now being formulated. Existing programs have been inventoried and something is known about them, such as who participates, and why. Virtually nothing objective is known about the effects of library service in adult education, however, and new tools of measurement are being sought. The author believes that two prime keys to the future educational importance of the public library as a social institution will be found in development of its functions in program planning and community research. It is assumed that these will supplement established service to the individual and the library's own programs of discussion and informal study.

It is the purpose of this paper to identify some of the trends in public library thinking which have determined the library's place in adult education, and to weigh their importance. While such education as promoted by libraries has spread widely during recent years, establishing a considerable diversity of projects and programs, ideas representing the most significant trends observable in 1952 are not new. They do, however, give eloquent testimony to a quarter century of work by pioneers. Cultural lag has been all too evident in the struggle to obtain general acceptance among librarians of the library's responsibilities for adult education. Perhaps the most remarkable fact has been that so much good work was actually done for so long by so few with so little support. The modest but encouraging gains of recent years are a tribute to foundation money and to the vision, persistence, and continuing service of a small group of individuals working both in and out of the library profession. One of the most indefatigable and articulate of these pioneers is Miriam D. Tompkins, who set up

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in Milwaukee in 1923 the first adult education department so identified in a public library, and who, a quarter of a century later, in 1950, was helping to write the Unesco pamphlet *Adult Education Activities for Public Libraries.*

Despite the fact that the public library as an institution was consciously established in the United States as an instrument of adult education, the earlier European traditions of custodianship are still honored in practice, although with decreasing reverence. Noting early pleas for development of public library services in New England and the underlying idea of a general community institute, which prompted so many of the earliest Carnegie grants for establishment of public libraries, it is difficult to understand why more attention has not always been given the educational work of librarians. The concept, if not the term “adult education,” was enunciated as the prime responsibility of the public library as early as 1850, and was clearly implied by Melvil Dewey in 1876. Justifying librarianship as a profession in the first issue of the *American Library Journal,* Dewey wrote: “We hold that there is no work reaching farther in its influence and deserving more honor than the work which a competent and earnest librarian can do for his community. The time was when a library was very like a museum, and a librarian was a mouser in musty books, and visitors looked with curious eyes at ancient tomes and manuscripts. The time is when a library is a school, and the librarian is in the highest sense a teacher. . . .”

The educational needs of the urban wage earner and his family were the main spur to development of free public libraries in nineteenth-century America. But as libraries increased in number and reading publics grew, problems of a technical nature began to absorb the time and attention of librarians. What had begun as a relatively informal and personalized service became increasingly mechanical and impersonal. It finally required philanthropy to put librarians back on the track.

In a very real sense, adult education and adult education in the library, as well as initial support of the library movement itself, are products of philanthropy. Without slighting the prior role of chautauquas, lyceums, women’s clubs, Americanization programs, and business and labor organizations in crystallizing the adult education movement, it may be that a small grant of two thousand dollars by the Carnegie Corporation in 1924, for publication of William Learned’s
memorandum to the president of the Corporation on problems of the public library, marked the real beginning of organized library adult education in this country. One result of Learned's work was that in July of 1924 the American Library Association appointed a Commission on the Library and Adult Education. Funds provided by the Carnegie Corporation in the amount of $24,500 made it possible for the commission to conduct special studies and investigations, hold frequent meetings, publish several bulletins containing some of its preliminary findings, and, in 1926, print an extensive two-year survey of Libraries and Adult Education.7

During 1924–25, the Carnegie Corporation also carried through a program of exploratory study to determine whether there was sufficient commonality of interests and activities on which to base the establishment of a national adult education association comparable to that which had flourished in England. After a series of regional meetings endorsing the proposal, delegates assembled in Chicago in 1926 to form the American Association for Adult Education.8

In all, the Carnegie Corporation gave some sixty thousand dollars specifically for development of the idea of adult education in libraries in the decade following 1924.9 Nor is this all, since it does not take into account large grants made to the American Library Association for general purposes, some of which went for the activities under discussion. The dates of other grants given by several foundations could well be cited as charting the subsequent history of the adult education movement in America. Certainly, the advent of the Ford Foundation in 1950, which spent more than three million dollars on adult education in its first six months, has breathed new life into all adult education, including library programs.

The importance of Learned's study in 1921–23 cannot be overemphasized. Considered controversial because of the weight given to education, it continues to be regarded as the single most thought-provoking blueprint for future development of the American public library. Many of its challenges are still unmet. Following what seemed to him the logical thread of Andrew Carnegie's dream, Learned set forth a concept of the public library as a "community intelligence center," by which a system of regional cooperation and special emphasis on personalized service would bring into focus the available cultural and informational resources. Films, recordings, museum exhibits, lectures and forums, road maps, and art works would all be
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included, and Learned found it difficult to believe that any town supporting a good high school would not eventually make corresponding provision for its adult population.

Librarians responded to the first challenges of the newly organized adult education movement by setting up reader’s advisory bureaus, forerunners of many adult education and community service departments in libraries where departmentalization rather than diffusion of adult education responsibility has since prevailed. Between 1922 and 1926, reader’s bureaus and adult education services were instituted in the public libraries of Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, and Portland (Oregon).10 By 1935, there were sixty-three professional reader’s advisers at work in forty-four libraries.11 Their main functions were preparation of reading courses and study outlines for individuals, assistance to teachers and students, and cooperation with discussion groups. Many of them placed heavy reliance upon the Reading with a Purpose series of guides to readable books, when these became available.12 Commencing in 1925, such guides were issued by the American Library Association, at the rate of one a month, and were continued for approximately ten years. Then, for reasons not clear to the author, since the project sold over 850,000 guides and became self-supporting in five years, the series was dropped.

While Learned’s arguments did receive considerable attention and stirred up much interest at the time of publication, librarians built up their initial programs of educational services along the lines of the more conservative recommendations given in 1926 by the Commission on the Library and Adult Education. In summary, the commission was of the opinion that the public library should lay most stress upon service to the individual, and should concentrate its attention upon serving the adult education programs of other groups rather than sponsoring “library’s own” programs.13 These recommendations not only reflected the character of most adult education activity among librarians at the time, but fixed the nature of such work for many years to come.

In 1927, its survey function having been accomplished, the commission was dissolved and a Board on the Library and Adult Education was created by A.L.A. to continue the studies inaugurated by the commission and to provide information and an advisory service for librarians interested in developing their educational work. In addition to continuing bimonthly publication of Adult Education and the
Library, the new Board stressed the need for production of readable books, and urged librarians to work for the broadest possible extension and coordination of educational services for adults. Renamed the Adult Education Board in 1937, it offered continuing inspiration, advice, and leadership under the general guidance of John Chancellor, specialist in adult education for the American Library Association until his resignation in 1941.

One other event of the twenties should be mentioned. During much of its early growth, adult education was plagued by the popular belief that adults could not learn. It was held generally that after one reached legal majority he was virtually uneducable. Certain of the falsity of this premise, leaders in the field of adult education persuaded Edward L. Thorndike, with the aid of a grant from the Carnegie Corporation, to direct a series of experiments to determine the characteristics and potentialities of adult learning. The results of two years of research were published in 1928 under the title, *Adult Learning*, and scientific evidence was at last offered to show that older men and women could acquire new knowledge and skills if they so desired.

All told, the beginnings of adult education were auspicious and boded well for the future. Many librarians were active participants. Reviewing a ten-year period, in 1935 Morse A. Cartwright, Executive Director of the American Association for Adult Education, wrote that the history of adult education in the library had kept pace precisely with the history of the adult education movement itself. "Evidence abounds that the more forward-looking of the librarians are seeing their opportunity and seizing it. It is not too much to say that the library, with informality as its keynote, is the most potent single force for adult education in America today." However, it should not be thought that this point of view was uncontested or even represented a professional majority. In 1933 the president of the American Library Association wrote: "... if we library workers view ourselves and our work in proper perspective, we must realize that we are not educators but rather the caretakers of important instruments of education." 16 To propose carrying library service very far beyond provision of reader's advisers, maintaining a calendar of adult education opportunities, and supplying books for adult educational uses, was to challenge a conception of the library's function which is still cherished warmly by many in the profession. 17

More than two hundred articles and several books on libraries and
adult education were published during the thirties, giving general surveys of thinking and action in the field. In 1935, the Macmillan Company issued Cartwright's *Ten Years of Adult Education*,18 a report on progress of the movement seen through the eyes of a leading figure in the field. *Adult Education in Action*,19 a collection of articles which with one exception had previously appeared in the *Journal of Adult Education*, and a *Handbook of Adult Education in the United States*,20 reviewing a cross section of adult education activity, were both issued by the American Association for Adult Education in 1936. A previous edition of the *Handbook* had appeared in 1934. *The Role of the Library in Adult Education*,21 papers presented before the Library Institute at the University of Chicago in 1937, together with Lyman Bryson's *Adult Education* 22 and *Helping Adults to Learn*,23 the latter a general survey of the public library in action done in the manner of the 1926 report of the Commission on the Library and Adult Education, rounds out the decade.

Outstanding among books produced at the time, ranking second only to Learned's *The American Public Library and the Diffusion of Knowledge*, was a provocative little report prepared in 1938 by Alvin Johnson entitled *The Public Library—A People's University*.24 A distinguished educator and nonlibrarian, Johnson set out at the request of the American Association for Adult Education, aided by another special grant from the Carnegie Corporation, to find indications of how libraries were actually functioning in the adult education movement, how librarians felt about developing work of this kind, and what the future position of the library might be.25 Basing his report on findings gleaned from direct visits to twenty-three libraries and indirect reports on seven more, Johnson was forced to conclude that while the adult educational activities of public libraries were, in the aggregate, impressive, no single library had yet come anywhere near developing the possibilities within easy reach.

Despite this situation, the logic of the library's position in the community led Johnson to extend the concept of the public library to embrace the functions and responsibilities of a people’s university. After weighing the likelihood of developing an effective system of adult education through the public schools, colleges, and universities, or through an independent educational system of the various tentative private and cooperative plans then in operation, Johnson concluded that the only reasonable scheme was to develop the public library into
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a permanent center of adult education. While public librarians had often yearned to be ancillary in adult education, Johnson felt there was nothing for them to be ancillary to. His views, like those of Learned, are still subjects of controversy, although the advent of the community college gives them less force in present-day thinking.

The picture of public library service which led Johnson to see it as the nucleus of a popular university is reflected fairly well in a small pamphlet issued by the Adult Education Board in 1940. Through Experiments in Educational Services for Adults,26 the Board hoped to stimulate interest and encourage the raising of standards. In its thirty-four sections this bibliographical guide covered a wide range of adult educational interests and activities and considered such matters as development of popular libraries, remedial reading clinics, bookmobile service, motion pictures in the library, the library psychologist, exhibit and display work, educational objectives for the adult lending department, and cooperation in adult education among several small neighboring libraries. Taken as a unit, it summarized the advanced thinking of the time and predicted the future course of much library service in adult education.

The first big chapter of adult education ends with World War II. The history of that chapter and of much material which might belong in a preface is outlined in the first major bibliography of the field, The Literature of Adult Education,27 issued in 1941 by the American Association for Adult Education. Undertaking a comprehensive analysis of germane material, Beals and Brody gave the field a history and some unity. If their approach was conservative regarding the role of the library—the view seemed to be that the library could be most effective in adult education through expansion of its more traditional book service functions through provision of popular libraries 28—it was still too advanced for general acceptance.

The role of the library in defense and war efforts and in assisting postwar readjustment was important. While not to be discussed here, it signaled a turning point. Understaffed, inadequately supported, desperately short of appropriate materials, public libraries throughout the country did what they could to supply books and pamphlets, give space to meetings, and gather special information. The reason these efforts were significant is not that they marked major departures from the established functions of libraries, but because the library, like all other public and private institutions, was led to focus its attention and
energies in a single major effort. For what may have been the first time in the lives of many librarians, the resources of an entire institution were mobilized locally and on a national scale to meet a variety of different but closely related educational needs.

This was reader's advisory service with a vengeance. Librarians not already aware of it became cognizant overnight of the fact that they were an integral part of the local as well as national community, and had pressing obligations to fulfill. Sober papers presented at the Library Institute held at the University of Chicago in 1943, under the general heading of *The Library in the Community,* do not emphasize the war effort as such, but they do highlight the need for librarians to understand the community in which they live if they are to serve it adequately in a time of crisis, or indeed at any time. This plea for understanding one's community and gearing library service to meet community needs has several important and far-reaching implications. It requires that the library build its collection more in terms of local interests and problems than in relation to the broad range of recorded knowledge. It suggests that information and ideas may be more important than the form in which they are recorded, and that the public library must provide accordingly. Finally, it implies that the local public library will eventually be evaluated according to its direct educational contributions to a living community through intellectual leadership, and not in terms of success in mere preservation or routine service functions.

Also during the war, a distinguished American writer, James Truslow Adams, having been asked to take another look at the progress of adult education and offer opinions as to what might constitute the best and most promising course for adult educators to take in postwar years, added another strong voice outside the library profession to the small chorus within: "I do not know any educational service which could reach and help the general public, as individuals or as groups, more directly and effectively than the public libraries." But progress is slow. In 1946, most libraries reported plans for an increase in educational activities, but indicated that these were hampered by lack of space and personnel. If the will was really there, it was weak, except in large libraries.

The last five years of adult education in this country have been marked by much running in many directions. Most stimulating and encouraging has been the pioneering of the Louisville Public Library
in establishing a bold program of A-V service with films, radio programs, and television, and what amounts to a “library of the people’s university,” in direct cooperation with the extension division of the University of Louisville. The same can be said of the mounting demand for specialists for group service in libraries, despite the difficulty of locating qualified workers. General interest among adult educators in problems of both young and older adults, community organization, public affairs, and social issues has seen corresponding activity within the library. For documentation of these activities and professional thinking about their suitability, one may find useful the 1948 edition of the Handbook of Adult Education in the United States, the Unesco manuals, Adult Education Activities for Public Libraries and Libraries in Adult and Fundamental Education, and the professional journals. Also, Eberhart has studied adult education as it developed through five chronological stages within the library profession from 1926 to 1951. Dillon, in 1949, reported a general survey of the work done by public libraries of the United States in adult education; and there are numerous other sources of information. A recent negative statement on the role of public libraries in adult education, and one which is, in the author’s opinion, a serious mismevaluation of the facts, appears in Shera’s article, “On the Value of Library History.”

The most comprehensive study of the public library in recent years was the Public Library Inquiry, another contribution to the profession made possible by the Carnegie Corporation. Testifying on the state of public librarianship in the United States, Robert D. Leigh, in his summary volume on the Inquiry, notes that in 1948 only six per cent of the nation’s public libraries had annual budgets of $25,000 or more. In general, most of the libraries undertaking any very extensive program of adult education enjoyed funds of $100,000 per year and up. Speaking realistically, most public libraries had neither budget, trained personnel, nor inclination to do much more than buy and hold collections of popular current fiction. In the few libraries that did carry on significant work, such activities were usually justified simply as a means of encouraging greater use of public library materials rather than for solution of educational problems. In no place studied in the Inquiry sample was the public library clearly recognized as the official library unit for the school, university, or community adult education program. Only in the general sense that it provided the essential library service for a host of informal adult education activities could the
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public library be considered even remotely related to what has been "somewhat romantically" called the "people's university."

Observing the behavior of the general American public as respects communications, and discerning a natural clientele for public libraries, Leigh concluded that the role of the public library is to serve those of the adult population, perhaps ten per cent, whose interests, will, and ability may lead them to seek personal enrichment and enlightenment. He stated: "The enlargement of this natural public library audience may well be the library's concern in co-operation with other agencies of education. But if our analysis is correct, the process of enlargement is slow, requiring intensive efforts and not producing numerically spectacular results. Meantime, adequate services to the existing and potential group of natural library users have a social value much greater than the gross numbers involved." 40 Apparently the public library is not, and in the near future is not likely to become, either a community center for reliable and useful information or a popular university. Not only does the library lack the necessary incentive and resources, but it would never occur to most Americans to use their local public library as a source of practical information and education.

Lack of sound research; stress on promotion and expansion of the library's own services, programs, and projects rather than thoughtful formulation, cooperation, and integration of efforts for the solution of community problems; departmentalization rather than diffusion of responsibility within the library; continuing insistence upon the importance of the individual without reference to the associations which establish that importance; complete neglect of many significant areas; emphasis on techniques rather than problems; failure to train a corps of professional workers able to do the jobs necessary—these are some of the negative factors which have characterized the public library's role in adult education during the last twenty-five years.

However, in the face of what by any quantitative measure would surely be judged almost complete failure, the potential importance of the public library's role in adult education has nevertheless increased. On the positive side, there has been a marked change in gross library coverage and improvement of collections. Fewer librarians cling to print as representing their only responsibility. Trends in the general field of adult education have seen a corresponding rise of activity in public library services for young and older adults, discussion of public affairs, community organization, and program planning. The pleas of
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Tompkins,41 Edge,42 and others for librarians trained to do the job of adult education have finally resulted in some revision in library school curricula, even if not enough and not exactly as planned. Students are now graduating from library schools who understand the job of adult education, and know something of where and how to begin. First through "Great Books," and thanks more recently to the beneficence of the Ford Foundation, librarians over the country have taken notice of the values of group discussion, notably as conducted by the American Heritage project under the supervision of the American Library Association. Admittedly, 117 American Heritage groups composed of only 2,500 people discussing books and films is not mass education. But the results, in 1951, were sufficiently impressive to command more Ford money for continuation of the project in 1952, and it is still the most extensive public library experiment in progress. Finally, the stimulating experimental and coordinating roles of state and county library service have taken hold in recent years as shown in the Watertown Regional Service Library in New York State,43 and may eventually lead to a cultural revolution in rural and small-town America.

Some public libraries have become conscious of the need to organize and focus their resources for educational work in particular areas. On a broad scale the elaborate Atomic Energy Institute, sponsored for several days by the Enoch Pratt Free Library in 1947,44 and the program to publicize the United Nations in Indianapolis,1 are cases in point. There has also been slow but steady improvement in provision of services to business and labor groups. Libraries in Washington, D.C., Baltimore, New York, and Detroit have organized classes and conducted reading clinics to help adults overcome inefficient reading habits.1 During the last ten years more than one hundred public libraries have established film collections, and are now reaching what they believe to be new and broader audiences with educational materials and programs previously unavailable.

Many librarians have become broadcasters, while some are contemplating the prospect of television and a few are doing something about it. In 1950 more than thirteen public libraries were regularly producing TV programs.45 More conventionally, questions on home, family, marriage, nutrition, and housing have been the subject of countless book talks, lists, lectures, study sessions, forums, and classes under the direction of public libraries. Perhaps most significant of all postwar activities, the library has come to be regarded as a center
for training leadership and for the planning of programs for community groups. In some places, notably Detroit and Cleveland, annual meetings have been held to familiarize group chairmen with library resources. Some aids for planning programs have been published. In the author's opinion community study and the shaping of programs, that is, determining the areas in which educational work is necessary and suggesting means of accomplishment, are the two main keys to the future importance of the public library.

Sifting the data in reports from the field to determine the actual content of today's adult education, Paul Durrie, president of the Adult Education Association of the U.S.A. in 1952–53, sees a continuing concern for meeting the immediate and personal needs developed by the individual as he functions as a worker, a homemaker, a creative individual, and as a citizen:

We see a slow moving from the easy areas where we teach the "how" to the more difficult ones where we are trying to help individuals understand the "whys," from dealing with things to dealing with people and ideas. We are saying, "To earn a better living is not enough; we must learn to live better, more fully, and more intelligently. Adult education must help make this a more effective democracy, must contribute to the maintenance and strengthening of our way of life."

There also seems to be a growing belief that methods of instruction and administration, if they are to be increasingly effective, must recognize the individual's network of relationships and interests, that they must involve the individual on an emotional as well as an intellectual basis in the identification of his problems and in planning and carrying on his continuing learning experiences. These need to be active and vital, not passive and academic.

... Reporters agree that a good community adult education program must involve many agencies and institutions and the use of many media. No one can function with a maximum of effectiveness alone. They stress the need for communication and joint projects which utilize the diversified resources, insights and skills of many.

Durrie has cited the major trends in adult education today. The role of the library and that of other educational agencies and institutions is to secure maximum participation in a program of education which will achieve the objectives implied. The main key is to relate the educational program to action. Toward that end "one principle... stands out as fundamental—build the experience of community with people. Within this framework they can discover first hand that others have
the same problems they have, that their common problems can be
solved by cooperative action, that when they come to know people in
the sharing of experience the basis for prejudice disappears and that
there are values, not apparent on the surface of the everyday world,
by which people can, and do, live." 

In regard to research and evaluation, the needs are great but little
has been done. For a suggestive list of research problems the reader
is referred to the section "Library in Adult Education" in a report
entitled Needed Research in Adult Education, prepared by the Joint
Committee of the American Educational Research Association and
the Department of Adult Education of the National Education Asso-
ciation, dated June 1949. Also, "Evaluating the Library's Programme" is
an excellent working paper prepared by Cyril O. Houle for the
Malmö Seminar held in the summer of 1950 at Malmö, Sweden.
Several bibliographic aids appear in a major review of research litera-
ture in adult education, published as the June 1950 issue of Review
of Educational Research.

Supported by a $25,000 grant from the Ford Foundation, the Adult
Education Board of the American Library Association is taking another
look at the library and adult education. The emphasis this time is on
public library service to groups, which in itself is an evidence of a
changing philosophy. The survey is elaborate, and will gather informa-
tion from all public libraries serving communities with a population
of more than 2,500. In addition to several questionnaires, the project
calls for an unspecified number of field visits and the use of other
follow-up devices. The survey will not be able to appraise the worth
of the efforts discovered, except in very general terms, but it will un-
doubtedly give information by which better to predict the near future.
The values of the survey as an educational and promotional device in
its own right are not inconsiderable.

For too many years the adult education movement in the United
States marched under two main flags, that of the American Association
for Adult Education and that of the Department of Adult Education
of the National Education Association, originally established in 1921
as the Department of Immigrant Education. It is to be hoped that
with the merger of these two organizations, accomplished in May 1951
by establishing the Adult Education Association of the United States
of America, which is now backed heavily, although indirectly, with
Ford money, hostilities have ended between those most interested in
public school adult education and those outside the school. Certainly
the tasks are sufficiently large and there is need for all.

The fear still does exist among some librarians, however, that public
school interests, having more generous tax support, will tend to crowd
other agencies out of the field. It is indeed to be hoped that the “clock
hour” measurement principles common to many public school programs
will never be applied to informal library programs. Another issue which
divided adult educators for many years was the study of group
processes. With initial sponsorship by the Department of Adult Edu-
cation, but with the bitter opposition of many within the American
Association for Adult Education, the dynamics of group behavior were
examined intensively in an effort to determine prerequisites for suc-
cessful education and the practice of democracy. The faddist char-
acteristics of this effort have now largely disappeared, and its positive
contributions are being felt in many areas, e.g., conference planning
and administration, group discussion and study, and leadership in
educational activities. The most notable undertaking of its kind is
the National Training Laboratory for the Study of Group Dynamics,
held annually at Bethel, Maine, for the last several years.51 One inter-
esting application of knowledge of the principles of group behavior
appears in a recent article entitled “Library Promotion and Service as
Problems of Group Dynamics.” 52

To summarize the growth of adult education during the last two
decades, in 1934 it was estimated that more than twenty-two million
persons in the United States were engaged actively in some form of
adult education. Of these approximately one million were being served
by libraries.17 In 1948, perhaps thirty million people in the United
States over twenty-one years of age were interested or participating in
adult studies of a more or less organized nature.53 Interpolating figures
from the Public Library Inquiry,54 perhaps five to nine million adults
are now active users of the public library.

Accepted functions of public libraries in today’s adult education are
at least these: (1) furthering of self-education, (2) providing materials
and information service for the informal educational enterprises of the
community, and (3) acting as exhibit centers of community develop-
ment. Disputed, but fairly well established in larger libraries, are
the following: (4) program planning for community groups; and (5)
sponsorship of book-based discussions, special classes, film forums,
concerts, and lectures. Attacked from within and outside the profession
are suggestions that the public library should also (6) assume leadership in the establishment and maintenance of a diversified program of informal adult education in the community, and (7) mobilize its resources for the identification and realization of desirable avenues for social change. All of these responsibilities are now being met in some degree by one or more libraries. Assuming that the public library is not already obsolescent, it seems that the trend will be in the direction of (6) and (7). If the tasks are unwanted, they are thrust upon librarians by the temper of the age and the traditional position of the public library.

References

15. Cartwright, op. cit., p. 149.
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40. Ibid., p. 48.
49. Houle, op. cit., chap. 7.

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Research on the Reading of Adults

LESTER ASHEIM

The field of reading has been studied in many different ways. All the investigations have something of interest to contribute to the librarian, whose major stock in trade is still books even in this audio-visual age. This report assumes, however, that the most pertinent studies are those which are concerned with the "sociology of reading" and which address themselves to the question: "Who reads what, and where does he get it, and how does it affect him?" On these there have been comparatively few efforts at research; we have much to learn about each of the aspects: the "who," the "what," the "where," and—most important—the "how does it affect him?"

The first scientific studies of reading, which began to appear in the middle of the nineteenth century, addressed themselves to a different set of problems. They were concerned with the reading act as a physiological process—the charting of eye movements, the noting of pauses, the study of blinking or lip movement or span of attention, as related to reading speed and comprehension. By the second decade of the present century the scientific findings of these psychological and physiological investigations were applied to the question of efficient pedagogical method—to the refinement of reading tests, to experimentation in teaching techniques, and to the exploration of reading readiness, speed, growth, and skill in relation to the physiological processes connected with the reading act. There was the beginning of interest also in the so-called "hygiene of reading," which experimented with the effects on reading skill and fatigue of different colors of paper and print, various sizes and kinds of types, and various methods of spacing and determining margins. It was not until 1930 that the students of reading began to explore its social role and its connection with the purposes its serves.

The earliest studies of the sociology of reading were concerned with Mr. Asheim is Dean of the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago.
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could not always focus on the specific aspects of the problem. We were interested in gaining some basic knowledge about readers and reading in broad terms, in knowing something about the averages and the norms before turning our attention to the individual and his place in the total picture. Thus we saw the importance of describing the “who” in the basic question, but identification of the reader was stated in terms of the characteristics most readily ascertained objectively. We were able to reply in census-like terms to such questions as: How do readers differ from nonreaders? What are the characteristics of the persons who read? Who is more likely, in any community, to be the customer of the bookstore, the borrower from the library, the user of the several media of print? Sex, age, education, occupation, and marital status have been the variables most frequently studied—variables which can be identified quickly in a personal interview or checked easily on a questionnaire.

Within the limits thus imposed, we now have a fairly accurate if generalized picture of the reader. We know that education is the most important influence on reading behavior no matter what the sex, age, or economic status of the reader; we know that the younger adults read more than the older ones; we know that the upper middle income groups read more than the lower income groups; and we know that women are more likely to read for recreation, and men are more likely to turn to reading for professional and vocational reasons. These facts have been gained from study of readers in many different contexts—we have investigated cross sections of the general population, whether they were readers or not; we have turned our attention specifically to known readers (users of the public library, for example); we have studied the users of the several different media, not only those of print; and we have concentrated on specific occupational or educational groups. No matter how the question has been approached, the same general findings have resulted, and we can state with some certainty that our general picture of the reader is a reliable one. Thus, to say that we probably do not need many more studies of this aspect of the problem is not to denigrate the fine work already done in this area; it is a recognition of the solidity of the contribution already made, which renders it possible for us to go on from there, building upon the groundwork already laid.

The “where” studies have taken a similarly generalized view. Studies of sources have been of two kinds: (1) examination of the “geography”
of distribution agencies on a national, regional, and community basis,\textsuperscript{6} and (2) investigation of agencies by types—the bookstore, the public library, the newsstand—as general sources of reading materials.\textsuperscript{5, 7-8}

As from the studies of the reader, some basic general knowledge has been gained from these scrutinies of sources. We know, with reasonable assurance, that the public library and the bookstore are the two major suppliers of books for adults, and that the way of second importance in which adult readers get such materials is to borrow from the collections of their friends. Also, we know that the city reader is more likely to have access to the varied stock he wants than is the reader in the rural area, and that almost invariably the person who is well served by one of the agencies will be well served by the others. The studies of specific agencies have dealt mainly with gross figures of use, while those of the "geography" of distribution should be recognized as concerned with potential rather than actual reading, showing what the maximum utilization could be for each type of agency in each kind of community and region, but not whether actual use has been made.

The investigations of what is read have been a little more specific, but again the kind of data which can most readily be gathered tends to be general. The "what" studies have been concerned with the form of the material more than with its content; our most reliable figures can provide us with comparative data on the reading of books, magazines, and newspapers as kinds of media,\textsuperscript{9} or, at best, with general breakdowns of the book materials into such broad categories as fiction and nonfiction,\textsuperscript{10-11} or the broad Dewey decimal classifications.\textsuperscript{12-13}

Assumptions about quality are often made in such studies; fiction is considered less "worth while" than nonfiction, for example, or books more "important" than magazines, but it need hardly be pointed out that their validity is limited. To determine quality the investigator must get "inside" the book or article and make an intensive analysis of the content.

But even when the investigator does this, the objective research methods he employs usually keep him from a very deep analysis of content. The most prolific contributions in the content analysis field have been the studies of "readability," of which the works of Rudolf Flesch\textsuperscript{14-16} are perhaps the best known. Such studies are not concerned with the quality of the ideas or information contained in a given piece of writing; they are directed toward an analysis of the ease with which it can be read, quite apart from the value to be gained from such
reading. Few would deny the importance of gauging the level of difficulty represented by different kinds of materials; certainly the librarian is well aware of the problem of finding those which deal with adult subject matter in terms which the average adult can understand. But the social role of reading is not adequately defined without some analysis of the value of the reading done and some interest in the effects. And there is a growing suspicion among students that indiscriminate reliance upon readability formulas to guide the writer may well alter the social role of reading in undesirable ways.\footnote{17}

Thus far, in treating the generalized character of the reading studies, we have treated the investigations of the question—Who reads what, and where does he get it, and how does it affect him?—as though they dealt with each aspect separately and in a vacuum. In actuality, even the most coldly objective efforts have attempted to combine the characteristics in meaningful ways. Thus, readers have been identified not only as readers per se, but as borrowers from the library or users of the bookstore (who and where). They have further been examined in terms of materials: What are the characteristics of the borrowers of fiction from libraries as opposed to buyers of fiction from bookstores, or how do library users of fiction differ from library users of nonfiction (who + where + what)? Such a combination of factors leads to a concern with reading interests and motivations: What do different people want to read about, and why?

Again, the early studies of interests were made in general terms; Waples and Tyler\footnote{18} deliberately addressed themselves to group characteristics, and established a strong correlation between them and stated reading interests. They found that the more characteristics that two or more groups held in common (for example, age, sex, occupation, and education) the more likely they were to check similar reading interests on a list of possible magazine articles. But once this was established, a new question arose: Do people actually read what they say they are interested in reading? Waples\footnote{19} and Carnovsky\footnote{20} combined the analysis of the checklist of interests with a report on actual reading and found that subject interest in itself is not enough; that people read in line with their stated interests only when the material is readily accessible and easy to read. The old assumption, basic to most studies of reading interests and preferences, that what people read is a key to the subjects in which they are interested, seems pretty effectively disproved. Accessibility, then readability, and only then,
interest, are the factors which lead people to read the specific things they do.

The cumulated knowledge gained from the several types of studies described above leads naturally to an interest in the effects of reading. What difference does it make whether magazines are more widely read than books; whether women read more fiction than men; whether people read the accessible book instead of one in which they say they are interested? The difference it makes has importance only in terms of the values received from different kinds of reading and the influence, recognized or unknown, which a particular type of printed matter has upon those who see it.

Until recently none but the literary critics had the temerity to make value judgments about the content of written materials; and while their analyses have a long and respectable history in the field of literature, they lack the kind of so-called “scientific” objectivity which the social scientists have attempted to make the criterion of valid research. Thus the adventures of the critic’s soul among masterpieces, revealing as the record of them may be, have not pretended to be the systematic, objective, and quantitative content analysis which social scientists demand. This does not invalidate either literary study or social science research; it merely underlines the difference between the objectives of the two kinds of investigation.

The extra-literary studies which attempt to control, as far as possible, the reliance on impressionistic and subjective judgments, have thus far been extremely limited in the field of motivation and effects. Motivations can hardly be studied without going to the reader himself, and the reader seldom knows why he reads a specific book at a particular time. The reasons he gives are often superficial or stereotyped; he is very seldom aware of the accessibility factor as a motivating force; and he often isolates a single influence when in reality his reading probably resulted from an opportune confluence of many influences.

He knows even less, of course, about results. Occasional mention is made in biographies and autobiographies of the life-changing factors in a book, but these are more interesting than convincing. Few of us can cite an instance in our own experience when a single reading caused a sudden and decisive turn of mind, and the question arises whether such an influence was ever actually felt in that way, or whether it merely makes a striking story. A superficial analysis of one’s own reading behavior leads to the hypothesis that effects are cumulative;
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that no one occurrence but a lifetime of reading forms the opinions and attitudes that we possess; and that the dramatic moment of change and revelation comes because we have been building up to it through all the exposure to ideas in books and other media which have preceded the specific reading. The results are not denied, but the pinpointing of the moment at which an effect appeared is difficult.

Some outcomes of reading can be established. The effectiveness of reading done for an instrumental purpose, as when one follows recipes, instructions, and guides to specific behavior, can be demonstrated by putting the instruction into practice. A successful cake, or birdhouse, or homemade dress produced on the strength of recorded directions furnishes evidence that the maker read and understood. The comprehension of reading done for school assignment also can be measured by the assimilation of specific factual content. In other words, reading which leads to an overt act or to the memorizing of an objective piece of information is most susceptible of investigation.

The leading sociological studies in this area have centered in the effects of reading and other activities of communication upon political behavior mainly because in the act of voting we have tangible evidence of attitude and interest which can be traced to written and spoken sources. From such research have come data pertinent to an understanding of both effects and motivations. We have learned that readers of political materials read in line with their predispositions, that they select the arguments which support established beliefs, and that they are most likely to remember and accept the points which occur most frequently. We are limited, however, in the extent to which we can transfer such findings concerning the deliberate reading of specifically "propagandistic" materials to the area of more subtle effects. Remembrance of Things Past is not campaign oratory, and its influence is not reflected in a specific act, like voting, which can be observed at a definite time and place. Nor does the reader of Proust, or Tolstoy, or Mann, or Hemingway consciously turn to such literature in order to change his mind or to reinforce particular opinions already held. Yet his mind may be changed without his becoming aware of it; and it is this kind of reading, which broadens one, makes him more capable of understanding, gives him wider horizons, or sharpens his awareness, toward which the present-day researchers would like to turn their attention.

As a consequence, the reading studies of the immediate future are
likely to turn more and more in the direction of the individual case study and the analysis of subjective factors. The general ones will continue to be useful for keeping background knowledge of the subject current, but the basic facts have now been established; and only when statistically significant deviations appear will it be necessary to multiply corroborative studies. Present interests lie, not so much in the modal reader as in the "sport"—the man with little education who reads widely, the well-educated nonreader, the opinion leader, or the influential member of the community who must be regarded as a special reader rather than a typical one. There is a growing interest, too, in more subtle uses of content analysis for what it can tell us about probable effects on different readers. In other words, we are ready to study the specific reader either in the very act of a particular reading, or through an analysis of all of his reading over a period of time, in order to follow through on the implications for his behavior, attitudes, and personality development.23

These are ambitious aims, and their attainment will not come easily. But their value—to educators, social scientists, and students of communication—is great. The librarian, who is a little bit of all three, should be particularly interested in the results. While he may feel intuitively that his social function is a vital one, he is often hard put to find objective data to support his belief. If he could learn something about the social role which reading plays, about the effects which different kinds of reading have upon different kinds of people, about the needs which books alone can satisfy, about the kind of people most affected by reading, he could perform more efficiently the important role in society which should be his but which now—too frequently—seems unattainable.

References
Research on the Reading of Adults


Measurement of Public Library Book Collections

LEON CARNOVSKY

Over the years a considerable number of surveys of individual public libraries have been completed and reported upon. In addition there have been accounts of regional and state surveys, and the sweeping description and evaluation incorporated in the published volumes, mimeographed reports, and periodical articles growing out of the Public Library Inquiry. Book collections have occupied a place in every one of these numerous studies, but the treatment has varied from little more than a quantitative report of books owned to highly elaborate descriptions designed to produce qualitative judgments.

Every librarian would like an answer to the question, "How good is my library?" and by this he means "how good" in books. He knows better than anyone approximately how many books he has, but he is always on the lookout for a formula which will tell him something more, in a qualitative sense, about the nature of his collection. His first resource is likely to be the Post-War Standards for Public Libraries. Here he will find a number of sensible principles, and in the interpretive text he will find that many of the statements apply directly to his own institution, regardless of size or financial limitations. Though the word "standard" implies generality, in application to specific libraries sufficient variation is permitted to provide for those which differ greatly from one another in the kinds of community they serve. Two libraries may be equally excellent, though their book collections have little in common.

There are various ways by which an evaluation of book collections has been attempted or at least proposed. These range from subjective

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estimates by professional librarians, based on rapid survey of the shelves, through the checking of one or more lists of selected titles against the card catalog, to the use of mathematical formulas which attempt to reduce reader demand and book provision to quantitative terms. Any procedure to be widely practicable must be easy to administer and relatively effective in producing an answer. In the course of time one well-defined method has been evolved.

The method discussed here to test the quality of book collections is well known and has been long practiced. It is that of checking collection against a booklist or bibliography. Such a procedure may be based on elaborate lists like the Standard Catalog or the A.L.A. Catalog (both with supplements), or the Hawkins' Scientific, Medical, and Technical Books Published in the United States; or it may be limited to compilations of "hundred best books" or to highly selective lists on given topics. In either case it will tell the librarian that he has x per cent of y titles, but will it tell him anything more than this? And even when he learns the percentage, what does he actually know about the quality of his collection? No one can possibly assure him what proportion he ought to hold. He might compare his showing with that of other libraries, and derive what comfort he can from the fact that neighboring Glenville holds an even smaller ratio or perhaps a percentage not greatly different from his own. Or he might feel a glow of satisfaction in discovering that he has already purchased practically all the titles on the checklist. Parenthetically, it may be noted that if the checklist has been compiled from a tool—say, the A.L.A. Booklist—which he himself used as a basis for book selection, and if the library follows a policy of buying liberally from the listings in that tool, he is wasting his time by using that checklist at all; for the results are clearly predictable.

Having said this much, we must raise the question, "Why undertake an evaluation at all?" Surely it cannot be very important to realize that the collection is good or poor unless one is prepared to do something about it, or at least to understand clearly why the stock is as it is. Before showing how an evaluation bears on this point, we shall report briefly on certain applications of the checklist method and comment on the implications.

Perhaps the earliest use of a comprehensive list was made in a Chicago area library study in 1933, when the collections of seventy-nine libraries were checked against the 1926–31 A.L.A. Catalog. The
range of holdings of the adult titles (2,711) was 60 to 2,012; of children’s titles (320), 16 to 299. The aim was to establish certain facts about library service in the district as a whole, rather than in a given community; thus, it would be difficult if not impossible for an individual library to know much or to do something about its own collection as a result of this survey. The same observation may be made about the Westchester County, New York, library study. Here the 2,911 starred titles in the Standard Catalog were selected as a basis for checking the holdings of thirty-five libraries, the resultant range being 41 to 2,497. The most recent use of the checklist on a broad geographical basis was made in connection with the Public Library Inquiry. Several lists were developed, as follows:

1. Thirty-six titles of fiction published in 1948, of which twelve were best-sellers, twelve “notable” as indicated by an A.L.A. committee, and twelve others considered important by professional critics, though not included in the first two groups.

2. Eighty-nine titles of nonfiction published in 1948, one third of them best-sellers, another third “notable,” and one third “important.”

3. Two hundred thirty titles “selected as the most reliable and suitable for general readers in seven fields of serious adult interests.”

4. One hundred twenty titles of periodicals—25 with circulations of a million or more, 25 circulating between 300,000 and a million, 20 from the so-called “quality” group, and 50 professional and specialized, based almost entirely on the Lyle Classified List of Periodicals for the College Library.

These surveys all showed that small libraries were making available only a small proportion of the important literature published; even many books that had reached the best-seller category, especially if they were nonfiction, were absent in a number of cases, and surprisingly many titles endorsed by librarians and book critics were held only by the largest institutions. These facts were reported not as criticism, but as emphasizing a situation which was inevitable as long as libraries were regarded as a local responsibility, to be established or not as determined by the political constituency, and as they were responsive to the tradition of popularity or mass demand. The small library—even one spending $50,000 a year—could not hope to keep up with the output of significant literature and at the same time satisfy a demand for popular books, regardless of their content. Where a
choice had to be made, it was generally on the side of popularity.

Though the findings of the various surveys have been reported in
general terms, they are all based on the checking of individual libraries.
In other words, the technique is directly applicable to the survey of
any library, whether undertaken by itself or by an outsider. But the
basic question remains, i.e., what will the librarian gain from it? In
every case, of course, it depends on the particular instrument used as
a checklist. If this is made up of the starred items in the Standard
Catalog, he will learn that certain titles which have been considered
clearly superior in one or more respects, such as authenticity, potential
interest, and readability, are not readily available to his patrons. This
knowledge may lead him (1) to order them immediately, or (2) to
place them on a preferred list for later purchase, or (3) to consider the
seriousness of their absence in the light of (a) other books in the col-
lection, and (b) a potential reading clientele for them. Beyond these
considerations there are two others of prime significance: the amount
of money he has in general, and for book purchase in particular; and
the relative importance to the achievement of his library's goals of fill-
ing gaps, as indicated by the checking, as against buying other, perhaps
newer, books in greater numerical demand. In short, he will have a
factual basis for decisions, and for implementing decisions, on a policy
of book acquisition.

A second value is that the checking should lead him to consider
accounting for the gaps revealed. Is there something seriously at fault
in his method of selection? Is he placing too great an emphasis on
popularity for its own sake, thereby neglecting books of real insight
though of more limited appeal? Does he have an obligation to provide
titles of the latter sort, even if it means reducing the number of those
which lead to large circulation figures? The problem is especially acute
for a librarian with a limited budget; he is called upon not merely
to decide whether to buy this book or that one, but this kind of book
rather than another kind. The wealthy library, or the large library,
can airily buy "everything," but the small library is continually faced
with alternatives—the selection of one item means the rejection of
another. When one recalls that about eighty per cent of all public
libraries have less than $4,000 to spend annually for all purposes, it does
not require much imagination to conclude that book purchasing must
be a highly selective process. The problem of choice is present whether
or not evaluation of the collection is involved, but through a check
of the stock the outcomes of whatever policy is adhered to are brought home in the most realistic fashion.

Although the advantages of the checklist method may be conceded, there remain certain criticisms which cannot be ignored. We shall therefore list them, together with the observations they suggest.

1. The method involves a highly arbitrary selection of titles. The titles are not of equal value, and many books not on the list are better than those included.

   Comment: The method as such does not necessarily imply arbitrariness in selection of titles. In every case attention must be given to the particular list used. The Standard Catalog, for example—and especially it starred items—does not reflect arbitrariness. If one thinks so, let him try making a compilation equal to it in authenticity and general applicability to public library goals. Since the selected titles have been based on the judgment of librarians and book reviewers, we are justified in assuming that they are qualitatively superior, or at least that they have something to say in the area which they treat. Occasionally one may wonder why one item is included and another omitted, but these exceptions do not invalidate the use of the list as a whole. The criticism has greater validity when applied to short lists devoted to single topics, or to those given such captions as “ten best”; but even the checking of such lists has its uses. One must be careful, however, not to regard such checking as equivalent to evaluating the collection as a whole, or even that part of the stock with which the list deals. Finally, it is true that the titles on any list cannot be “of equal value”; but the significance of this depends on answers to questions as to their value for particular purposes or people. To the amateur botanist an elementary text is likely to be infinitely more useful than a monograph, while the reverse is true for the specialist in cytology.

2. The titles, though good in themselves from the standpoint of accuracy, authority, and readability, bear little relation to the community served by a specific library.

   Comment: Once more it depends on the nature of the list. It might be nonsensical to use a compilation of technical tools in a library serving a gardening community, but checklists should be selected whose titles bear some relation to the goals of the library being examined. At the same time one should be slow about dismissing lists because their titles seem “high-brow.” One should never forget the presence in almost every community of persons who are genuinely interested in
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the books that do not appear among the best-sellers, but which have more to contribute to understanding and intellectual growth than those which are merely popular.

3. The titles are apt to be badly out of date.

Comment: This may be true, and if so the list should not be used. It must be remembered, however, that a book which is a dozen years old is not necessarily valueless, particularly if it has not been superseded by a better one. An old book is not always a dead one.

4. Titles in the library on identical topics are completely ignored by the checklist method.

Comment: This criticism is made most frequently of all. It is implied in the common observation that though a library does not happen to have these titles it does have others equally good, or at least on the same subject. Needless to say this often is true, and the criticism has merit. However, it fails to take into account the fact that many times a reader comes in search of a specific book. For example, if he is looking for the Thomas biography of Abraham Lincoln, he is not likely to be satisfied with the information that though Thomas’ biography is not held, Lord Charnwood’s is, or even the monumental Sandburg’s. Books are unique; though sometimes one may serve as a satisfactory substitute for another, there are limitations to this principle, and a librarian may serve his community badly if he depends too strongly upon it. In any event, the use of the checklist does not and should not lead to a blind purchase of books wanting; the perceptive librarian will always weigh his gaps against his possessions, and with the gaps revealed he is in a better position to determine what, if anything, to do about them.

5. The services which are available by interlibrary loan are not taken into account; though a given library does not have the listed titles, it can readily obtain them from a central collection or from some other library.

Comment: It would obviously be foolish to apply the method to a small deposit collection or to a library which depends heavily on interlibrary loans to fill patrons’ requests. Nevertheless, as every librarian knows, the overwhelming proportion of book circulation depends on what the reader finds on the shelves of the library he visits. A library which consists of relatively few “good” books cannot long endure on the argument that it can borrow the rest. This is not to deprecate the sound principle of interlibrary loan; it is simply to suggest that the
principle cannot be invoked as an alternative to a good collection. Furthermore, if a librarian is interested in evaluating his own collection, the wealth of other libraries is irrelevant. Conceivably, too, the checking of a list by a group of libraries which tend to borrow from one another may point up areas in which all are weak, and may lead to joint action whereby all of them may be strengthened, through a systematic book acquisition program aimed at reducing duplication and increasing variety.

6. A library is not penalized for having poor titles, since checklists invariably consist of approved titles.

Comment: All libraries inevitably tend to accumulate stocks of obsolete and worthless books, and the checklist method does nothing to criticize them for it. As evaluation, therefore, it fails to do a complete job. This is true, but of questionable importance. As well criticize the Louvre because some of its paintings are substandard. The method is designed to reveal riches and to identify areas of poverty, not to set up a scorecard for libraries in which good books are balanced off against poor ones.

7. The procedure fails to take into account special aspects of a collection which may be highly important to a particular library. Examples are simply-written books for adult beginners or retarded readers; and strength in fields which are of great interest to its community, such as gardening, local authors, technical materials. And of course nothing whatever is said about nonprint materials like records and films, which are properly a part of the general collection.

Comment: This is obviously true, but once more it is only necessary to state that the method is not definitive, and for the measurement of special materials or the achievement of particular library objectives other devices must be introduced. Even so, the checklist has something to contribute. If a library does maintain a strong collection on gardening it may wish to use the method as a basis for making it still stronger; and obviously a list of films, assembled as booklists are compiled, may serve to gauge the strength and weakness of a film collection.

In the last analysis, the evaluation of book collections, as of other things, depends on the goals in view. If a librarian uses a bibliography on sculpture as a basis for judging his resources in this area, he does so because he feels that it is part of his job to provide books on sculpture. And conversely if it is unnecessary, in his particular community, to keep up with materials on coal mining, there is no point
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in measuring such a collection at all. Lists like the Standard Catalog and A.L.A. Catalog are essentially collections of bibliographies, and the librarian would be well advised to use these lists with this in mind. For each part of a general list he should tacitly consider what his obligation is in his community to provide books on its topic. If he has practically nothing on a subject in which there is no reason for strength, he certainly should not repair the gap merely to increase the proportion of holdings on any list.

To the question as to whether any one list is better than another, the answer must be that it depends on what the librarian wishes to know. For a general overview of a collection as a whole either the Standard Catalog, probably limited to starred titles, or the A.L.A. Catalog, with supplements, is perhaps the most satisfactory. Since checking is a considerable undertaking, and therefore costly in time and money, it probably is better to limit it to sections where real and serious questions arise. That is, if a librarian is concerned about his collection in the fine arts, let the work be restricted to that. Since most libraries are interested in holdings of recent important books, the latest annual volume of the A.L.A. Booklist may be excellent as a checklist, although the arrangement makes it difficult to use for this purpose. Another possibility, narrower in scope but practicable, is the annual listing of "best books" in media like the New York Times Book Review. The writer recently had occasion to use such a list of 275 titles in a library of 60,000 volumes. The titles on the Times list are divided among the following headings:

- Fiction
- Biography
- World Politics
- Essays
- American Scene
- History
- Religion
- Art
- Science
- Poetry
- Humor
- Sports

It was a simple matter not only to learn that in each of the above fields the library had so many titles, but to ascertain the specific titles it did not hold. The latter point is the important one, for a librarian needs to be in position to consider each item and to decide whether or not its addition is essential. This does not mean that a library can be transformed suddenly from mediocrity to excellence; it does mean that a firm and practical basis can be laid for molding a collection to the
goals of the library and to the needs of the community. If the use of
the checklist leads to no more than this, it surely is justified.

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Legal Status of Public Libraries

WALTER BRAHM

The legal status of public libraries has been so well presented by Joeckel in 1935, by Garceau in 1949, and by Leigh in 1950, that it would seem unnecessary in a short article such as this to attempt to go over much of the same ground. Because current trends may show more clearly when contrasted with the long history of library organization, however, a brief résumé, with apologies to the above authors, is in order. Aside from this, the present article will report events and trends of more recent years.

Our first “public libraries” were private libraries, designated variously by the general term “social,” and specifically by the words “association,” “partnership,” or “vocational,” derived from the way in which they were organized. The association or subscription library, and the partnership or proprietary library, became the two most common legal forms of organization. Association libraries are often referred to as subscription libraries because they accepted members for a set annual fee. “Proprietary library” is also another name for the private library organized as a common-law partnership, under which the partners invested their money in shares. The association or subscription library became the more popular type, although there were combinations using both methods of securing support. Names of these early libraries, often seeming to indicate the origin or purpose of the institution, have added to a certain confusion about the history of the period. “Ladies’ libraries,” “gentlemen’s libraries,” and “young men’s institutes” are examples.

When the idea of free tax-supported public libraries arose, library organization tended to become a part of some division of government. For the sake of brevity, a somewhat arbitrary description would be that, for most of the nineteenth century, public libraries were organized as a part of the government of the community in which the library was situated. In other words, some were set up under the municipality.
or village, some under school districts, others under the township. The exception was the association library. It is natural that some of the older association libraries continue to exist at the present time, receiving public tax funds although privately administered. But even today new libraries, particularly small ones, are being established as association libraries. Although figures are not available this is probably more common than the library profession is aware of. As an example, Pennsylvania library laws permit the establishment of libraries by private groups, and if the library wishes to apply for tax funds it must permit two members to be appointed by the governing authority which provides the funds. Since association boards commonly have large membership, control still is in private hands. In Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, the seat of the Carnegie library idea, there were thirty-one libraries in 1950, twenty-four being of the association type.

From the standpoint of legal status, the association library represents a conflict. The public accepts it and uses it as a public library, but no unit of government has direct responsibility for its support and management. Its area of service and jurisdictional rights may be nonexistent or open to contest with another library.

Library organization next turned to the county as the unit of government, and the first half of this century, particularly 1930–50, has seen great emphasis and stress on selling this type of library organization. Multicounty and regional library units of organization have also come into being in the past few years. Today it seems the public library movement is still using all the various units of government as a legal basis for new library units, much as an opportunist using the path of least resistance, and in so doing has beaten three different paths in its attempt to reach the larger unit goal: the county library, the multicounty or regional library, and the state library. As a matter of fact, the National Plan for Public Library Service in 1948 proposed five principal types of large units for the United States, namely, (1) county libraries serving whole counties, (2) county libraries serving parts of counties, (3) regional libraries, (4) federated library groups, and (5) special state districts; but these boil down to the three mentioned just above. Federated groups represent merely a method or means for securing county, regional, or state service, as will be reported later. A look at each in the light of current happenings is desirable.

County as the library unit. Joeckel listed 230 county library units in existence prior to 1935, excluding those having annual income of
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less than $1,000. By 1949 about one-fourth of the 3,069 counties in the
United States had established county libraries of some sort. This
figure includes regional libraries, however, and a breakdown of figures
reported by the American Library Association would show some 537
county libraries.

Legislative enactments of some of the states in the last few years
indicate the speed of the trend toward the county unit. Maryland's
public library law of 1945 set up the county as the only basis for new
libraries, repealing the rights of other municipal units to establish
libraries. Similarly, while Ohio has supported all its libraries since
1934 from a county tax, new laws were passed in 1947 removing the
right of all subdivisions of government except the county to create
public libraries. Only county or multicounty libraries may now be
established in Ohio. The powers of library boards regardless of the
unit of government are the same, and likewise every public library
in a county is free to all the residents of the county. The net result as
far as the public is concerned is that only one library system exists,
even though legally there may be a number of independent libraries
in a county.

In 1949 Michigan amended its state aid law to facilitate the estab-
lishment and development of county and regional libraries. The same
year twenty-seven counties in Arkansas passed a library tax measure,
and by that date also, fifty-two of California's fifty-eight counties had
county library service.

Multicounty or regional library as a unit. Eighty-five “regional
libraries” were listed in the 1949 County and Regional Libraries
issued by the American Library Association. The term “regional library”
is a loose one, covering a wide range. It may be used because of a
contract between two libraries in a single county, or at the other
extreme may apply to an entire state area. The regional library now
seems to represent the inspirational goal that the county library stood
for some years ago, and the late legislation indicates a trend toward
such organization.

The Kansas legislature enacted laws in 1951 permitting the estab-
lishment of regional libraries. The same year the New Mexico legis-
lature provided for the organization of county and multicounty library
service. Ohio, in 1949, passed enabling legislation for setting up
regional libraries. Michigan amended its state aid laws in the same
year to facilitate the establishment of such libraries.
setts, a state with many small libraries, established in 1950 a demonstration regional library which is described later in this report, this in addition to three large-area libraries already in existence. The regional library seems to have taken more root in the southern part of the country than elsewhere, since Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia display a total of forty-eight such agencies.

The State as a unit of service. Because of our system of government, the legal status of libraries is determined entirely by the states, either directly through legislation or indirectly through the "home-rule" powers of municipalities. Whether library service is primarily a concern of the state or of the locality has never received a convincing answer. Up to 1935 only one state had a constitutional provision specifically affecting the library. Since then Missouri has added a section to its constitution making the commonwealth responsible for library service. State library legislation over the country is uniformly permissive, and there does not seem to be any inclination to make library service mandatory. Despite this, however, in actual practice executive agencies are making it more and more a concern of the state.

Several small states long have been giving direct library service, and additional ones are exploring this field of extension work. Although controversy exists on the matter, enough states are active in it to indicate a new pattern. By 1948 the Vermont Free Public library Commission was supplying its entire area with regional service and supplementing the resources of the local libraries. The New Hampshire State Library operates bookmobiles, giving supplementary aid to public and school libraries which are not open daily, covering in this manner all sections. In 1949 New York State set up its $100,000 a year experimental regional library service center at Watertown, offering additional facilities to existing local libraries in three counties. The Illinois State Library has devised a plan to divide the state into six districts and extend assistance to the libraries in each.

Implications of a unit of library service larger than the state are to be found in the report of the Committee on Library Development of the Pacific Northwest Library Association, involving multistate planning. Likewise a northern Great Lakes Planning Council has been created to develop a joint program of library organization for six states in the area.

Methods of obtaining larger unit of service. While a county or re-
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gional unit seems to be the common objective of these efforts, the legal means or methods used to obtain that end vary considerably, and the resulting library organization in many instances is coming to have extra-legal status. At the risk of controversy it is this writer's firm conviction that library service, whether it be in a city, township, county, or region can only be organized legally in two ways:

1. As a unit of government, i.e., a library organized as a part of government, and constituting a complete entity with a single administrative authority over the territory under its jurisdiction. Under this method the procedure in creating a county or regional library would be to combine existing libraries into one legal administration. When such consolidation takes place the number of existing units is usually decreased.

2. On a basis of contract, i.e., library service by contract, involving agreement of one administrative library unit, or government agency, with another library. If more than two libraries are included, the arrangement today is called a federation. A federation necessarily entails a contract. Likewise an association library is concerned essentially with contract service—to its members under the terms of membership, to the public in return for tax support, or by other understanding. When federation takes place, the number of units usually does not decrease but remains the same, and in some instances has increased. Since the National Plan for Library Service envisages a reduction in the number of units, federation may seem inconsistent with that.

Are the larger units of today being set up by consolidation or federation? As far as county libraries are concerned, search of library literature reveals only scattered examples in which consolidation of existing libraries into a single administrative unit, or with a larger unit, has taken place. There may be others, but they do not appear in the record. In Ohio the number of independent units has been reduced from 280 in 1948 to 271 in 1952. Four small libraries in Ross County previously operating as a federation consolidated into one. Several small libraries in Cuyahoga County merged with the Cuyahoga County Library. These, together with similar mergers in other counties of the state, account for the nine eliminations. The independent libraries of Yakima City and Yakima County in the state of Washington joined into a single unit in 1951, to form the Yakima Valley Regional Library. The
year previous the Vancouver City and Clark County libraries of the same state merged to become the Fort Vancouver Regional Library.²⁴

For the most part, however, the approach to county service seems to be through the door marked “Contract or Federation.” The trouble is that this door, once opened, remains open, and that those who enter federation can usually back out. A clash of personalities or an unresolved difference of opinion can dissolve the arrangement. Nevertheless, there are many interesting examples. Monroe County, New York, established in 1952 a loose combination of twelve libraries in the county, including the large Rochester Public Library, each library to continue its local financing. The federation is to provide interlibrary loan service, delivery, publicity, and a union catalog.²⁵

A hybrid plan, between consolidation and federation, was the interesting and unusual procedure used in 1948 to unify small and large libraries in Erie County, New York. This is the county in which some twenty small institutions, each independent, together with the Buffalo Public Library and the Grosvenor Library, became “a part” of the Erie County Public Library. The arrangement is rather complex, but the units mandatorily are a part of the county library as far as finances are concerned. They can receive funds only through the county library budget. The local boards remain in existence, however, and the administration of each library is coordinated through a contract signed by all the parties.²⁶

A contract between county officials and an existing library for service throughout a county is a familiar device.¹¹ This is particularly applicable where a large library is in existence, and suggests that whatever the legal organization of large existing public libraries, it has not tended to change and is not likely to do so in the near future. Preference for the status quo, with legal and taxing obstacles, may account for the situation. Notable exceptions appear in the Yakima and Vancouver, Washington, libraries mentioned above, and at Dayton, Ohio. Recent Ohio legislation facilitates the transformation of existing libraries into county units. As a result the large Dayton Public Library shifted its legal basis from the school district to the county in 1948.²⁷

In setting up multicounty or regional libraries, the legal problems involved in crossing county lines have no doubt discouraged the formation of single administrative units and encouraged use of the federations now so common. Wisconsin appropriated $50,000 in 1951 to set up a bicounty or regional library demonstration. This is planned
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as a three year trial, with the local area matching the state grant. Massachusetts, a state with many small libraries, in 1940 had established a form of regional library service in three separate sections, providing bookmobile service to supplement local facilities. In 1950 a new region, the Western Massachusetts Library Federation, was set up on the strength of $36,500 from Marshall Field for a two-year demonstration. This coalition is concentrating on provision of professional services—pooling the resources of the libraries and allowing each in turn to share the services of trained library specialists, while retaining local autonomy.18

Finally, something new has been added. In a few instances the state agency is coming into the picture, giving direct public library service to the individual, or is on the ground as a partner doing the behind-the-scenes tasks for the local libraries. This is happening in various ways, but the final effect it will have on the legal status of the local library remains to be seen. Delaware, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Tennessee, and Vermont are providing supplementary regional facilities in one form or another. Delaware, New Hampshire, and Vermont give direct service. New York's Watertown demonstration is providing a headquarters for some fifty small libraries in a three county area, but does not serve the public directly. This plan has received national attention, and its proponents argue that it leaves the legal basis of the local library intact but is broad enough to reach unserved sections. From the legal standpoint the only way such a result can be accomplished is by the creation of more independent units within the region, which would be counter to the attempt on the part of library leaders to lessen the number of libraries. Here it is of interest that "Tennessee has no regional library law but through contract has 10 regional libraries patterned after New York in general principle but less adequately financed." 29

Garceau's report for the Public Library Inquiry looks with favor upon the New York pattern, and suggests that possibly one-half of the total library expenditures within the state should be made directly by the state agency. He contends that "Such a plan escapes the most obvious hurdles of local tax limitations and frozen real property taxes." 30 The fallacy, however, is in the assumption that while local tax limitations and frozen taxes exist, they do not occur at the state level. Prior to the upheaval which produced the appropriation for
the New York regional experiment, the grant-in-aid arrangement in New York had remained frozen for many years.

The question arising here is whether library service can be provided partly by a local unit and partly by a state. Can it be managed half and half, or will the state, like the camel in the Arab's tent, eventually take over? It seems that this problem, and the broader aspects of the state agency's position in direct public library service, is in need of study. In this connection Leigh, in his summarizing for the Public Library Inquiry, implies that there may well be monopoly systems in library service comparable to those of public utilities. 31 The idea has merit; and ways in which the legal obstacles to consolidating all the existing units in a sample state could be overcome could be a subject of profitable study.

This paper cannot discuss the legal aspects of the countless and different tax provisions by which libraries are supported. Potterf held that "a cardinal defect in the legal personality of many library boards lies in the narrow limits within which they can levy taxes." 32 His solution was a broadening of the base of local taxation. This is certainly to be desired, but it should be pointed out that few library boards, if any, have direct power to levy taxes. Public libraries ordinarily have been organized as parts of taxing authorities, and not themselves as taxing authorities; so that final discretion for levying taxes, even within statutory limitations, usually rests with a school board or city council, or with township trustees or county officials. It would be most difficult for library boards to obtain legislation making them direct taxing authorities, and there is no indication of such a trend. Certainly existing association libraries, which are dependent upon whatever units they have persuaded to support them, show little desire to become part of government in order to overcome their inability to levy taxes. However, one result of introducing larger units of service is the broadening of the tax base, and is no doubt one of the factors encouraging the trend.

Within the last ten years there have been persistent efforts on the part of the library profession to secure federal legislation and funds to demonstrate public library service in every state. These attempts have thus far been unsuccessful, but if such legislation ever should be enacted a new pattern of library service would emerge, and could conceivably lead to changes in the legal status of library organization.

Summary. The constitution of many libraries still consists of the
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private corporation or association of one hundred years ago. Contrary
to the trend toward the large unit, small libraries are still being formed
on this basis. Women's clubs and other civic groups organize as private
associations to provide public library service to new communities and
new residential areas. Although no actual figures are available, it is
possible that more new small library units are being created today than
there is consolidation of existing units.

The legal basis of many other libraries is still bound up with the
time-honored unit represented by the municipality, township, or school
district. In the history of library development the county as the legal
basis for service has only recently become a favorite. Multicounty or
regional library organization seems to be the next step, in the crea-
tion of county and regional libraries, some are formed by consolida-
tion of existing agencies into single administrative units; but currently
a contract or federation of existing libraries, which may include the
state library agency, without loss of local autonomy, seems to be the
prevailing device. Lastly, with some state agencies providing facilities
directly, the state itself may become a legal basis for public library
service, and the largest unit of it.

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In September 1952 Fenton B. Turck, a New York consulting engineer, wrote that “The culture and the economy of the United States have, in less than a generation, exploded into an entirely new dimension.” 1 He presented evidence that this explosion “is not a pattern made by a people interested only in material progress—in bread alone.” It is, rather, a design that shows a well-rounded people, matching material progress with the building of a great new national culture. . . . In a further examination of these facts, and others, the pattern becomes clear—a picture of an entirely new kind of America, and Americans, whose new behavior, desires, needs, and tastes demand new patterns of service and distribution.”

Mr. Turck went on to show that in 1950, as compared with 1940, Americans spent ninety-six per cent more in constant dollars for books but bought motor cars at a rate only ten per cent greater than ten years ago. At this greatly accelerated rate they bought flowers and seeds, classical records, and theater and opera tickets. In one year they spent more to go to classical concerts than to baseball games. They bought more Bibles in the ten years than in the preceding forty years.

Even the sceptical will admit some degree of truth in these conclusions. A student of the library movement, in attempting to analyze the events of the past few years and to chart the course of its development, will do well to consider the relation between libraries and the over-all cultural patterns which are forming in our time. Are libraries moving in the same direction as the general culture? Are they behind, or in advance? Are the trends we think we see, really trends? Which events have significance? Which victories and which defeats are likely to have permanence?

It is generally accepted as a historical fact that public library development in the United States has been, up to now, predominantly local.
The first tax-supported public library was established in 1803; the first state library extension service was inaugurated by Massachusetts in 1890; a federal agency working in the same field was not created until 1937; and the final state agency was not established until 1949. It should be noted that, in this article, the state and federal library agencies considered are those concerned with the study, guidance, and promotion of public libraries and public library service, as distinguished from specialized and research libraries such as those of federal departments, and from state historical, legal, and other libraries.

In the past ten to fifteen years there has been an acceleration in the development of federal and state interest in library extension. The following events may be taken as examples:

2. Publication of Carleton B. Joeckel's *Library Service as Staff Study No. 11* for the Advisory Committee on Education, 1938.
3. Michigan's annual continuing appropriation of $500,000 for libraries beginning in 1938.
4. Library support as state policy adopted in Missouri's Constitution, 1945.
5. The movement leading to establishment of the National Relations Office of the American Library Association in 1945.
10. The New York State Library Aid Bill of 1950, providing $1,175,000.
11. Use of state aid for library salaries in Georgia, 1951.

These events are not the only ones which indicate the development of state and federal agencies for public library service, but they are important, and typical of many others. Each is an outgrowth of long evolution. Taken as a whole, they represent a phase of libraries' share in "the American explosion." Compared to the increased tempo of American life, the library explosion is subdued—a bit of fireworks
instead of atomic. It does represent an increasing vigor, an enlarging concept of library service, and development within the profession of a willingness to accept responsibility for controlling its own destiny.

It should be noted, also, that these events do not meet with universal favor within the library profession. There have been conflicts within the A.L.A. and within state library associations over the establishment of policies and their implementation. Many librarians do not perceive the trends, or disapprove the goals. Others are too concerned with individual problems to participate actively in larger movements. However, there is an increasing sense of direction, a gain in the skills necessary for attacking problems, and above all an increasing number of librarians working as a group for effective growth.

Of the examples of development of state and federal library agencies, some represent actions by library associations; some, moves by state governments; and some, undertakings of the federal government. These categories are not mutually exclusive, and indeed bear important relation to each other.

The official actions of the A.L.A. during the last twenty years are the easiest to recognize as forming a single pattern. They did not occur spontaneously; instead, they represent a stage in library thinking and library history. They are a logical outgrowth of the needs and desires which led to the founding of the American Library Association in 1876. The urge for librarians to associate themselves in considering mutual problems leads to working together to achieve mutual goals. Combining in a national organization promotes this nationally.

The establishment of the National Relations Office was part of the same movement which earlier had led to setting up the Service to Libraries Section in the Office of Education, and which had brought support of federal aid to education, including library service. The same movement produced planning on both a state and national scale by the national association; although in the final analysis that body could gain results only by pressure and persuasion.

This activity, as a function of the American Library Association, grew out of the lack of adequate governmental facilities for planning and leadership in the public library movement. The relative weakness of state and federal library extension agencies, when compared to the strength of the larger public libraries, coupled with the tradition of local autonomy, had left a void which could be filled only by a national association.
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It may follow that, as the governmental agencies grow stronger, they will do more and more in determining directions and thus tie the staff and line functions closer together. There is some evidence of this in the stronger state units today. However, if the historical pattern prevails, it will be a long time before all state agencies can assume such responsibility, and even longer before the federal organizations can do so. The greatest hope for early progress lies in the factors mentioned in Turck's "American Explosion."

An interesting variation of association planning is found in the Southeastern Library Survey, which was a cooperative effort by agencies of the federal government, the states, and state and regional library associations. Other examples have occurred in the Pacific Northwest and the Mountain Plains regions.

In the sixty years required to establish state library extension agencies, from Massachusetts to Arizona, their growth has been uneven and sporadic. Some older agencies have increased in vigor and influence. Some lately established ones have surpassed their forerunners in amount of appropriations, in strength of organization, and in influence upon state library development. Others, both old and new, have not been able to exert the influence or to provide the services now considered incident to state responsibility.

In the sixty years the pattern of state library service has changed from concern primarily with traveling libraries, meager supplements of local book funds, and aid in organizing libraries, to assistance in selecting librarians, establishing standards, demonstrating library service, and financial aid in making it adequate, and even to establishing regional centers as advocated in the National Plan for Public Library Service, or providing direct service where local resources are inadequate. At the same time the scope of public library activity itself has broadened from collecting and preserving books to organizing and presenting knowledge. Salesmanship has entered, work with groups is advancing, and the library is becoming more nearly an integral part of everyday community life.

The broadened concept of library service, with acceptance of the enlarged concept of state responsibility, has led to action by the states. The Missouri constitution, adopted in 1945, declared it to be a policy to promote the establishment and development of free public libraries and to provide for their support. Other states have had similar provisions written into their basic library law during the last
decade. Arizona was the last to establish a library extension agency, this in 1949, but it provided no funds for the program.

During the past seven years there have been a number of changes in the line of control for the state library agencies. In 1945 there were fourteen independent commissions, twenty-two units under state libraries (six of which were under state departments of education), nine directly under state departments of education, and two under other bodies. By 1952 there were twelve state library agencies under state departments of education, twenty under independent commissions, and sixteen as parts of state libraries. If there is any significance in this shifting of control, other than an indication of concern for state responsibility in public library development, it seems to lie in awareness of the difference between library service to a state government and library extension.

The implementation of state policies for library extension does not testify so much to the establishment of policy as to the determination to carry it out. Helen Ridgway, writing in the Municipal Yearbook for 1951, made an effective summary of the trend. She reported that for two year periods embracing 1950 there were material additions to state aid for public libraries in seventeen of the commonwealths, and that in nineteen others extension agencies were given increases for work allied to that ordinarily financed by state appropriations. New York through a new law added over $1,000,000 for 1950, bringing its total to $1,175,000. North Carolina assigned over $160,000 new money in an aggregate of $765,000, providing $550,000 to help speed and equalize public library service. Georgia raised its 1949–51 grant for rural libraries from $450,000 to $700,000. Missouri added $150,000 for 1949–51, reaching all told $872,000, which embraced over $400,000 to assist city, county, and regional libraries. Louisiana increased its appropriation for 1948–50 by $100,000 to a total of $450,000, of which more than half went for demonstrations in parishes.

Her statement points out several interesting facets. First, four of the five state agencies mentioned received state aid appropriations in excess of the $500,000 in Michigan's 1938 appropriation, which was noted as a landmark. Second, three of the five agencies were in the "impoverished" South, which had been considered too poor to support adequate library service. Third, the amount of increase ranged from $100,000 to over $1,000,000; and this increase, if viewed over a period of ten years, is significant. In the three southern states the appropria-
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tions for state extension agencies exceeded the total 1941 public library expenditures in those states, being approximately double in Georgia and North Carolina. Fourth, all three types of organization were represented. Two were under independent commissions, two under state departments of education, and one a part of the state library. Fifth, each of the programs aimed at the development of larger units of service, whether municipal, county, or regional. Although the small community library is still widely represented, evidence indicates that it is passing from the scene.

At the federal level, the pattern has been different. When viewed in historical perspective, however, it appears likely that the federal government will assume an increasing responsibility for the promotion and encouragement, if not the provision, of nationwide public library service.

Before the establishment of a federal service to libraries most federal library assistance was either indirect, i.e., aimed at a specific objective in which libraries were included by coincidence, or consisted in exempting libraries from the provisions of certain federal statutes. Two important exceptions are the sale of Library of Congress catalog cards and the furnishing of depository libraries for federal publications. In 1938 these federal services were adequately summarized by C. B. Joeckel for the Advisory Committee on Education in Staff Study No. 11.

During the previous year Congress had supplied an initial appropriation to the Library Service Division of the Office of Education, for the purpose of "making surveys, studies, investigations, and reports regarding public, school, college, university, and other libraries; fostering coordination of public and school library service; coordinating library service on the national level with other forms of adult education; developing library participation in Federal projects; fostering Nation-wide coordination of research materials among the more scholarly libraries, inter-State library cooperation, and the development of public, school, and other library service throughout the country." 21

The high promise of this statement of objectives was then and has continued to be offset by meager appropriations. The division, now a section, has maintained a skeleton organization, limited by lack of funds primarily to studies, investigations, and reports, and to some of the coordinating functions mentioned. It has served as a liaison
between libraries and various federal agencies in matters of surplus property and priorities and allocations of building materials.

However, this is not the entire story. The Service to Libraries Section has and is exerting an important influence in state library extension. Through cooperation with the Library Extension Division of the American Library Association, through national conferences of state library agencies, and through the transmission of information concerning state plans for library extension, as well as statistical information, it plays an important role at the state level. The importance of this is often entirely overlooked by observers, and even by participants in the conferences and by recipients of the benefits.

At this point it becomes necessary to consider the Library Demonstration Bill, and its successors, in the light of the historical framework and with reference to federal interest in library extension and development. This bill, first introduced in the 79th Congress, has been favorably reported by every committee to which it has been referred; has been passed once by the Senate, and failed by only three votes in the House of the 81st Congress. Nevertheless, up to now it has failed to pass.

Any study of federal relations in the extension and development of public library service must assess the importance of this bill and its place in the American pattern of intergovernmental relationships. Garceau intimates that any program of federal aid is premature from the standpoint of state agencies, but further states that “The use of Federal monies is justified as a convenient way to give intelligent direction to the movement...” He sees the Demonstration Bill and its successors not as an attempt to meet this need, but as an entering wedge for full-fledged federal aid.

The debate on the floor of the House indicates that enough congressmen shared his views to defeat the measure the only time it reached a vote. However, the fact that within five years the proposal gained almost enough support to succeed, suggests that some program conforming to the functions outlined in the original appropriation for the Library Service Division can become an expression of national policy.

In summary, it appears that there is a definite tendency for state library extension agencies to increase in strength, to enlarge the scope of their operations, to participate more directly in library service to the public, and to assume planning and promotional functions for
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statewide public library service. The federal government, following the historical pattern, is in an earlier stage of development in its relation to public library service. Its present roles seem to be those of research, and of liaison between state library agencies and the federal government, with a view to serving as a clearinghouse for library programming. However, the effort behind the Library Services Bills could enlarge the part of the federal government in a much shorter time than the sixty years which were required to establish state extension agencies.

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County and Regional Libraries in the United States

HELEN A. RIDGWAY

The first fifty years of the American public library movement was characterized by the establishment of many small city and town libraries throughout the country. The second fifty years, beginning about 1900, saw increasing emphasis upon the development of larger units of library service, including county and regional libraries.

In his detailed analysis of public library government Joeckel points out, “As currently used in the United States, the words ‘county library’ are loosely applied to any type of library service to a county or any considerable portion of it. Thus used, the term often gives an impression of unified service to the whole county which may or may not be the actual fact.” He then classifies the various types of libraries and various combinations of governmental and geographical situations which may contribute to what is commonly called county library service. Included are: (1) libraries which are part of a county government, (2) libraries which are part of both a city and a county government, and (3) municipal libraries or libraries of other types which serve a county by contract. Geographically, they may serve the entire area of a county, or only a part, usually omitting the larger cities.

Some years later Morgan explained, “Within these county libraries there exist so many variations in organization, size, income, governmental relations, and library procedure that the public concept evoked by the term ‘county library’ is, not surprisingly, often confused or inaccurate.” She then used a simplification of the Joeckel classification, grouping county libraries into three kinds: independent, contract, and city-county.

Miss Ridgway is Chief of the Bureau of Libraries, Connecticut State Department of Education.
The inclusion of the whole variety and range of county library service in lists and statistics of county libraries has been the general practice. The notable exception is the Statistical Circular published by the U.S. Office of Education. This list does not incorporate statistics for all libraries at the disposal of county residents, but only those set up under state law to operate as county libraries, or under county administration. It omits county libraries which provide their services through contractual agreements, and also municipal public libraries giving some county service but already reported in other statistical circulars or bulletins. It is especially useful, however, in supplying information about county libraries whose annual income is less than $5,000 and therefore does not entitle them to mention in the latest edition of the A.L.A. list.

The word "regional" as applied to library service also has taken on a number of different connotations. In 1937 Joeckel stated: "The words 'region' or 'regional' are being used in three senses in current writing on the extension of library service. These are: (1) To indicate library cooperation in a major geographical region, such as the Middle West; (2) To describe a regional public library system extending over a considerable area, such as a county library, a multiple-county library, or the Fraser Valley Demonstration Library in British Columbia; (3) To describe a type of branch library in a city or county public library system, as the Legler Regional Branch of the Chicago Public Library, or the Lancaster Regional Branch of the Los Angeles County Public Library."

On other occasions, too, Joeckel relates his discussion of regional libraries principally to the second use of the word and is clearly thinking of a library area made up of a number of counties and/or other taxing districts. In the National Plan he makes a distinction between "regional or multicounty libraries," "federated groups of libraries," and "special state districts." Harris, Merrill, Garceau, and Leigh all use the term "regional library" as synonymous with "multicounty library," but they all recognize and discuss other types of regional library service as well. Harris refers to five district classes of regional library service, including: (1) special library districts, (2) state regional units, (3) state regional service centers, (4) federal-state-county service, and (5) multicounty libraries.

A more detailed analysis of the various types may be found in Merrill's compilations of information on regional and district libraries,
to which reference has already been made. In these publications
the word "region" obviously refers to a district smaller than a state—
a multiple-county area or a trade area—and except for New England
inclusion is limited to cases in which laws or sections of laws permit
units larger than a county, whether called regional or district or rest-
ing on contract with other counties. In New England, where emphasis
is on the state and the town rather than the county, various contract
provisions for town libraries are comprehended, as well as the arrange-
ments under the Vermont state-regional law. Garceau refers to the
emerging pattern of regions centering in field offices of the state library
agency. Leigh agrees that the multicounty district is the most common
regional library unit, but also recognizes the growing importance of
the library districts constituted by state action and the public library
organization of metropolitan areas as a reflection of the general gov-
ernment pattern. The problems and patterns of library coordination
and consolidation in metropolitan areas are outlined with some
care by Vieg and by Winslow. Winslow suggests as stages of
evolution (1) cooperation, (2) coordination or federation, (3) volun-
tary consolidation, and (4) enforced consolidation, and indicates the
conditions under which each type might be appropriate.

The gist of the matter is that in general usage the term “regional
library” usually refers to a multicounty library. But the term “regional
library service” is used interchangeably for the multicounty libraries
of the Southeast and the Southwest; the ad hoc library districts of
Illinois; the state-regional library service centers of Vermont, New
Hampshire, Massachusetts, and New York; and the various services
for metropolitan areas being developed in the instances at Buffalo, Los
Angeles, and San Francisco. This distinction between terms
was well made by Joeckel, “The term ‘regional library service’ . . .
is used deliberately instead of ‘regional library’ since the essence of the
proposal is a co-operative organization of library service rather than
the governmental and administrative unit usually connoted by the term
library.”

The history of the first twenty-five years of county library develop-
ment in America has been ably summarized by Long. Early county
library laws in Indiana (1816) and in Wyoming (1886) did not result
in any appreciable building of book service for rural districts. Sandoe states that Ohio started the first county library in 1898, and that
Maryland pioneered with a book wagon serving a county in 1907.
Joeckel accepts Long's authority that county libraries for Hamilton and for Van Wert counties, Ohio, and for Washington County, Maryland, were all authorized by law in 1898. Concerning the rivalry between the two Ohio libraries Long explains, "Unquestionably the Hamilton County bill became a law five days before the Van Wert County bill, although the general county library bill to which Van Wert County stood sponsor was introduced earlier. The service in Hamilton County through deposit stations and the central library was in operation before Van Wert enjoyed library service, but it was simply an extension of privileges from the city library, and not, as in the case of Van Wert, a library created from the beginning as a county institution." Long gives April 9, 1898, as the date of incorporation of the Washington County Library, but 1901-02 as the first year of operation, and 1905 as that for the Maryland book wagon. An early history setting forth Van Wert's claim as the pioneer county library appeared in 1914 and included a summary of all other county library developments up to that date. Fair compiled a list of articles on service organized by counties and other large units in 1935. A history of the Washington County Library became available in 1951.

In general, county library development was irregular and slow until California's county library act of 1909 and county free library law of 1911. Both Long and Joeckel stress the leadership of the state librarian, James L. Gillis, in convincing the government, the people, and the librarians of California of the importance of county libraries at a strategic point in the history of libraries in the state.

Long reports 200 counties over the nation as having county library service in 1925, among which were 42 of California's 58. By 1935 California and New Jersey were the only states mentioned by Sandoe and Morgan in which county libraries were numerous and flourishing; although the only states without general laws for the establishment of such libraries in 1935 were Delaware, Idaho, North Dakota, and the New England group. Delaware already had a special county library law for Newcastle County, and New England was developing complete library coverage along other than county lines.

Referring to statistics compiled by the American Library Association, Morgan continues, "... in 1935 there were actually in operation only 225 county libraries in the continental United States with incomes of $1,000 or more a year. Stimulated by improved legislation, state aid, and private grants, the movement again gained momentum, with the
result that by March, 1944, 651 counties were organized for library service in the continental United States. The latest revision of the A.L.A. statistical summary, that of 1949, lists 736 counties having county or regional library service. In this figure are 35 multicounty libraries serving 87 counties, and 109 counties securing services from state library extension agencies. Ten counties coterminous with cities were not included. The financial standard applying was “a minimum annual income of $5,000 or 10 cents per capita, whichever is larger.” Only 32 libraries met the A.L.A. minimum financial standard of $1.50 per capita, and only 16 also met the A.L.A. minimum population standard of 25,000.

Much of this county and multicounty library development has taken place in the South, particularly in the Southeast. Harris attributes the growth to the fairly substantial amounts of state aid, to the presence and stimulation of the TVA, to the standards for high school libraries set by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, and to the fact that the lack of previous library development has made it easier to secure cooperation for service over a large area. She also recognizes the stimulation of the W.P.A. grants. Merrill and Martin, too, emphasize the impetus state aid has given to the development of larger units of library service.

The TVA’s encouragement of regional services is similarly mentioned by Pritchett, and libraries are specifically cited as an example of such development by Lilienthal. Morgan points out that the earlier grants from the Julius Rosenwald Fund, in 1929, for the demonstration of county library service in seven southern states, really led to the sponsorship of W.P.A. library projects in the 1930’s. A study of these Rosenwald county library demonstrations has been made by Wilson and Wight, and a country-wide one of the extension of library service under the W.P.A. by Stanford. Other important reviews of the spread of library service in the South are attributable to Barker, and to Wilson and Milczewski.

In the North the most notable recent development of both county and regional library service is now taking place in New York State. A series of library studies begun in 1945 by the Division of Research of the State Education Department resulted in an interim summary by Crane in 1947, and a final report by Armstrong and others in 1949. The studies included an evaluation of public library service in New York State, with suggestions for a division of the state into fifteen
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regions, each to be served by a regional center. These centers were to be wholly state-supported and state-operated agencies, designed to perform functions that could be most effectively managed on a region-wide basis. Service was to be given directly to local public libraries and librarians, not to the general public, just as a wholesaler supplies the wants of the retailer.

The immediate result of the studies just cited was an appropriation of $100,000 by the 1948 legislature, for the establishment of an experimental program in the Watertown region of the state, to last approximately three years. During the period a careful evaluation was made of the experiment, and as it was considered successful the plan was continued on a permanent basis. An interim report 42 on it was made in 1950. In addition to their value for New York State, the studies related to the experiment became the basis of some of the later and more extensive research undertaken for the Public Library Inquiry by Armstrong,43 Garceau,44 and Leigh.45

A second result of this concentrated attention on library needs in New York State was the organization of a Library Trustees Foundation and the appointment of a Governor's Committee on Library Aid, whose first report 46 was issued in 1950. It was primarily due to the trustees' interest and effort that a bill authorizing substantial aid to county library units was passed by the 1950 legislature. For the first year a state appropriation of $1,000,000 was made. When fully operative, the maximum state financial aid to local libraries would be $3,653,000 a year, approximately thirty-five per cent of the current amount provided by local taxation for library support. The formulas for the various state grants in New York State are summarized by Leigh,47 and the regulations under which they are administered have been issued by the Commissioner of Education.48

The question raised by Leigh whether this provision for state aid to county libraries will supersede or include the program for regional library service centers, such as the one at Watertown, has been explored in some detail by Bradley.49 He suggests that the two plans would seem to be complementary, not competitive, the direct state aid being especially applicable to the more populous metropolitan areas, and the regional service centers to those unserved or dependent on existing small libraries. As of July 1, 1951, Bradley reports three county-wide plans operating under the 1950 law, these being in Chemung, Erie, and Schenectady. He tells of schemes outlined in four other

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counties, and of plans in the predraft stage in twenty-two more counties.

The particularly complex situation in Erie County, New York, is discussed by Mahoney,17 who designates the library there as the first of the federated kind of public library in the United States; although Bradley points out that it has not yet resulted in a complete amalgamation of the two metropolitan and the smaller outlying libraries into a consolidated county organization. Progress is steadily being made, however, according to the library's own annual reports.16 Plans for the development of regional library service on a state-wide basis are also proceeding in a number of other states,50 notably in Washington, where the organization is based on a report by Bowerman.51

In 1923 both the American Library Association and the National Grange passed resolutions offering their belief that the county library system would bring to country residents opportunities more nearly equal to those of the city dweller, and so preserve and enrich farm life.30 Subsequent experience has shown, and authorities in general agree, that with notable exceptions, the typical county in the United States is both too small in population and too limited in financial resources to provide adequate library service to rural areas. In moving toward larger units, however, many proponents of library extension still rely mainly on the county as a base for organization, and avoid creating ad hoc districts in disregard of county lines.

As Leigh puts it, "The library extension leaders who have accepted the concept . . . [of larger public library units for rural areas] have actually rejected the county as the universal unit for rural library organization. Even in California where large county libraries developed early as models for emulation, some of the counties lack the population and tax income considered adequate for full, modern library service." 52 Garceau 53 and Leigh 54 both point out that the estimated minimum workable unit of population has changed from 25,000 to 40,000 to 200,000, and the proposed standards of expenditure from $6,000 to $25,000, to $37,500, to $60,000, and now to $100,000.

The breakdown in the old distinction between "rural" and "urban" living also has an important bearing on the development of library service to rural people, as Kolb 65 suggests, and even nonlibrarians like Odum 56 and Reed 57 sense the implication for libraries of the accelerated development of metropolitan areas and of regional planning generally. Even the multicounty region and the metropolitan area
as units of library government seem inadequate to Garceau and Leigh, and they follow Joeckel, Wilson, Noon, and others in emphasizing the increasingly important role of the state in the strengthening and extension of library service—through stimulation and supervision, through state grants-in-aid, and through the administration of state-regional library service centers.

Nor has the role of the federal government in relation to library service been overlooked. Joeckel envisages an enlarged and greatly strengthened national agency equipped to provide effective library leadership, supplementary materials and services, and federal grants-in-aid in a variety of forms, including grants for regional library service. Garceau concludes, however, "... despite the compelling logic of Louis Round Wilson's Geography of Reading, there is no state in the union which could not today easily meet ALA's standards for public libraries." He suggests, therefore, federal grants-in-aid to state library agencies for administration, rather than for demonstration of county or regional library services, with a second type of federal grant to cooperating research libraries for the purpose of building a national network of coordinated research facilities. Leigh appears to accept the validity of federal grants to public libraries if administered by state library agencies for purposes of stimulation rather than equalization, but adds, "A more fundamental type of Federal participation in public library development in the years ahead is by leadership and financial support of the country's research library and bibliographical facilities."

For the next decade at least the trends in the development of county and regional library services would appear to be toward creation of large multicounty libraries by consolidation, federation, or contract; the organization of metropolitan library areas by federation, contract, and occasionally by consolidation; and the further development of state-regional centers for the provision of supplementary library services to local municipal, county, and multicounty libraries. Munn expresses some doubt about the state-regional office being the answer for all forty-eight states, and suggests waiting for evidence from present experiments in Vermont, Massachusetts, Missouri, and New York. Meanwhile present county and regional librarians should derive much help from the references already cited, and from such summaries of discussion and experience as Reaching Readers and Schenk's forthcoming manual. 

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References


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HELENA RIDGWAY

The scope of what may properly be termed personnel work in public libraries has not been defined with sufficient clarity to make possible the easy identification and selection of pertinent items from library literature. Furthermore, subject headings in current indexes do not keep pace with the development of new concepts and terminology in a field in which that literature is rapidly expanding. The major groupings of subjects in personnel administration in public libraries may, however, be expected to follow fairly closely those used in the broader field of public personnel administration. A check of the subject headings used in four recent issues of Personnel Literature, a bibliography issued by the United States Civil Service Library, shows current matter listed under sixty to seventy headings. Among the larger topics included are: position classification, salary determination, recruitment and selection, training, performance evaluation, conditions of employment, employee organizations, and problems of organization and administration.

The first effort to encompass in one volume a fairly comprehensive treatment of the methods and problems in the field was Herbert's Personnel Administration in Public Libraries. Although now largely outdated, it still has some value for the neophyte and serves as a useful introduction. A second volume of broad scope is Personnel Administration in Libraries, edited by Martin. Because of the specific problems treated in the papers and the authority of the authors, it is one of the most useful volumes on the subject.

The Telford Report, published in 1927, is among the "landmark" titles in library personnel work. Indeed, it almost marks the beginning of the authoritative literature in this field. Using data from 6,000 positions in about 150 libraries, it is a factual study of the basic problems of position classification in libraries, and represents a stage of develop-

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ment which still has not been reached by many public libraries. The later Classification and Pay Plans for Municipal Public Libraries of the American Library Association uses the general framework developed by the earlier publication, but presents the material in very different form, without making significant improvement in the basic theory or techniques. The comparable 1951 report on the same topic has wisely abandoned the effort to tailor a classification plan for each library, in favor of statements of principles and methods, so that each institution may develop its own classification and pay plan to fit its particular situation and needs.

Representative Positions in the Library of Congress is noteworthy because, in addition to the large number of class specifications given, representing most of the levels and types of work in the library, the volume shows in charts and text the over-all organization and staff and the organization and major purposes of each separate organizational unit. A brief volume issued by the Virginia State Library Extension Division attempts to formulate specifications for typical classes of positions, and salary schedules for several variant forms of public libraries in that state. A publication of the New Jersey Library Association has somewhat similar purposes. The effort to define the professional and nonprofessional job content of library positions produced the useful Descriptive List of Professional and Nonprofessional Duties in Libraries.

For a number of years data on salaries currently paid were published in the A.L.A. Bulletin in connection with statistics for public libraries. The discontinuance of this annual compilation led to a special tabulation for a group of large libraries by Galt, of Buffalo, now continued by Enoch Pratt Free Library. Partly because of dissatisfaction expressed at recent American Library Association meetings with the proposed revision of the Association’s minimum salary standards without inclusion of current scales, a study of salaries was made in 1952, and a first report based on that has appeared. Also, David summarized the economic status of library personnel in 1949, presenting salary data in a variety of classifications and for several types of libraries. For such information covering a wide range of individual public libraries, the best published sources are now the annual reports of the various state library agencies.

The selection of library employees and in-service training are given well-rounded consideration in two papers in the volume edited
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by Martin. *Internship in the Library Profession* is the subject of an article by St. John. Alvarez has made a detailed study of the qualifications of 241 directors of public libraries in cities of over 10,000 population in seven midwestern states. Personnel and training agencies have been surveyed and reported upon in Indiana, Michigan, Tennessee, and New Jersey. At the University of Chicago Library Institute in 1948 Munn read a paper entitled "Education for Public Librarianship" and Ersted one on the subject of "Education for Library Service to Children and Youth."

A comparative study of service ratings in several public libraries was made recently by Elliott. Conditions of employment are included in the report of David previously referred to. Certification has been a topic of recurring interest for a number of years, and one compilation summarizing practices in the several states has appeared. This summary subsequently has been brought more nearly up to date. Kavanaugh and Wescott, after a survey of opinion, prepared a statement headed "A National Examination as a Basis for Library Certification." Practices of individual states have often been reported in brief articles, but the recent proposals for New York seem to represent the most significant progress on this problem.

Personnel practices in a group of civil service and non-civil service public libraries were studied by Goldhor. A detailed treatment of the selection of the head librarian in a civil service jurisdiction applies the case study method to a single position, while a general report on civil service and libraries answers many of the common questions on this subject.

Organizations of employees is the subject of a thoughtful paper by Phelps, and the incidence of unions in libraries has been described by Berelson. The need for a new approach to the problems of morale is eloquently stated by Gardner. A group of papers on retirement for librarians was recently edited by Goldhor. Two publications prepared by the staff of the Minneapolis Public Library have been reprinted by A.L.A. The first emphasizes public relations with patrons, and the second supervision of personnel.

The effort to encourage individual public libraries to prepare well-rounded codified manuals of personnel organization and procedure should be stimulated by a recent publication of the A.L.A. Board of Personnel Administration. Many of the volumes recounting the sur-
vey of the Los Angeles Public Library have findings and implications for personnel and Volume IX is devoted exclusively to personnel administration. This is the outstanding example of a factual study of policies and practices in a single public library, and its findings and recommendations are of wide significance for other institutions.

The Public Librarian, one of the volumes growing out of the Public Library Inquiry, contains the largest amount of material within any one volume on the specific topic of professional personnel in public libraries. Among the general conclusions are the following: (a) public librarians “are not a clearly defined professional group,” (b) “both the general level and the career pattern of salaries for professional personnel in public libraries are inadequate and tend to be inequitable,” (c) a large proportion of the personnel do not have the collegiate and professional education called for, (d) “personnel in public libraries is inadequately organized and supervised,” and (e) “present public librarians are, on the average, oriented by temperament, interest, and training more toward the atmosphere and the working pattern of the traditional public library than toward the purposes and activities of the institution envisaged by the current official public library leaders.”

A survey of the literature on personnel in public libraries seems to indicate that while it is extensive, most of it is elementary and un-integrated. Perhaps with a view to remedying this, a subcommittee of the American Library Association Board on Personnel Administration has been working on the preparation of a bibliographic essay reviewing the literature on library personnel administration.

On the subject of financial administration, the relatively small body of substantial writing in the public library field may, for convenience, be grouped under the following topics: the place of the library in public finance; budget; income, including that from federal and state aid; expenditures; and accounting. Two volumes, neither of them now up to date but covering several or most of these subjects are those by Vitz and by Wight. The first, a collection of papers by librarians, emphasizes financial problems of the library in the early years of the depression of the 1930’s, but includes points of view which still are pertinent.

Chatters treats the relationship of the library to the local government, an important problem not limited to finance. The trend toward home rule charters, now making rapid progress in some states, will
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undoubtedly affect fiscal as well as other aspects of the public library program.

The best treatments of the function, structure, and operation of the public library budget are to be found in the general works by Vitz and Wight, referred to above. However, the theory and practice as expressed in these volumes are less adequate, though more specifically pertinent, than will be found in the general and specialized literature of public administration. Discussions of the library budget emphasize the income part of the budget—sources of income, methods of securing additional financial support, and winning the “budget campaign.” Drury and Shedd have prepared a “library finance handbook” especially for Kansas libraries.

The performance budget, representing a relatively new topic in public finance, has not yet been adequately described as it relates to libraries. Such a budget is set up in terms of (a) the specific anticipated work program, including volume of work performance, (b) cost per unit for each type of work to be performed, and (c) the total of the amounts of money required as shown by the products of the volumes of work and the corresponding costs per unit. Obviously a satisfactory performance budget cannot be prepared unless the basic work units have been defined and compiled and unit-cost data have been determined.

Two opposing points of view relating to local sources of tax income for library support are (a) that the proceeds of a definite tax or rate should be earmarked for the library, and (b) that the library should receive its support in the form of appropriations from the general revenue of the jurisdiction. The provision of a definite millage or a minimum-maximum range is common in general library legislation. A part of the proceeds of the intangible property tax is used successfully in Ohio. Librarians have tended to support the first point of view, while the general theory of public finance has tended to oppose such a piece-meal approach to the financial support of governmental services. In fact, public administrators would tie all aspects of public library administration and finance more closely to the local government.

The volume by Armstrong, published in mimeographed form for the Public Library Inquiry, contains data on income and expenditures from the Inquiry sample of libraries and for the several states, and represents an important and unique contribution.
Three particular aspects of library income have dominated the library literature of the past two decades, namely the library in the depression, federal aid, and state aid. The first and second of these topics often are considered together. Duffus described the financial plight of “our starving libraries” during the depression years of the early 1930’s, following studies of ten American communities. Stanford reported a comprehensive investigation of federal aid during the depression years. Descriptions of the programs of two states are included in his volume. Scores of articles about local and statewide programs have appeared. Chatters gives a succinct overview of the implications of financial aid from central government—state and federal—and makes general suggestions about future policy.

Many of the early articles about federal aid are concerned with the dangers inherent therein, and are now primarily of interest to the historian. Joeckel’s report on the problem, and the wide experience of libraries with various forms of emergency federal aid during the depression years, have done much to promote the acceptance by the profession of the general principles of federal participation in financing extension of library service. The published hearings on the federal library service bill contain evidence supporting the now approved point of view, as well as details covering the proposed distribution of federal aid to the several states. Late in the fall of 1952 plans were announced by the American Library Association to reintroduce in the 83rd Congress the library service bill which failed to be brought to a vote in the 82nd Congress.

Wachtel published in 1933 a study of state provisions for the support of municipal public libraries. An excellent brief history and statement on the present status of state aid as of 1945 is given by Merrill. Reports on the need for aid of that sort, and on plans for specific programs, are common in the publications of state agencies and associations. Possibly the most careful of these have emanated from New York State. The Report of the Governor’s Committee on Library Aid gives important background information, together with the text of the State Aid Law of 1950. Programs of assistance are now operating successfully in many states, under widely different plans and methods of support. Possibly the outstanding tendency in the best of the state-aid programs is the emphasis upon strengthening the services of small libraries by some type of consolidated or integrated large-area plan.
as distinct from the early methods of equal small grants or direct per-
capita payments.

Public library expenditures in cities of over 100,000 population have been studied by Deily in relation to the total municipal expenditures and the economic ability of the jurisdictions. Kaiser has made comparisons of trends, including expenditures, in a group of large public libraries from 1900 to 1946.

Library accounting is similar in principle to general accounting, and consequently has received relatively little attention. Special manuals for public libraries have been prepared by Brown and by Bray, but local needs will probably continue to dictate the practices of individual libraries. The chief advance in recent years has been the introduction of machine methods. Parker describes library applications of punched cards in financial administration.

In a chapter on “cost accounting” Wight refers to significant studies up to 1943. The data for the Montclair survey of costs in thirty-seven public libraries, reported by Baldwin and Marcus, represent the largest body of information on this subject. Possibly the most significant contribution of their effort is the compilation on the distribution of time in various types of activities, which was a by-product of the cost investigation.

An important analysis of the financial administration of a single library system is given in one of the volumes of the survey of the Los Angeles Public Library. On a lower key there is Yabroff’s survey of business procedures in the Racine (Wisc.) Public Library.

Examination of the literature reveals no example of a library which has integrated cost accounting with its general accounting. Obviously, such a process will require refinements in practice and routine reports regarding the volume of work accomplished. The units of performance which are recorded must be directly related to the categories into which expenditures are classified or can be segregated, since the unit cost is the total expense of an operation or activity divided by the number of work units accomplished. Performance budgeting, which has been referred to earlier, requires unit cost data, thus illustrating the basic unity of budgeting, accounting, and cost accounting.

The present writer suggests that consideration be given by public libraries to cost accounting and performance budgeting, using a few simple basic types of activities or services which are common to prac-
tically all libraries, such as (a) acquisition and processing, (b) preservation and storage, (c) circulation, (d) information and reference work, including the advising of readers, and (e) other services. For the first four of these the count of number of items gives the performance data. With the exception of the volume of information and reference services these figures are now typically recorded. The "other services" consist primarily of a variety of activities for individuals and groups, such as forums, concerts, and exhibitions, where the basic count is the number of persons served. Within each of the five broad types of services suggested as measures of performance, unit costs would probably vary widely with different types of materials and programs. Some libraries would want to make further refinement of the data, so as to determine the variations in unit costs among a variety of activities. The total cost of performing the anticipated number of units of work should add up to the total budget request. The costs of activities and operations which are nonproductive of any of the recorded work units, such as administration, and building operation and maintenance, must be allocated to the various appropriate work units.

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Buildings and Equipment

CHARLES M. MOHRHARDT

A PHENOMENAL construction boom has taken place in public library building during the past seven years. New edifices are appearing all over the country. In metropolitan Detroit alone some seventeen new public library buildings have been planned or put up in this short period. Most of the construction nationally has been confined to branch libraries in the large and medium-sized cities, and to main libraries in the medium and small-sized communities.

Information concerning library buildings erected since World War II is brief and widely scattered in library and architectural journals, in newspapers, and in the files of the American Library Association. Unfortunately there is no recent publication on buildings comparable to Wheeler and Githens' monumental prewar volume. The references included in this article have been selected to show the most recent trend in the design of public library buildings.

The new buildings indicate clearly that a basic shift in style is taking place. The "monumental" and "informal" designs of earlier periods are being replaced with "functional" structures which fit the needs of their communities and help to promote the library program rather than simply serve as reading rooms and repositories for books. The "functional" library is simple in form, open, efficiently laid out, flexible, and relatively cheap to operate. In physical appearance it is more friendly and inviting than its predecessors.

The change in public library design has been brought about by many influences. Perhaps the greatest impetus toward the new approach sprang from the lean years of the depression, the scarcities created by the war, the ever-present need for more economy in governmental services, and a striving for the best possible library service at the least possible cost. A second factor favoring new design was growing awareness of the uninviting aspect of older libraries, which were poorly

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lighted, expensive to operate, wasteful of space, and apparently suffered from a disease which manifested itself in a brown and tan coloration. A third influence was the inauguration of new services designed to make the resources of the library more useful to the community. Finally, there has been a realization that improved methods of library operation bring new and different physical requirements.\(^5\)

One of the more noticeable new developments in the public library is its emergence from the side streets, or quiet neighborhoods, into the hurly-burly of the shopping center, often having as its neighbor a supermarket or a local movie house. The convenience to the library patron of having his library building, and particularly that of a branch, located in the business area and within a few steps of the places where he does his weekly marketing, far offsets any advantage of quiet which the more secluded spot offered.\(^7\) Sites are now selected for availability to the user.\(^8\) Parking lots are often furnished to the public and the staff. Bicycle racks are placed near entrances to avoid clutter on the sidewalks and round doors.

Since buildings have been located in business districts they have come to embody many of the features which merchants have found important in attracting customers.\(^9\) Entrances are placed at sidewalk level for easy access, and large areas of glass are used on fronts, in order to permit passers-by to view the books and readers and the colorful and inviting interiors.\(^10\)-\(^14\)

It is inside the buildings, however, that the greatest changes have been made.\(^15\) Light-colored floor coverings are used to brighten the effect and to reflect light on the lower bookshelves. The trend is away from cork floors and toward asphalt tile, rubber tile, and linoleum. Painted cinder block walls appear to be increasing in favor, as they provide a colorful and attractive texture, beside having desirable acoustical properties and being much cheaper than plaster. The treatment of ceilings with sound-absorbing materials is standard practice. A highly important quality for any new library—and this is particularly true of the branches—is convertibility. Changes may occur in any neighborhood over a period of twenty to twenty-five years. The modern branch library building, placed in its appropriate location and constructed without columns and interior bearing walls, can easily be converted to commercial purposes. It has a resale value which was not possessed by the older single-purpose buildings.

The layout of the new interiors differs widely from that of the old.\(^16\)
Many of the new features have been introduced to eliminate the forbidding atmosphere of earlier days, and to invite the reader to use the books and facilities at hand. The public service space no longer is divided into rooms designated as being for adults, juvenile departments, and reference purposes. The separating walls are omitted, and any division desirable is achieved by means of free standing bookcases. The inside of the building remains open, free, and pleasant to the sight. Not the least important aspect is flexibility. As the needs of the community change, altering, for example, the proportion of children to adults and bringing necessity for reallocation of space, the building can be adapted with a minimum of cost through the simple expedient of moving bookcases.

The new buildings often are so designed that all public service may be kept on the ground floor. Usually one control desk can serve for charging and discharging of books and registration of borrowers. In many newer plans such a desk is placed so that its staff may supervise most of the public service area, this being particularly true in branches. In main buildings, where limitations of building site must be taken into consideration, the effort is toward the maximum public service on the ground floor. This arrangement renders the library easier for the public to use, eliminates the need for space-consuming stairways and corridors, enables the public service staff to be concentrated on one floor, induces coordination in work assignments, and adds greatly to ease of supervision.

Careful studies have been made of the requirements of illumination. While there is no universal agreement on the amount of light required for reading areas, experience has shown that forty foot-candles maintained is adequate for most readers. The chief consideration is that all public service areas be evenly lighted, so that free-standing bookcases, tables, chairs, and other equipment may be moved to new locations and still have the necessary supply.

An aid to good lighting, as well as to economy in many directions, has been the lowering of the ceilings and the use of bright or light colors on walls, floors, furniture, and books. The esthetic appeal of a room where color has been employed with discrimination and taste is a psychological lift to both staff and public. The old heavy oak tables, with chairs and reading lamps to match, have been replaced with end-tables and colorful plastic upholstered chairs, which lend the
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air of an inviting lounge. Reference areas are provided with individual tables, or with those of a type seating four persons.

There have been many changes in branch building layout with reference to public service. The place reserved for young people is located between the children's and the adult areas, so that the child is able to progress toward adult reading as rapidly as his intellectual interests impel him. The reference facilities, since they are used heavily by boys and girls of high school age, are placed near to, or sometimes in, the section used by the youth group. The adult lounge, for obvious reasons, is situated near the adult bookstacks. Since this lounge commonly is a most attractive and colorful area, it has been placed directly inside the large glass part of the building front.

A meeting room has become an important and almost necessary feature of the modern branch library. The addition of a great variety of community services in the form of educational programs has called for rooms which can be separated from the main area for such activities. The ideal location for the meeting room is on the ground floor, at a point easily accessible from the children's and adult sections. This arrangement permits crowds of children to move in or out for story hours without disturbing other patrons. It also allows the space to be used for smoking when no gatherings are scheduled.

In this connection, public librarians are recognizing the need for smoking facilities in their buildings. The patron who spends considerable time in the library should not be required to retire to the outside for the relaxation of a smoke. The dual-purpose meeting and smoking room is often separated from the lounge area by means of a glass partition, which provides for adequate supervision. When the space is used for meetings, draperies can be drawn to insure privacy. Colorful draperies can have a softening effect and add to the distinction of the building as a whole.

Thus far we have been concerned with trends in public library design which directly affect the patron and concern his attraction and comfort. There are other new features which are not obvious to the public, but are of tremendous importance in the behind-the-scenes life of a library.

A common practice in planning buildings of the older type was the inclusion of multiple small workrooms. The trend now is toward incorporation of these into one larger area which may serve two or three departments, thus saving in building cost and lessening the
duplication of typists, and of typewriters and other equipment. A further economy in the workroom may be achieved by adopting work stations in place of desks. Each of these is assigned to a staff member to assure him adequate space for his routine duties. In branch libraries the staff workroom is usually placed directly behind the control desk, so that clerical operations may be removed from the desk and not appear overprominent,28 and yet be near at hand. It is planned with access either from the street or from a vestibule, permitting deliveries without disturbance of public service departments.

The staff kitchenette is sometimes situated adjacent to the workroom, in which case it is open only to the staff; or it may be placed near the meeting room, in position to serve as well such occasional groups as may hold meetings in the building.29 Available on the market today are self-contained kitchen units which include a small stove, refrigerator, sink, and cupboard. Such a unit, and a snack bar attached to the wall, conserve space in the staff quarters and allow use of part of the room for a staff lounge.

One of the most importance shifts in the arrangement of public libraries is a change in the situation and size of the control desk. According to this, the desk is adjacent to the entrance and parallel to the course of the borrower as he enters, rather than directly ahead of him. Such a position seem preferable, inasmuch as the borrower sees the book collection at once and, furthermore, does not feel that he is under observation from the moment he enters the building. The new control desk is smaller and lower than the old, being thirty-five inches high on the adult end and thirty inches high on the juvenile end.2 This smaller desk is made possible by the newer methods of book charging, such as the transaction system and other devices for routine simplification. The transaction method of book charging, incidentally, is being successfully used with such varied types of equipment as punched card machinery, tape and wire recorders, and photographic machines which reproduce on either film or paper.

Great attention has been given to saving space and time in the smaller details of the new buildings. It has been found that the elimination of closets reduces building costs and provides greater flexibility, especially since oversized closets tend to become catchalls and to harbor material and articles of no value. Undersized closets, on the other hand, result in an overflow and general clutter. A desirable alternative is substitution of movable steel or wood cabinets, which
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may be added to if more space is needed. They also contribute to the flexibility of the building, as they may be moved when expediency indicates a change.

Many libraries are now using bin-type periodical cases. These have a sloping hinged surface, where current issues of magazines are displayed while previous issues are stored behind them. The whole cover of the current issue is in view, there is no overlapping of items, and the effect is pleasing and colorful as well as convenient. The bin-type case does, however, require more space than the more conventional type of periodical rack.

Perhaps a further word is indicated regarding trends in the selection of furniture, since chairs are the obvious spots for placing the warm or contrasting bits of color necessary to a pleasing general appearance. New plastic materials are available in a wide choice of color and designs. They have proved to be durable and easy to keep clean. Many libraries are buying chairs designed for hotels and restaurants, since they are built to withstand the rough wear of public use. Selections are made with regard to a room as a whole, and with thought of wall and floor coverings as well as of the heights and relative weight values of the other equipment. A colorful, balanced, well-lighted interior which may be seen from the outside, particularly at night, is a far more potent advertisement for library service than any showcase could be.

Some libraries have added exterior conveniences which deserve attention. One of these is a timing device which floodlights a parking area, and which may be controlled so that the lights are turned off automatically after the staff has left the grounds. Another innovation is the book-return box, which is placed at the curb in front of the building for the convenience of the patron driving to or from work.

There has been no intention in this article of implying that all old ways are bad and all new ways are good. Tradition has its place in the lives of all of us. It lends a pattern to our affairs in which we find comfort and security, and breaks with it are wisely undertaken with caution. What has been presented here, in the way of innovations and changes of various kinds, represents tried and tested features which have proved satisfactory, desirable, and acceptable not only to staffs but to the public and to the handlers of city purse-strings. Staffs, on the whole, have expressed appreciation of the ease of operation of the new structures. Public enthusiasm for the new kind of building is
articulate, and evidenced by growing use of library facilities. Those
members of city governments who control budgets are aware that
buildings of the type described are less expensive to construct and to
operate than others, and have resulted in more widespread service.
In the face of such wholesale popular approval there can be no doubt
that public libraries are establishing new traditions which more than
compensate for loss of the old.

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English Public Libraries

LIONEL R. MccOLVIN

The public library services of Great Britain differ from those of other countries in that all are provided under one body of library legislation and governed and financed by local authorities. All are managed by library committees appointed by, and responsible to, the elected councils of urban and county areas which are independent of one another and of the central government—the latter having no share in their management or financing—and which are free to determine their own standards, provisions, and activities. This administrative framework was determined by the Public Libraries Act of 1919, which permitted county councils to provide libraries in all districts for which urban (or rural county-district) authorities had not adopted the preceding Libraries Acts. The result is not an administrator's ideal. The nearly six hundred independent authorities serve populations ranging from less than two hundred to over a million. Few county library systems cover the whole of the geographical, much less the administrative, county area; some counties provide for municipalities much larger than others with their own municipal services; there is little coordination of independent towns and the surrounding county districts, and much duplication of provision where county headquarters are situated in towns with their own libraries.

Nevertheless, despite this untidy, unsuitable framework, a great deal has been achieved, and progress continues steadily. Only 42,000 people in Great Britain and Northern Ireland are without any public library. Issues per head of total population have increased from 4.4 in 1935 to 6.77 in the year 1951-52, and expenditure from 1s. 0½d. to 4s. 1½d. Summary statistics showing conditions are published every year in the Library Association Record. The present state of county libraries is described in a conference paper by H. D. Budge. The fifth quin-

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quennial Report on the Municipal Library System of London and the Home Counties, 1944 was issued in 1946. A detailed account based on the personal investigation of twelve surveyors in 1936 appeared in the Library Association’s Survey of Libraries, and the McColvin Report of 1942 describes the situation as it was at that time. Further, McColvin outlines the position of 1950 in the centenary issue of the Library Association Record, which also includes a brief account of the movement since its beginnings by W. A. Munford, the author of the most recent history of British public libraries, Penny Rate. For a popular account of public library development and organization the reader may go to British Libraries, by McColvin and Revie.

As may be expected absolute local autonomy, with neither aid and encouragement nor intervention and policy dictation by central government, has produced a wide variety of provision. Progressive authorities have been able to develop and experiment; apathetic and backward authorities have been permitted to offer grossly inadequate services. The Library Association has continuously striven to spur the latter to achieve at least average standards. Of its many activities to this end mention should be made of a booklet entitled A Century of Public Library Service, which was sent to all authorities asking them to review their work, and which many followed with excellent results. Much of the same material was used in another booklet designed for general circulation during 1950, in observance of the one-hundredth anniversary of passage of the public libraries act.

Nevertheless, the disadvantages of the present system have been long manifest. The public library service now caters to the needs of all sections of the community, setting no bounds to the range of materials provided, excepting that on the one hand more and more librarians are paying less heed to popular demands, and that on the other closer cooperation with, and recognition of the existence of, special libraries, limits certain categories of more highly specialized supply. This catholic and all-pervasive book provision demands that readers, whatever their needs, shall have access, directly or indirectly, to an almost unlimited range of materials, mostly far beyond the local resources of the smaller authorities. Moreover, if the public library is to achieve its cultural and educational functions, representative stocks must be on display at all, even the smallest, service points. The former objective may be attained in large measure by cooperation; the latter, and its corollary, the full exploitation of trained staff, de-
mands a measure of drastic reorganization. Much progress has been made in the former, little in the latter direction.

Cooperation has manifested itself in several forms, notably in schemes for the inter-lending of books. The nationwide system of regional bureaus, embracing all public and a great many special nonpublic libraries, with the National Central Library as the coordinating element, was described in Luxmoore Newcombe’s *Library Cooperation in the British Isles*.¹³ Briefer but more recent accounts are given in articles by R. J. Bates on the National Central Library,¹⁴ P. H. Sewell ¹⁵ and J. G. Scurfield¹⁶ on the regional bureaus, and L. W. Sharp¹⁷ on library cooperation in Scotland. This interlibrary lending system has gone far towards giving truth to the boast that there is available “any book for any man anywhere”; but, like every living aspect of librarianship, it is always subject to the criticism of those who would improve it, and the Executive Committee of the National Central Library and the National Committee on Regional Cooperation recently commissioned R. F. Vollans to prepare a detailed critical report, which has lately appeared.¹⁸

However, since libraries can lend only the books that they possess, attention has been given to securing the maximum coverage within each of the regions. The most important scheme is being developed by the London metropolitan boroughs—a plan which divides between the various boroughs the responsibility for acquiring current publications and for retaining older materials in a joint reserve, a part of the total field of knowledge being allocated to each borough. This and certain allied projects are described in articles by K. G. Hunt,¹⁹–²¹ and a similar arrangement in the South Eastern Region is outlined by W. J. Hill.²² The London metropolitan boroughs have also agreed to lend books on one another’s borrowers’ tickets, thus overcoming the limitations imposed by local government boundaries. Over 86,000 volumes were so lent in 1951. This tendency is spreading throughout the country, though it is still handicapped by the existence of unequal standards in neighboring areas. Nevertheless, the example of one London authority, which will lend on the ticket of any library authority in the world, may well in time be universally followed.

The larger unit of library service could result either from voluntary action or from a reorganization of the areas and powers of local authorities imposed from above. Library authorities have always enjoyed the right to combine, and the non-county boroughs can if they wish
relinquish their powers so that their libraries become part of the county system. Few have done so. In 1941 the Library Association Council, resolved to be ready with a blueprint for the postwar library service, commissioned L. R. McCollvin to make a thorough study and field survey, a task rendered financially possible by the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust. His report included proposals for creating ninety-three library service units, each uniting town and country and possessing the necessary financial resources to make full stock provision and adequate staffing economically possible; suggested grants from the central government and government inspection; and proposed other reforms. This was the basis for the Library Association Council’s proposals which were presented to the first postwar General Meeting in 1946 and adopted, except for the clauses relating to the size of library areas. R. Irwin’s discussion of this matter also is of interest. One of the principles then accepted was the desirability of a government grant, but the Association’s efforts to secure it were rejected by the local authorities’ associations at a time when these were in a mood to resent any further participation of the state in local affairs. Yet, though none of the main objectives of the Report and the Proposals have yet been attained, it would be wrong to think that this brave effort to create a better-based national service has been in vain.

Though it is not possible in a short article to isolate and define as trends the ideals and objectives discussed in the books next to be mentioned, they will show how librarians have been thinking, what they have been seeking to do, and, often, what they have been doing. They are L. S. Jast’s The Library and the Community, E. A. Savage’s A Librarian Looks at Readers and Special Librarianship in General Libraries and Others Papers, McCollvin’s Libraries and the Public, and Leyland’s Wider Public Library.

There have not been any fundamental changes in basic techniques, which are described in the sixth edition of James Duff Brown’s Manual of Library Economy, Headicar’s Manual of Library Organization, Carnell’s Library Administration, and such works on special aspects as Collison’s Library Assistance to Readers. County library history and practice are dealt with in Carnell’s County Libraries and Osborne and Sharr’s County Library Practice. There has been, however, constant preoccupation with new methods, services, equipment, and such matters, evidenced by a wide variety of periodical articles which have been summarized since 1928 in the Library Association’s The
Year's Work in Librarianship.\textsuperscript{37} It is to be regretted that this publication will cease with the volume for 1949, but papers issued since then are included in Library Science Abstracts. A brief account of development, with notes on new buildings and the like, appears each year in the Annual Report of the Council of the Library Association.

Special aspects to which much attention has been given in recent years are library service for hospitals\textsuperscript{38} and prisons,\textsuperscript{39} and some libraries are providing service for old people, including personal delivery and staff visits to the bedridden and to the elderly folk living alone. The question of how far the public library should engage in extension work is constantly debated, as is the relationship between the school library and the public library's children's department;\textsuperscript{40} and the views of the Library Association on the latter have been outlined in a memorandum.\textsuperscript{41} Though only a few public libraries as yet have collections of microfilms or reading and reproducing apparatus, several are developing good loan collections of gramophone records of music and language study courses;\textsuperscript{42} and more attention has been given to the provision of books in foreign languages.\textsuperscript{43} Local history collections have long been a feature of most libraries;\textsuperscript{44, 45} and renewed interest in the preservation of local archives has led to the formation of a standing committee of the Library Association to promote work with them, and to insure whenever possible a close association of archival material with local collections of books, prints, and other items. The Library Association has recently established a committee to promote the development of library services in the British colonies.\textsuperscript{46}

Librarians have not, alas, been as much concerned with library architecture\textsuperscript{47} as they might had conditions been different. During and since the war few new buildings have been erected. We have had to be content with temporary premises and adaptations, and even these are for the time being under an "economy" ban.

Though the last decades have seen no fundamental change in the general basis of staff recruitment and training,\textsuperscript{48} two important developments must be noted. Before the war there was only one full-time school of librarianship in Great Britain; now there are ten, all the new schools being at technical and commercial colleges, preparing students for the examinations of the Library Association. Second, since the war all local authorities have adopted nationally negotiated scales for salaries, with general, clerical, and professional gradings and
national conditions of service. These scales will not be fully effective until authorities are obliged to grade, suitably and adequately, all their professional staffs; and so far only one award, fixing the minimum grade for an assistant in charge of a branch or department employing three other assistants, has been secured. It cannot be denied, however, that when this first step is followed by others, the improved status and rewards of library workers will go far to attract better personnel, and to offer remuneration to those already employed which is just and better related to their abilities and responsibilities.

Finally, the Library Association has continued to be a great influence in promoting the development of library services, raising standards, uniting librarians, and establishing fruitful relationships between librarianship and many associated aspects of activity. J. D. Stewart gives a useful summary of its work.49

What of future trends? In the opinion of the present writer the outstanding ones are these. First, we are steadily and continuously improving standards of provision, and are thus both increasing the volume of worth-while public service and raising the prestige of public libraries. Consequently, libraries have suffered far less from economic blizzards than once they would; they can look to the future with confidence. Second, more attention is being paid and will be paid to reference and information work; and especially, in the immediate future, to making the public library, in close association with research organizations, a better medium for the wide dissemination of scientific and technical information. Third, because our training facilities are vastly better, because of slow but steady improvement in the status and rewards of librarianship, and because of the incalculable value of the Library Association’s system of professional registration, we shall have tomorrow a better equipped body of professional men and women, with a keener appreciation than ever before of the vital importance of their work.

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During the past five years, activities to encourage the development of public libraries as centers of popular education and culture have occupied a prominent place in Unesco's program. In this time a number of successful projects have been launched with substantial concrete results, and a constantly growing network of librarians associated in the work of Unesco has been established in many countries.

In carrying out activities in this field, Unesco has acted in close cooperation with governments, library associations, and individual librarians. With their help it has organized seminars and conferences to bring together librarians from all over the world or from a region, to examine their problems together and formulate plans of action which they could put into effect when they returned home. It has followed up on such meetings by publishing the papers produced and distributing them to librarians, educators, and government officials throughout the world, and by other means. It has set up a pilot project, in collaboration with national authorities, to provide a demonstration of first-rate public library service in a region previously without such service, awarded fellowships to librarians for study abroad, encouraged the organization of literacy campaigns and production of simply written material for newly literate people, and carried out many other activities which facilitate the spread of public library services.

These projects have been organized by Unesco, not as ends in themselves, but as stimulants to far wider action by governments, library associations, and individual librarians, on whom rests the ultimate responsibility for the development of public libraries. It is heartening to realize that these activities have resulted in the creation of new libraries and new services in existing libraries, and a general quickening of the public library movement in many countries.

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Nevertheless, in traveling from country to country one is struck with the great lack of public library services, and past achievements shrink when one realizes that most of the people in the world have never even seen a public library. Whole countries occupied by millions of people have not one public library worthy of the name, few trained librarians, no library schools, no library literature nor “tools” in the language of the country, no library associations, and few publications which the common people can read. Often a library situation like this is accompanied by staggering general problems, such as widespread illiteracy, poverty, and disease, which obviously have a considerable bearing on public library development. One has only to look at the countries where the public library movement has reached its most advanced state to realize that prerequisites for such development are a relatively high educational level, a high standard of living, and a healthful environment. It is true that a library can be started under difficult circumstances, but public library development for a whole country can proceed only at a rate approximating the rate of general improvement in the conditions under which the people live. These basic improvements are being made in many parts of the world, but progress must be measured in years, rather than in days and weeks, and for this reason world-wide activities to extend public library coverage can only be considered as a long-term effort.

Several important projects were undertaken by Unesco in the public library field. In 1947, as a first step in implementing its public library program, Unesco engaged Emerson Greenaway, then head of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, as a consultant, to make a survey of public library services in Europe. Greenaway’s report provided a valuable basis for work in that region, and on his recommendation, a Unesco public library charter was drafted to give librarians and the general public in all countries a clear picture of the guiding principles of public library service endorsed by Unesco. The charter was published as a leaflet and poster under the title, The Public Library, a Living Force for Popular Education. ¹ Thousands of copies were distributed in English, French, Spanish, Italian, and Arabic to Unesco Member States throughout the world. Displayed in libraries and distributed to adult education groups and other organizations, the document has helped spread the modern concept of public library service and has provided support for progressive librarians, particularly in places where public libraries are not yet well advanced.
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Unesco has organized three public library meetings which have given librarians an opportunity to work out their problems together and to acquire new knowledge and enlarged points of view. Participation in such gatherings with colleagues from all over the world has brought courage and determination to many librarians, who realized for the first time that they were not alone with their difficulties but members of an international movement working on the same problems. Publication of the recommendations and papers of these meetings has provided these and other librarians with needed support in convincing local authorities that public library services are indeed essential.

In organizing these meetings, Unesco requests governments to send their leading librarians and those who are likely to be the leaders of tomorrow. The points are that the conferences and seminars are really useful only if they conduce to action, and the most effective and extended action can be taken by people whose positions give them some power and influence.

In 1948 Unesco, in collaboration with the International Federation of Library Associations and the government of the United Kingdom, organized the first international summer school for librarians in Manchester and London, England. Fifty librarians from nineteen countries took part in the meeting, which lasted four weeks. The American participants were: Wallace Van Jackson, formerly head of the United States Information Service Library in Monrovia, Liberia; Helen Wessells, now editor of the "Library Journal"; and Marietta Daniels, Associate Librarian, Columbus Memorial Library, Pan American Union. The work was guided by an international faculty consisting of a Norwegian, a Britisher, an Indian, a Belgian, and an American in the person of Leon Carnovsky, Professor of Library Science in the Graduate Library School at the University of Chicago. The course included lectures by the faculty and guest speakers, discussions, and demonstrations. The "laboratory" for the school was the Manchester Public Library, which was an eye-opener for librarians from countries where public library services are little developed. Subjects discussed included the philosophy of public librarianship, book selection policies, the development of extension services, adult education group programs and reader's advisory services, relations with other educational institutions and special social groups, work with children and adolescents, the organization and administration of public libraries, technical processes, personnel, and finance.
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The London session, which took place during the final week of the school, was timed to coincide with the meeting of the International Federation of Library Associations. It was thus possible for the school to secure a number of outstanding librarians as guest speakers. Among them was Carl Milam, then director of United Nations libraries. The following countries were represented at the school: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, India, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, South Africa, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United States of America.

Unesco’s second public libraries meeting, the Seminar on the Role of Libraries in Adult Education, was held in the Stadsbibliotek of Malmö, Sweden, in 1950. This modern and attractive library was an excellent headquarters for the seminar. Indeed, the interiors of the Stadsbibliotek and its principal branch made a marked impression on the participants. Even those from countries where public libraries are most advanced collected photographs and specifications for future use in planning new buildings.

Participants in the seminar came from Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Ceylon, Colombia, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Italy, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the U.S.A., and Venezuela. American participants were: Ralph Munn, Director of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh; Fern Long, Supervisor, Adult Education Department, Cleveland Public Library; and Helen T. Steinbarger, Consultant in Adult Education, Public Library of the District of Columbia.

Preparation and collection of material for the meetings began months in advance. Thus, when the seminar opened, it was possible to provide participants with a number of working papers in English and French which had been prepared by experts in various countries, and with detailed discussion outlines drafted by the group leaders. Extensive documentation on library adult education work had been assembled for the seminar library, and an exhibition showing what libraries are doing throughout the world had been set up in the main meeting-room. Approximately fifty films, as well as film-strips, were also on hand for use during the meeting.

The director of the seminar was Cyril O. Houle, Dean of University College at the University of Chicago, who also led one of the groups. The other group leaders were Lachlan F. MacRae, Chief Librarian of Fort William Public Library, Canada, and Yvonne Oddon, Librarian
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of the Musée de l’Homme in Paris and formerly consultant in Unesco’s Fundamental Project in Haiti. Most of the credit for the outstanding work accomplished at this seminar is due to the excellent leadership provided by this top-flight team of experts and the efficient collaboration of Ingeborg Heintze, Director of the Malmö Stadsbibliotek.

The work of the seminar was laid out according to three general topics, each assigned to a working group. Participants could choose the section they wished to join. Group I, under Houle, discussed the basic character of adult education in the library, and the planning, organizing, carrying out, publicizing, and evaluating of library adult education programs, especially in countries where library services are reasonably well developed. Group II, led by MacRae, concerned itself with audio-visual materials and techniques in library adult education, i.e., films, radio, television, recordings, discussion groups, and exhibitions. Group III's subject was the establishment of library service as an aid to adult and fundamental education in underdeveloped regions. Oddon was the leader of this third group.

The seminar was run on democratic lines, with leadership spread among as many people as possible. In the middle of the first week, as soon as the participants began to know one another, they were asked to elect three members who would serve on a steering committee with the director and group leaders. This committee met regularly throughout the four weeks to decide on policies, appoint other committees, and handle various matters which came up for discussion. Every effort was made to ask all participants to serve on committees or to accept special assignments, such as acting as chairman of a plenary session. Thus responsibility for the work and success of the meeting was widely distributed, with the result that the spirit and teamwork of the seminar were excellent.

There was no air of the classroom in Malmö. Lectures were few and limited to the first three days. The groups began their meetings immediately after the opening ceremonies, and during the first week each participant had an opportunity to speak for ten minutes or so about himself and his work. After that, any changes desired by the groups were made in the provisional discussion outlines, and the participants began discussing some of the general points on the agenda. As soon as the shape of the various problems to be considered was clearly seen, the groups broke up into small committees for intensive study and exchange of ideas on specific topics.
An evaluation committee elected by the seminar sent a questionnaire to all participants nine months after the meeting to check on action taken as a result of the seminar. The report of this committee, of which Ralph Munn was chairman, has been widely distributed in mimeographed form.

In response to a request made by the members of the Malmö Seminar, the government of Sweden and Unesco have collaborated in the production of a 16 mm. sound film on Swedish public libraries, called The Road to Books. Prints in English, French, and Spanish will soon be distributed to Unesco National Commissions, for showing to librarians and educators as well as to the general public in Member States.

In October 1951 Unesco held a conference on the development of public library services in Latin America, in the Biblioteca Pública Municipal of São Paulo, Brazil. The meeting was convened in collaboration with the Organization of American States and the Brazilian authorities to consider basic public library problems in Latin America, and to draft plans and recommendations for the development and extension of public library services in the region. Seventeen countries and four international organizations were represented at the meeting by 119 librarians, of whom 63 were observers from Brazil.

The twenty-one-story Biblioteca Pública Municipal in São Paulo was an excellent site for the conference. It provided good quarters and a good example of public library services in action. In addition, São Paulo has a children’s library, a university library, and mobile services for workers, all first-rate and of interest to the librarians from other parts of Latin America.

The main work of the conference was carried out in four commissions, where the discussions were of a practical kind and directed toward action. The broad subjects considered were: development of public library services on a regional or national scale; inter-American action needed for public library development; library services for children in public and school libraries; and professional training for work in public libraries. The commissions’ work was based on twenty-one working papers, most of which were distributed with a fifty-six page bibliography and other documents several weeks before the meeting. The four volumes in the series of Unesco Public Library Manuals were used as background documents.

The following definition and statement of public library objectives,
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which owe much to the American Library Association, were adopted by the conference:

“The Public Library, a product of modern democracy, and its foremost agent for the integral education of the people, is the institution which conserves and organizes human knowledge in order to place it at the service of the community without distinction of profession, creed, class or race. Its objectives shall be: (1) to offer the public information, books, diverse materials and facilities for the best service of their interests and intellectual requirements; (2) to stimulate freedom of expression and a constructive critical attitude toward the solution of social problems; (3) to educate man to participate in a creative manner in community life and to promote a better understanding between individuals, groups and nations; (4) to extend the activities of the centres of learning, offering new educational possibilities to the people. In order to fulfill its objectives the Public Library must enjoy absolute freedom in its task of diffusing culture, and ample autonomy to function.”

The conference then pin-pointed and analyzed some of the top priority problems which must be solved if public libraries in Latin America are to carry out these objectives and become more effective agencies for the education of the masses. As a result of its deliberations, the meeting recommended the enactment of national library laws and provision of adequate financial support for public libraries, increased public library services for workers’ education, establishment of national bibliographic centers, increased exchange of publications in the region, publication of more books and pamphlets especially suited to people who have recently learned to read, expanded and improved library services for children, translation and preparation of books on library science, and more library schools. The conference also made suggestions concerning the location of the public library pilot project and the bibliographical center to be organized by Unesco in Latin America.

The conference placed considerable stress on practical accomplishments as a result of the meeting, and appointed a committee to check with conference members, in the middle of 1952, on action taken. Other follow-up activities are being undertaken by the Library Specialist in Unesco’s Havana office, who was appointed shortly after the São Paulo meeting.
This year the spotlight will turn on Africa, when Unesco holds a public library seminar in Ibadan, Nigeria, for the librarians of Africa. The preliminary arrangements for the meeting will be made before this article appears in print, when the writer and Yvonne Oddon, Librarian of the Musée de l'Homme, who will direct the seminar, make a trip to Dakar, the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Leopoldville, Brazzaville, and Algiers to do the spade work for the seminar.

A series of publications called the Unesco Public Library Manuals has resulted from the meetings described above. The first three volumes in the series were based on material produced at the 1948 school in England. The others contain a selection of the working papers and group reports of the other meetings. All of the volumes have been published in English, French, and Spanish, and some in Arabic and Italian as well. They are “best-sellers” among Unesco publications—one country alone has ordered 3,000 copies of each volume—and many of the editions have been reprinted. The following are the volumes which have already appeared: *Education for Librarianship* by J. Periam Danton; *Public Library Extension* by Lionel R. McColvin; *Adult Education Activities for Public Libraries* by Carl Thomsen, Edward Sydney, and Miriam D. Tompkins; *Libraries in Adult and Fundamental Education; the Report of the Malmö Seminar*, edited by Cyril O. Houle; and *Development of Public Libraries in Latin America*, the report on the São Paulo Conference, published in the autumn of 1952.

The *Unesco Bulletin for Libraries*, which is distributed to 8,000 institutions throughout the world, often prints material on public libraries. A recent article which proved very useful was “Public Library Service to Labour Groups,” by Dorothy Bendix, Chairman of the American Library Association Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups. The January 1951 issue of the Unesco *Bulletin of Fundamental Education* was entirely devoted to the subject of libraries in fundamental education.

One of Unesco’s most successful activities is the Delhi Public Library, a pilot project organized by Unesco and the government of India. Opened by Nehru, the Prime Minister, in October 1951, the library now has over 10,000 registered borrowers. It lends 24,000 volumes and serves 67,000 people every month. Its fast-growing book collection already totals approximately 20,000 volumes, most of which are in Hindi and Urdu. Among the library’s most popular features is an active
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program of lectures, discussions, story hours, and film showings for adults and children. Fifty of these meetings each month draw over 3,000 people.

Established to give special service to new literates, the library is setting up deposit stations in literacy centers and starting a program for production of easy-to-read books for people who have recently learned to read. It is also translating profusely illustrated children’s books published in the United States and other countries. However, new editions of these books are not being published at this time. Instead, the Hindi or Urdu translation is printed on small strips and pasted over the original text in a copy of the foreign edition of each book. The translations are also made available to other Indian libraries. The project has had a large bookmobile constructed, and planned to begin mobile service to outlying parts of Delhi late in 1952.

The Delhi Public Library, as a pilot undertaking, is intended to stimulate similar developments elsewhere. The General Conference of Unesco is accordingly being asked to include in the 1953–54 program several internships, to enable librarians from neighboring countries to work at the project, for the purpose of gaining experience which would be useful to them in organizing public library service along similar lines in their countries. Proposed too is an evaluation of, and final report on, the project at the end of 1954, when Unesco’s active association with the library is scheduled to cease. Such a report, which would sum up all of the findings of the enterprise applicable elsewhere, should be extremely useful to organizers of public library services in conditions similar to those found in Delhi. Also likely is a film on the library’s activities, which will probably be made soon.

The library is financed jointly by Unesco and the government of India, the latter bearing the larger share of the expenditure. Unesco has agreed to contribute $60,000 during the period 1951–1954, subject to approval of successive sessions of the General Conference, and the Indian government will provide $120,000 during the same period, conditioned on the approval of its Parliament. It is anticipated that after 1954 the library will be financed entirely by the Indian authorities.

A project similar to the Delhi library will be organized next year in Latin America. Preliminary arrangements have already been made with the government of Colombia, where it will be situated.

Unesco has awarded twenty-one fellowships to librarians from fifteen countries for study abroad, and under its Technical Assistance program
has granted thirteen additional library fellowships. Some of the fellows have specialized in public library work and have made all or part of their study tours in the United States. The Exchange of Persons program has been particularly helpful in giving an impetus to library development in countries where young librarians have no opportunity to see first-rate library services.

Unesco has worked constantly to surmount or remove the barriers which hamper the free flow of books and other educational, scientific, and cultural materials from country to country. One of these has been circumvented by the Unesco Coupon Scheme, which since 1948 has enabled libraries and other institutions in "soft" currency countries to use their own currencies to buy books from "hard" currency countries.

The procedure used is now well known. Unesco prints the coupons and sells them to Unesco National Commissions in each participating country, usually for dollars, pounds sterling, or francs. The National Commissions, in turn, sell the coupons to libraries and other institutions for their national currency. Booksellers receiving coupons send them to Unesco for redemption in their own currency. An example may make this clearer. A librarian in, say, India may wish to order an American publication. He buys a Unesco coupon from his National Commission, paying for it in rupees. He sends the coupon, with the title and author of the book he wants, to the American Booksellers' Association, which forwards it to the appropriate publisher. The publisher sends the requested book to the Indian librarian and later forwards the coupon to Unesco for redemption in dollars.

Operation of the scheme is made possible by a "hard" currency reserve, provided by Unesco and supplemented by funds from the sale of coupons in "hard" currency countries. The American Library Association Council adopted a resolution at the 1952 midwinter meeting, urging American librarians to use Unesco coupons to pay foreign bookseller's bills in order to make additional dollar credits available for the purchase of American books by foreign institutions and readers. Thirty countries have participated in various sections of the scheme for books, films, or scientific materials, and approximately two million dollars worth of coupons have been issued.

Great progress was made in 1952 in removing several barriers hindering the free circulation of publications and certain other items, when the Unesco Agreement on the Importation of Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Materials went into effect. The agreement abolishes
import duties on foreign books, and eases the restrictions in certain
countries on purchase of foreign currency for payment abroad. So far
eleven countries have ratified the covenant and nineteen others have
signed it.

In 1951 Unesco launched the Unesco Gift Coupon Scheme in the
United States, the United Kingdom, and France. Under this plan,
Unesco prints and sends to clubs and other organizations in these
donor countries booklets of gift stamps which the organizations sell to
their members. Each stamp booklet sold pays for one Unesco Gift
Coupon, which is a form of international check or money order used
to purchase books, films, and equipment for needy public libraries
and other institutions.

During the past two years Unesco has successfully begun a new
kind of international aid—the reconstruction of library collections which
were devastated during the war, by volunteer workers from foreign
countries. In 1950 and 1951 groups of Danish and Swedish librarians
and students literally saved the collections of the library of Valognes
in France. In 1951 Unesco encouraged and helped a similar effort by
the United Nations Student Association of Great Britain and the
British Library Association, which have been able to give assistance
to the Municipal Library at Dunkirk and to the National and Univer-
sity Library at Strasbourg. This work is now spreading. The en-
thusiasm of the first delegations has inspired the International Students’
Movement of the United Nations to form groups of volunteer workers,
and the British associations intend to continue their exertions.

A large part of Unesco’s program is in the field of education, and
many activities, such as literacy campaigns, production of publications
for neo-literates, and seminars and training courses for educators, have
a close relationship to the development of public libraries. For this
reason, the Education Department and the Libraries Division work
in close cooperation on projects which concern both. The Libraries
Division has prepared working papers, set up exhibits, or sent rep-
resentatives to many Unesco meetings on adult, fundamental, and
workers’ education. Also, plans are now being evolved for the estab-
lishment of rural library services in connection with the Fundamental
Education Training and Production Center in Patzcuaro, Mexico, and
training in public library techniques for educators at a similar center
to be set up in Egypt is a likely future development.
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