Guidelines for county and regional library service in the future may, with some hazard, be projected from data at hand concerning population growth and its effect upon local governmental services.

The pattern of rural problems will undoubtedly persist and, as pointed out in the recent article by E. A. Wight, current trends in library extension programs will continue to emphasize service to people living in areas where none had previously been available. However, in the future, county and regional libraries will find their greatest challenge in offering a service articulated to the needs of the new and growing population centers embracing multiple jurisdictions.

According to U.S. Bureau of the Census projections, by 1980 the total population of this country will be in excess of 245,000,000, an increase of more than 65,000,000, or nearly 40 per cent more than the present population of over 180,000,000. This growth will fill in and urbanize many areas now served by county and regional libraries throughout the country, particularly in the Great Lakes region, the South, Southwest, and West.

By 1980, less than a third of the population will be rural, and by the year 2000, urbanites will compose about 85 per cent of the national total. This figure does not mean, however, that the rural challenge during the next twenty years will be any the less significant.

The types of library organization designed to serve the urban-rural population will be clarified by definition: according to the A.L.A. Glossary of Library Terms, a county library is “A free public library maintained by county taxation for the use of the whole or a part of a county, established as an independent institution, or combined with a municipal or other library; or, a municipal or other library which provides library service to a county by contract.” The regional li-

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County and Regional Libraries

brary is defined as "A public library serving a group of communities, or several counties, and supported in whole or in part by public funds from the governmental units served. Sometimes known as District Library."

The A.L.A. Glossary goes on to define "extension library service" as "The supplying of books and other library assistance to individuals or organizations outside a library's regular service area" and "library extension" as "The promotion of libraries and library service, by state, local, or regional agencies."

Illustrating these definitions are several patterns of organization, viz: (a) as a department of county government serving the unincorporated area and those cities electing to receive and be taxed for the service; (b) as an extension of city service through a contract whereby the City Librarian becomes the County Librarian and establishes service outlets throughout the county and operates them from contract funds; (c) through a contract by which one county provides another with library service; (d) through a special district with elected trustees having power to levy the library tax and administer the service within the defined boundaries of the service area, e.g., Dayton and Montgomery County Public Library in Ohio; (e) by a federation of city and county library jurisdictions on a voluntary basis, such as the recently established Pioneer Library System in New York State; (f) by a county library contract with established city libraries for specific services or full operation of branches, as provided by the Wayne County Public Library, Michigan; (g) in conjunction with supplementary or direct service through state regional branches, as in New Hampshire, where the entire state becomes, in effect, a single library system; or in Tennessee, in which eleven affiliated regional library centers are administered under contract with the State Library.

Success in promoting library extension service and in establishing library systems reflects professional leadership, nationally and in a number of states. Where there are active professional associations working closely with their state agencies, long-range regional and state-wide programs have been and will continue to be developed. Much pioneer work has already been done in the establishing of county and regional libraries in such states as New York, Michigan, Wisconsin, Louisiana, California, and Washington.

With the concentration at headquarters of purchasing, processing, and administration, and a broad tax base, large-area service has
been comparatively inexpensive and has set a pattern for similar operations in the future. Traditionally, county and regional libraries have been supported by a low tax rate spread over a large area for a service designed primarily to reach readers outside the cities having independent local libraries. Some cities contract for service, whereas others have joined the system, or, upon incorporation, have continued the county service because of the low tax rate. Equalization is a feature of large-unit service since the unincorporated area with its increasing industrial development, oil fields, and productive land and utilities provides a high assessed valuation which produces revenue that can be spent in the poorer parts of the library's service area, including the small cities.

The question of equalization becomes crucial as the areas served by county and regional libraries develop into metropolitan complexes. Within the areas served there will be poor and wealthy communities, and all should receive library service that meets professional standards. Equalization will have to be provided through state and federal aid in the interests of a high level area-wide service.

In farm areas and in rural communities, there are still twenty-five million people without public library facilities; more than 250 counties are without public libraries. Through state demonstrations and guidance and with federal assistance through the Library Services Act, in these unserved or poorly served areas, the major emphasis will continue to be upon the establishing of new facilities on a county or regional basis.

Progress in the establishing of county and regional library systems serving populations of 50,000 or more is reported by the Office of Education as a gain of 27 in two years, from 147 systems in 1957 to 174 in 1959.

In West Virginia, Mississippi, and Arkansas, where there have been losses in population, and in states showing less than a 10 per cent gain, such as North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Alabama, and Kentucky, county and regional libraries will follow established patterns in reaching readers outside the cities with independent local libraries. The future in these states will undoubtedly see new library jurisdictions and service consolidations, and present operations will be strengthened and expanded through the Library Services Act and state aid.

Fourteen states have experienced more than a 20 per cent increase in population since 1950: New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, Connecti-
cut, Florida, Louisiana, Ohio, Michigan, California, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, and Utah. Of these, only five have adopted state standards, although others are at present working on their adoption or are following A.L.A. standards.

With the adoption of state and national standards, the first steps have been taken toward the establishment of an overall national plan of library service with some variation in patterns of development. The stages of development to be achieved in furthering public library service are the following: (1) the adoption of standards and goals; (2) the recognition of specific needs, identified through a process of assessment and inventory of current library resources and services as measured by the standards; and (3) the action program, based upon a detailed and specific plan. Under the Library Services Act originally passed in 1956, a number of working programs for rural service have been set up. The demonstration programs supported by federal and state “seed” money are described in some detail in State Plans under the Library Services Act, Supplement 2, previously referred to.

Illustrating the second developmental step are the three combined reports of the California Public Library Commission, which includes recommendations for the establishing of library systems throughout the state, based upon minimum standards for determining state aid. Ralph Shaw’s survey of existing library facilities in metropolitan Toronto, set up as the basis for grants-in-aid for extended service and setting forth minimum standards, also illustrates step two. Another is the comprehensive Library Development Project of the Pacific Northwest, a study of the library services and facilities of British Columbia, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington, sponsored by the Pacific Northwest Library Association and administered through the University of Washington. A current proposal is Michigan’s “State-Wide Plan for Public Library Development.”

The action program, step three, based upon a specific and detailed plan, is well exemplified in the New York State Library regional service program, which in 1959 comprised 17 systems providing supplemental and contract service to all or parts of 19 counties, including the city of New York as one region. The success of this multisystem concept is attributed to the leadership of the trustees and librarians of the state in obtaining the adoption of the state-aid legislation. Since Los Angeles County, California, has already felt the popula-
tion impact that is predicted for existing and new metropolitan areas, the growth pattern of library service and the problems of jurisdictional relationships experienced there should indicate what lies ahead in other parts of the country. The core city, Los Angeles, is well served by its long-established public library system.

In the growing outer areas, the Los Angeles County Public Library has been in an interim position in providing service, and flexibility has been one of its features. Until a community became strong enough to incorporate and support its local services, it looked to the county to provide them. Many mature and wealthy cities such as Beverly Hills, Burbank, and San Marino were once served by the County Library. As these cities grew in wealth and population, they desired and were able to support an independent service. County library service was continued in other cities since the low county tax rate provided a facility that would have been more costly to the city as a locally-supported operation.

According to census projections, more than 170 million Americans will be living in metropolitan areas in 1980, and 58 per cent of these will live within suburban rings, a pattern similar to the present Los Angeles County complex. To provide libraries for these multitudes of people will require vision and leadership of all librarians, and all will inevitably be concerned with large-area planning. The summary of state standards, their development and special features and application, is of particular value at this point. H. L. Hamill, also stresses the importance of long-range planning, as well as the breaking down of local barriers to metropolitan-centered service and awareness on the part of librarians of every opportunity to see that library service is included in studies of metropolitan problems.

The point was well made by Leigh when he said:

It is one of the assumptions of the [Public Library] Inquiry that in a large-scale modern democratic, industrial society there are advantages both in local initiative and participation and in larger units of administration; that neither should be neglected, but that governmental structure should be contrived to give the greatest possible scope to both principles.

The movement for building larger public library systems by consolidation, federation, or voluntary association has centered attention largely on less populous areas. It is equally desirable as a direction for development, however, in metropolitan regions. As we have seen,
County and Regional Libraries

public library systems which cover the whole of a metropolitan area exist almost nowhere in the United States. The organization of libraries under municipal corporations here, as in less populous areas, militates against complete coverage of the area, and voluntary cooperation to provide an integrated service for the whole metropolis has seldom been carried out. But a pooling of resources in large urban areas has as much promise of economy as in rural regions.17

Since the completion of Leigh's study in 1950, several events have contributed significantly to the progress of public library development. The passage of the Library Services Act in 1956 with its five-year extension in 1960 accentuates the role of state library agencies and challenges them to continue the leadership they have demonstrated in their pioneer work for rural service. The adoption of the revised public library standards18 in 1956, a major advance, must be periodically reviewed to be responsive to newly emerging problems and conditions. Still another event is the Ford Foundation grant of $5 million, establishing the Council on Library Resources, Inc., for the purpose of investigating library problems. It is hoped that the Council will act favorably upon a proposal submitted to it for the study of the implications for public library service in the metropolitan complexes of the present and the future.19

Although something of a controversial excursion into public relations, the inauguration of National Library Week in 1958 has contributed to a broader community- and nation-wide understanding of public library service, which is essential to the support of an adequate program for the future.

Whether or not Sputnik I is to receive the credit, it is a fact that since its launching in October 1957 there has been an upsurge in library use, with "increased stress on formal and informal education, particularly in the fields of science, foreign languages, and mathematics."6 There has also been drastic change in the ways in which the public uses the library. Modern readers, particularly students, are in a hurry; the majority come on specific missions and expect prompt and complete service.

The experience of Southern California as one of the newborn, mushrooming areas suffering from overgrowth and immaturity indicates the problems that will confront metropolitan complexes now in the embryonic stage. Not only is student use increasing dramatically in the libraries of the area, but there is also an almost spectacular gain in general adult and juvenile service. Los Angeles
JOHN D. HENDERSON

County Public Library, with its two-million-plus service area population, is faced with unprecedented demands for technical books and high-level fiction and nonfiction, and there is a growing need in the branches for full-time reference librarians for telephone service alone. Furthermore, children are reading as never before and in many cases at levels far beyond their school age.

Reference is made to the American Library Association's publication on standards, in which libraries are urged to band together formally or informally in the systems which "reach out to a wider world, drawing on even greater and more specialized resources offered by state and federal agencies." 20

Not only must libraries be provided for the great metropolitan areas, but the service must also be adapted to the new population. It is predicted that the number of students in school and college will double. Their assignments will place heavier demands upon the library resources available to them—public and school or college.21

The working population will increase, though not at the rate of the young people of school and college age. The older element of the population, 60 and above, will also increase. This growth will mean greater demands for service by the nonproductive segments of the population, with a heavy burden of support upon the middle group that must carry the tax load.

As pointed out in State Plans under the Library Services Act, Supplement 2, "If any differences ever existed between the needs and interests of urban and rural citizens, such differences are now insignificant because of such factors as mobility of population, modern transportation, and communication. The requirements of the rural resident are as advanced and diverse as those of the city dweller. He needs to have access to good, up-to-date library service to the same degree, and the same standards of service should apply to both urban and rural areas." 22

County and regional libraries are structured to serve large and complex areas. In the future the urbanizing rural areas and the growing unincorporated communities and member cities will continue to look to the county or regional library for book service if plans anticipating this growth are developed. If our standards are to mean what they say, the service areas will expect not only films, records, serials, maps, documents, and other special reference materials, but also the additional resources of the ultramodern public library, including microfilm and microfilm aids, facsimile and photo copy, closed
County and Regional Libraries

circuit television, and rapid teletype reference service—even access to an international reference network connecting major libraries throughout the world.

It is predicted that the pattern of metropolitan expansion will continue, taking in larger and larger areas. It is indicated that central cities will undergo both structural and jurisdictional changes and that the periphery cities will multiply; that the areas between cities will continue to fill in; that some areas will be annexed by the existing cities; and that other parts will remain unincorporated. However, it is not foreseen that there will be any significant increase in the number of metropolitan areas. Rather, on the East Coast and in the South and West, where the population concentrations are greatest, there will be a fusion or conglomeration of these areas, as in the case of Greater New York or Greater London. Interurbia is the name applied to these newly identified phenomena. It has much meaning for market analysts, sociologists, political scientists, and librarians, especially those concerned with county and region-wide services.

Unplanned metropolitan areas, however, might easily Balkanize into a complex of independent jurisdictions with duplicate services varying in standard according to the wealth of each. The desire for home rule and strong local loyalties have prompted many new as well as older communities to withdraw from county service and establish their own; this vertical development of service by multiple jurisdictions unrelated to neighbor or area could very well become a disastrous trend.

According to the Committee for Economic Development,

These major shifts of people and industry have strained the social fabric and overloaded time-honored political institutions. Sixteen thousand local jurisdictions in fewer than 200 metropolitan areas have struggled hard to maintain a semblance of orderly growth and to supply the increasing demands for public service of their area residents. But the unit costs of these efforts have been high; a team of 20 mules is not as efficient as a single diesel engine. And although our local governments have kept things going in metropolitan areas they have failed in one crucial area of public responsibility: they cannot plan, budget and program ahead for the entire metropolitan region.

Implied in any comprehensive plan for regional library service and the establishment of library systems is a new philosophy of local government. Political wisdom will be needed to develop a plan that
will combine local autonomy and diversity with the features of region-wide coordination. Furthermore, the development of the region must be the concern and responsibility of all jurisdictions within it, and an awareness of the total needs of the area should be reflected in the program. The features of the plan must closely establish the gain to all participating jurisdictions, and provision must be made for formulating policy and goals on a comprehensive regional basis.

It should be feasible to program such a service, inasmuch as it is possible to envision an ideal area-wide library system. Bookmobiles would serve the outlying communities, particularly schools and small crossroad centers, and it is to be seen that with greater concentrations of people, special branches for children could easily be established. In settled communities having comparatively large populations, local branch service should be provided, with buildings ranging from 4,000 to 10,000 square feet in size, and with book collections averaging between 15,000 and 30,000 volumes.

Supporting the community branches, a regional facility housing at least 100,000 volumes should be established, with a fully trained staff and broad resources available to all readers and serving as a backstop to the branches within the respective region. This centrally-located regional headquarters would therefore constitute a reservoir for the region or even a group of regions within the library system.

Uniformity in rules, policies, forms, and charging systems would be possible in the overall system, and there would be no standing need for nonresident service, nonresident fees, or reciprocal service. Fortified by a borrower's single-card method, patrons would have full access to the material wherever they might live or work or attend school, or at whatever library facility happened to be the most convenient point for taking out and returning library materials.

Overall administration, as well as all purchasing, book preparation, and the warehousing of secondary materials, should be performed at the central services headquarters. Book selection, cataloging, data processing, information retrieval, interlibrary loans, region-wide service programs, and the more difficult reference work would likewise be concentrated at this point. It should also feature a bibliographical center for the region, if not a cooperative, interlibrary reference service, such as the San Joaquin Valley Information Service in Fresno, California, or the Denver Tri-County Project. Special bibliographies and reading lists could be prepared here for distribution to the cities within the area, including material on local government for city and
County and Regional Libraries

county officials, special material of interest to business and industry, and reading lists of general scope. A regional union catalog would also be feasible, such as the electronically produced book catalog maintained by the Los Angeles County Public Library continuously since 1952.26 Such innovations and adaptations are reflected in the findings and papers of the Institute on Cooperative Planning for Public Libraries27 sponsored in February by the School of Library Science of the University of Southern California.

It is realized that such a concept of cooperative library service is idealistic and remote from realization in the immediate future. The ease of transportation and communication and the burden of taxation will do much to create favorable public opinion supporting a broad-based library service with the features described here. The crux of the matter lies in assuring to the local jurisdictions the services, the economies, and the degree of local authority that will enlist their support in the broad plan of operation.

Community support will be basic and the advice of lay boards or councils should prove an invaluable administrative tool in the future programs. Since demands upon the administrator will be exacting and challenging, a strong body of counselors or advisors representing the communities served should participate in policy deliberations regarding the scope and level of the service. It is fundamental that the advisory groups understand objectives and program standards and the basic operations of library service.

Two possible lines of development are indicated in serving metropolitan areas: the core city library, in the one case, serving as a resource for the region far beyond the city limits, as contrasted with extended county or regional service as such. In this sense, the city is involved in extension service as defined in the A.L.A. Glossary. It is concerned about receiving support and equalization from the state to offset the expense to which it is put in serving nonresidents for reference or other services. In some cases, the city library is the agency through which the county and rural areas are served, as has already been pointed out.

In the federated library system in New York, the Pioneer Library System is centered in the Rochester Public Library and serves a large area. In this connection, it is of interest to note a statement by H. Hacker dealing with the system and with the importance of county government:
In our judgment, county government in New York State is the key to the future development of local government. The cities are integral parts of county government, for example, the City of Rochester is the county seat of Monroe County, and the people in Rochester pay general county taxes. We have few programs on a county level that exclude the city, either from financing them or from sharing the program benefits. There are many functions, formerly performed by the cities and the towns, that now are provided by the counties—welfare, health, water supply, planning, probation, libraries, etc. There has been resistance to these transfers of functions. The towns fear increased county taxes. At the same time, the city people are concerned that the quality of services might be sacrificed. But the trend toward transfer and consolidation is growing and very likely will not be stopped.

It would seem that the definition of "municipal" must be expanded, since the metropolitan area will include a group of cities and possibly unincorporated interurban areas that will be urbanized insofar as the concentration of people is concerned. Whichever line of development is followed will depend upon several factors, including the leadership of the state agency and the local authorities in planning future service, as well as the strength of the core city library and its attitude toward a metropolitan area-wide library system.

It is a professional irony that as librarians advance in their work, their responsibilities fall into fields for which they have received progressively less and less training. Administrators of public library systems obviously draw on the fundamental disciplines of librarianship, but their energies and judgment are largely devoted to questions and issues far beyond the techniques and subject content of their library school training. Consideration should therefore be given to providing more adequate training for the responsibilities that go with the profession's higher positions.

In the future there will obviously be a greatly accelerated demand for library administrators. The broad field of library service should be attractive not only to the book-minded researcher and the librarian who wishes to work directly with readers, but also to the action-minded individual who appreciates book service and book knowledge and is called to responsibilities involving supervision and the directing of personnel, as well as planning, budgeting and programming, public relations, building layout and design, and the other responsibilities characterizing administration. Since library service on a large
County and Regional Libraries

scale combines the characteristics of an educational institution with the qualities of a public service department, the administrator of the program must also combine leadership in the professional aspects of library service with the related facets of administration involved in operating a government department. It is these governmental elements in public library service that should be given greater emphasis in library schools.

The service areas of the county and regional libraries will include several jurisdictions, which will mean continuous communication and involvement in matters of policy clarification and development, all of which responsibilities, including budget, cost controls, and the service program, will call for qualities of leadership—even statesmanship. Unless we take steps to train our future librarians for this kind of administration, we shall find the work taken over by professional public administrators and business managers. The pattern is clear in the cases of hospital service, road departments, and the engineering divisions of government where professional managers supersede the professionals in top positions of authority and responsibility.

The library systems of the future will serve millions of people in the megalopolitan centers and hundreds of thousands in many others. There will, of course, remain the ever-present problem of the independent libraries within the metropolitan area. Whether or not cooperative arrangements can be established that will bring these libraries into the local system will depend in large measure upon the ability and training of our new library administrators.

The opportunities in extension service and in the field work connected with the planning and developing of metropolitan area systems will multiply as the new areas emerge. Librarians of the future who wish to train and qualify for field work as members of state agency staffs should receive special instruction. Also the activities of state agencies should be incorporated into the general education of all librarians. Techniques of counseling and advising librarians and local officials as well as community groups are matters of day-to-day work in extension service, in addition to the setting up of demonstrations for bookmobile service and other programs.

The work of the Library Services Branch of the U.S. Office of Education should be well presented to library school students, including the scope of the official reports, its counseling and coordinating functions, and the assembling of library statistics, with emphasis upon their interpretation and value to the library profession as a
whole. The legislation behind library programs and the limitations of legislation, where there are such, also deserve the attention of students, in addition to the establishing of service yardsticks and the techniques of surveying and assessing library resources, services, and activities.

Library service is as unique governmentally as the public schools, and as an educational facility it merits special identification for its financing and administration. In metropolitan regions it should properly function on as broad a basis as water supply, air pollution control, public transportation, and other area-wide public utilities and facilities that overlap jurisdictional boundaries and call for coordinated master planning.

In brief, county and regional libraries are serving areas predicted to undergo astronomical increases in population, in which drastic governmental changes will take place. Based upon minimum professional standards, planning is called for on a large scale to provide acceptable service for the expanding metropolitan complexes and their satellite communities. The large-unit type of operation offers the best solution to the service problem, through federation, cooperation, contract, special library district, or some combination of these organizational patterns that will provide the broadest possible coverage for the county or region to be served. There are already many examples of such broad-based library systems, and state and federal aid offers the most effective means of equalizing support for their high-level service, provided over a large area with an uneven tax base.

Today's challenging library problems are accentuated by the staggering projections of the demographers; the patterns of area-wide development now emerging indicate the urgency of a full-scale planning and action program and the gigantic educational task that must be undertaken if we are to provide an adequate library service for 1980's expanded population.

References

County and Regional Libraries


15. Hauser, op. cit., p. 98.


**ADDITIONAL REFERENCES**


County and Regional Libraries


