



The Methodology and Results of the Monteith Pilot Project

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THIS PAPER REPORTS on only one of several aspects of the Monteith Pilot Project which has interest as an innovation in library research. Other aspects of the research will be covered in the final report to the Cooperative Research Program, which is now nearing completion.¹ The one aspect to be discussed here, and discussed in some detail, is the analysis of the social structure in which the Project was carried on.

Research in librarianship draws upon the methods and techniques developed in other fields and applies them to library problems. The Monteith research reported here uses the methods of anthropology and sociology. There is nothing new, of course, in the use of sociological methods in library research. The social survey technique, which is borrowed from sociology, has probably been used more than any other in the study of library problems. But the methods used in the sociological analysis of processes in a single institution have rarely been applied in library investigations. Such methods were clearly called for in the Monteith Pilot Project.

The long-range goal of the Monteith Library Program is that of helping undergraduate students attain a high level of competence in the use of the library. In the pilot phase of our program we proposed to concern ourselves not with obtaining evidence on the validity of library competence as an objective of undergraduate education nor with the potential contribution of such competence to the achievement of other educational objectives. We were interested in learning what we could about library competence, about what it involves, about what we mean when we use the term. At this stage of our work, how-

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ever, we were content to limit ourselves to very tentative investigations into these questions.

We started our work with the conviction that students attain library competence, however it is defined, only when they actually use the library and only when their use of it is significantly related to what they consider the real business of college, that is, to courses of substantive content. Since it is only through the teaching faculty that library experiences can be related to regular course work, we undertook to set up a social structure in which librarians could work with teaching faculty in developing a curriculum in which student use of the library was an integral element. The primary objective of our research, therefore, was to focus our attention firmly upon the relations between faculty and librarians as they changed and developed through the two years of the Pilot Project.

The analysis of social structure was the responsibility, exclusively, of our project research analyst Carol Ballingall, an anthropologist who has had much training and experience in sociological research. She is a member of the teaching staff of the social sciences division of Monteith College, having served in that capacity half-time while the Library Project was in operation. It is Ballingall's analysis that is reported here, but the report, itself, is my own. It stems from reading, from discussions with Ballingall and with other colleagues at Monteith, and from my own experience. I have assumed that librarians would be interested in the observations, the reflections, and the comments of a librarian, a nonspecialist in the social sciences.

First, however, some background information is necessary. Monteith College, which was founded in 1959 with assistance from the Ford Foundation, is one of the eleven colleges of Wayne State University in Detroit. It is a small college, admitting less than 400 freshmen each year. At present the enrollment is about 700 and the faculty numbers about 30. The basic courses in the Monteith curriculum are required of every Monteith student. They take about half of the student's time through his four years in college; the other half he spends on his pre-professional, specialized, or advanced studies. A student planning to enter the medical school, for example, begins his pre-medical work in his freshman year and continues it concurrently with his Monteith courses through the rest of his undergraduate career. The Monteith curriculum begins in the freshman year with a year-and-a-half course sequence in the social sciences and a two-year course sequence in the natural sciences. A year-and-a-half course se-

quence in the humanities begins in the middle of the sophomore year. A colloquium in the senior year draws on all three areas, and a substantial senior essay is required of every student.

The teaching staff of the college is organized into three divisions, each of which is responsible for one of the three basic course sequences. The courses are staff-planned and staff-taught. Each member of a staff shares in the divisional responsibility for the two lectures and is individually responsible for the two discussion sections presented each week in each course. The discussion sections are limited to twelve students in the freshman year, but they increase in size through each class level. It is a stated aim of the college to foster in the student an increasing capacity for independent study. Thus the freshman receives a great deal of faculty attention, but he is expected to work more and more on his own as he proceeds through college. Every student is required to take the final segment of one of the basic courses without attending the discussion sections, though he may attend the lectures, and students are generally encouraged to take any course independently if they feel competent to do so.

All of these features of Monteith College made it seem an ideal setting in which to develop an integrated program of library instruction and course work. Because the faculty was new, we would not have to overcome old habits. Because the courses were to be staff-planned and staff-taught, we were not obliged to deal with instructors individually. We were in on the ground floor as the actual planning of new courses began. And we benefited from the commitment to the idea of independent study since surely this implied an important role for the library. (It should be understood, by the way, that Monteith has no library of its own. The students use the general facilities, including the libraries, of the University.)

Planning for the Library Project began as soon as faculty members began to assemble in the summer of 1959. A proposal to the Cooperative Research Branch of the Office of Education was approved in March 1960, and the pilot project began officially in April. The proposal called for a project staff consisting of a director, serving half-time, a research analyst, also half-time, a full-time project librarian and a number of graduate students, who were to work under the supervision of the project librarian to provide bibliographical services to the faculty. All three principal members of the project staff were to participate in the course-planning deliberations of the three di-

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visional teaching staffs of the college. We were to begin in the fall of 1960 by working with the social sciences division. Beginning in the spring and continuing into the fall semester of 1961, we were to work also with the natural sciences and the humanities divisions. Thus the action phase of the project was to extend through three semesters, ending in the spring of 1962. A fourth semester was to be devoted to analysis and reporting.

The General Nature of Social Structure Research

In essence, social structure research involves the examination of a particular situation or institution in the light of certain potentially relevant models which may serve to highlight the many values and activities perceived.² The models serve as convenient approximations which allow the researcher to grasp a given situation rapidly and to categorize it properly. Once the researcher has found the appropriate category, he knows what kinds of behavior he can expect to observe. After a remarkably short period of actual contact, he is able to frame questions which will bring pertinent answers about the characteristics of the particular situation he is analyzing.

This kind of research derives from both sociology and anthropology, or, more precisely, from an area of study in which there is considerable overlapping between the two. As sociology, the study falls into the category of institutional sociology and, more specifically, into that branch of institutional sociology which is concerned with the study of formal organizations.³ As anthropology, the study falls into the area of social anthropology of the structural type. The primary discipline of our research analyst is social anthropology. Her methods, therefore, were inevitably shaped by certain characteristics of this field.

Anthropology is holistic; it strives to see a social unit as a whole. The anthropologist most often uses nonquantitative methods. He looks for "regularities," "configuration," and "pattern" in the whole. Most anthropologists attempt to approach the social unit without preconceptions. Some make a point of avoiding hypotheses to be tested.⁴ They strive for an "inside view," distorted as little as possible by their own personal and cultural biases. For these reasons, the anthropologist is inclusive in his gathering of data. He attempts to encompass everything in his notes on observation, in his recording of interviews, in his collection of artifacts and documents. However, his perception and

consequently, his selection of data, is inevitably influenced by concepts which have theoretical weight, concepts which have proved meaningful in anthropological studies. His analysis, moreover, involves a great deal of systematic working and reworking of the data collected.⁵

The Academic Institution as a Formal Organization

The study of formal organizations has been much influenced by the classic statement of Max Weber on the nature of bureaucracy.⁶ The features of bureaucracy as Weber enumerates them include a clear-cut division of labor and a high degree of specialization, the organization of offices into a hierarchical structure, behavior governed in accordance with formal rules and procedures, the expectation of an impersonal relationship between officials and clients, and a career orientation of staff.

Like practically all modern large-scale organizations, colleges are bureaucratically administered, and a small college imbedded in a huge university faces not only its own bureaucratic administrative structure but also the bureaucratic demands of the giant institution of which it is a part. In the academic institution, however, the tendency toward bureaucracy is always tempered by the ancient tradition of the university as a community of scholars. In Monteith, moreover, this tradition was deliberately emphasized; so that we find all the features characteristic of the bureaucracy considerably modified in this setting. So, for instance, while a division of labor and a degree of specialization is reflected in the organization of the teaching staff into three divisions, there is no departmentalization according to discipline and interdivisional studies are fostered. The de-emphasis on hierarchy is apparent in the fact that the policy-making Administrative Council is made up of the chairmen of the three divisions, each of whom is in close contact with his respective teaching staff. Very little hierarchical structure has developed within the divisional staffs partly because practically all instructors started at the same time and partly because the development of a staff-taught course fostered a sense of collegueship. Bureaucratic rules and procedures do govern some Monteith activities, but such formalities are likely to have emanated from the bureaucracy of the University rather than from within the College, where flexibility and rule-by-consensus are cherished.

The impersonality of the official-client relationship is less likely to

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appear in the academic institution than in such bureaucracies as the unemployment service or the social service agency. It is particularly minimized at Monteith because the College has always been committed to the aim of creating a small-college atmosphere. The career orientation of the college instructor generally involves a strong identification with a specialized field. At Monteith the interdisciplinary staff group pulls in the opposite direction. Relatively few Monteith instructors have even attempted to make contacts with their opposite numbers in the College of Liberal Arts. Thus the Monteith situation has strong collegial aspects which might recall earlier patterns of the English common room where every member was a peer, where tolerance of eccentricity did not exclude vigorous debate of ideas, where each person acted when outside the common room as an independent, autonomous scholar, responsible only to the judgment of his peers and of history.

But Monteith College exists, nevertheless, as a formal organization. The formal organization is the context in which the college teacher must function. Like the doctor, who needs a hospital, the academic intellectual needs the university to provide him with students, classrooms, laboratories, a library, an office, and a salary. He must give up some of the freedom of action of the free-lance artist or writer, though not so much as the civil servant or the technician. He must find acceptance among his peers who expect him to be independent and autonomous. He must regulate his activity to the extent that his students have a reasonable expectation of seeing him at class time, hearing his thoughts on roughly the areas he is scheduled to cover, receiving his criticism and evaluation of their performance. But how the man teaches, the standards he sets for the performance of his students, these are matters ordinarily thought of as entirely his own business. Only extraordinary infractions of expectations will be noticed by peers, who will, in any case, tend to defend his, and potentially their own, individuality and style as a matter of academic freedom.

In short, each of the three models is partly reflected in the Monteith situation: (1) the model of the bureaucracy, (2) the model of the collegial organization, and (3) the model of the free and independent teacher. The Library Project faced the challenge of coming to terms with this hybrid creature. Our structural analysis reveals the lessons we learned through two years of trial and error before we finally achieved a moderate acceptance.

Analysis of the Monteith Structure

The analysis of our experiences in the Pilot Project was based on three kinds of data: notes on observation, transcriptions of interviews, and transcriptions of tape-recorded reminiscences. The research analyst kept detailed notes on her observation of every formal and informal meeting which involved project staff members along with faculty individuals or groups. Three series of interviews with the faculty were conducted, one at the beginning, one in the middle, and one at the end of the Project. In addition, Ballingall and I each dictated a lengthy reminiscence, about forty typewritten pages, covering the entire period of the Project. We attempted to recall our own changing views with regard to it as well as our estimate of our relationships with each individual faculty member at every stage in the enterprise.

This voluminous body of data, approximately four file-cabinet drawers full, was systematically examined and re-examined by the research analyst as she looked for regularities and deviations in the many patterns of relationship which appeared in the Monteith structure. This analysis resulted in the identification of four characteristics which seem to have been particularly significant for the development of the Library Project. Each of these characteristics is related to concepts implied in the discussion, above, of the academic institution as a formal organization, and of Monteith as a particularly hybrid species.

The Dual Role Concept at Monteith. The concept of role is essential in the analysis of any social system, but it has a particular flavor in the consideration of a structure which is at all bureaucratic. In the bureaucracy, role is associated with office rather than with person. The concept of role implies the idea that people behave the way other people expect them to behave. An individual's behavior reflects not only such general roles as those determined by his age, his sex, his family, his social class, his occupation, etc., but also his membership in this, that, or another group, his "place" in the group, and the duties and responsibilities, the ideas and sentiments, in short, the expectations attached to that place. In this sense, an individual's identity is conferred upon him by the social definition of the behavior appropriate to a particular group, whether that group is defined by an office held in a bureaucracy or by membership in a collegial organization.

The concept of role does not imply conscious play-acting, however; it refers to a largely unreflective acceptance of the socially conferred

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identity. Furthermore, behavior in accordance with a role not only expresses the ideas and feelings which are consistent with the role, but produces them. The individual identifies with his role.

Many individuals in the Monteith College structure carry responsibilities in two areas and consequently the dual role is accepted as a normal pattern. An individual who has a dual role acts in any given social situation in accordance with his perception of the expectations attaching to one or the other of his two roles. The fact that the dual role pattern was accepted in the Monteith structure meant that usually the "others" expected the individual to be able to separate his two roles in his thinking and behavior.

The Concept of "Social" Distance. The Monteith structure is marked by relatively little social distance between individuals at various levels in the hierarchy, but by considerable social distance between different groups at the same level, especially between the three divisional teaching staffs. The concept of social distance is related to the familiar concept of "status" which is associated with the view of bureaucracy as a system which prescribes and defines relationships in an organization which is hierarchical and in which functions are highly specialized. But social distance also implies distance on the horizontal, the socially, or organizationally defined separation which is a factor in the ability of individuals and groups at the same status level to communicate with one another. Thus it applies equally well to the colleague-group relationships which characterize the three divisions of the teaching staff.

The Divisional Organization and Group Allegiance. The organization of the teaching staff into three divisions has had a crucial significance upon the group organization of the College, since each staff has developed distinctive ways of organizing itself, assigning responsibilities, and providing for internal communication and coordination. The "group," we are concerned with here is a task-oriented group, not a primary group like family or close friends. But neither is it simply an aggregate of individuals who fall into a particular classification. The concept implies not only a common task and a real interaction in dealing with this task; it implies also a more or less cohesive body which develops its own style of working, sets its own boundaries and responsibilities, and defines the roles of its members. Like all groups in the sociological sense, it is a mechanism for the control and coordination of behavior.

Ambivalence Between Roles. The Monteith instructor must deal

with a degree of ambivalence between his role as a member of a staff, sharing the responsibility for a whole course, and his role as an instructor, individually responsible for his own discussion sections. This characteristic of the Monteith structure is illuminated by the concept of the "reference group." The "reference group" does not mean necessarily an actual interacting group of people; it does mean those groups or individuals to whom one refers for standards of value and behavior.⁷ The concept is related to the concepts of role and status, since the group to which one refers for standards is likely to be determined by one's own role and status in a given social situation, or more accurately, by one's perception of that role and status. As indicated, each staff became a powerful reference group for every member in it. But it was not the only reference group. A chronic problem of the service organization, of which the college is an example, is that of the professional's ambivalence between his own definition of his client's "best interests," and the client's definition, or, in other words, the client's wishes.⁸

In the Monteith structure, the instructor is responsible with his colleagues for total course planning and for planning and presenting lectures, but he meets individually with each of his discussion sections and is solely responsible for what occurs in them. His ambivalence reflects the tensions between the collegial model of the staff and the model of the free and independent teacher. It also reflects the instructor's reference group conflicts. In deciding what is in the "best interests" of the students, he can refer to the definition of the staff, the definition of the students or the definition of his own internalized standards which have been set by such "others" as former teachers, former colleagues, the "teaching profession," or the "scientific community."

Stages in the Development of the Library Project

The Pre-Project Stage. The four characteristics of the Monteith structure which have been discussed—the dual role pattern, social distance, the division of the teaching staff into three divisions, and the instructor's staff-discussion section ambivalence—were all of crucial importance for the Library Project at each stage in its development. From the outset I have had a dual role at Monteith. I was employed originally as a half-time executive secretary for the College. My second role was that of emissary, or salesman, if you like, from the Wayne State University Library. Dr. Flint Purdy, Director of the

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Library, assigned me half-time to the task of developing and gaining acceptance of an integrated library program. As executive secretary my role was clearly subordinate. I was responsible for implementing policies determined by the Administrative Council. Because of the lack of social distance in the vertical structure of Monteith, however, I had no hesitation about campaigning for my ideas to my superiors, and I experienced no difficulty in getting a hearing and support for the proposed program.

As soon as the faculty of the social sciences division arrived on the scene and began to meet in course-planning sessions, the chairman of the division invited me to meet with them. Because of the pressure of other duties, however, it was impossible for me to do so regularly. I soon found that when I was there my presence was accepted with grace and friendliness, but I was not a part of the cohesive interacting group which they quickly became. In short, I was not accepted into full membership.

During the first year of the College, the year in which the Library Project was being planned and the proposal to the Cooperative Research Program formulated, we presented two library assignments. For a number of reasons, students found one of these assignments both difficult and burdensome. They expressed their dissatisfaction forcibly in their discussion sections, thus bringing to the surface the instructor's reference group ambivalence. As a member of the staff the instructor had, along with his colleagues, agreed to the assignment. As an individual, responsible for a discussion section, he faced a number of rebellious students. To some of the instructors the rebellion seemed justified; the assignment was interpreted as meaningless busywork, and the students became the effective reference group. The lack of social distance within the divisional staff, moreover, made it possible for student dissatisfaction and the instructor's acceptance of validity of this dissatisfaction to be quickly and effectively communicated to the divisional chairman.

The First Stage. As the project began officially in the spring of 1960, then, it had already felt the effect of the four structural factors, though, of course, we were not consciously aware of these characteristics at the time. Gilbert Donahue was appointed project librarian, and was expected to serve the Project full time. But he also had two roles, in that he joined me in participating with the teaching faculty in course planning while at the same time he was assigned the responsibility for supervising the work of the bibliographical assistants.

These two roles were complementary in the sense that each was concerned with furthering the aims of the faculty, rather than with shaping them. As supervisor of bibliographical services, he supplied skilled assistance; as participant in course planning, he presented the library as means for achieving objectives determined by the faculty. Similarly my two roles were parallel, if not complementary. Both as executive secretary and as director on the Project, I saw myself as implementing rather than determining faculty goals.

There was the possibility of conflict, however, in the two roles carried by Ballingall, our research analyst. As a member of the teaching staff in the social sciences division, she carried her full share of responsibility for course planning, for lectures, and for leading her own discussion sections. As a research analyst on the Project, on the other hand, she was expected to stand a bit apart to observe and analyze the relationship between the faculty and the Project. Probably her experience as an anthropologist led her to accept without hesitation this dual role. The anthropologist is accustomed to dealing with a situation in which he participates in the daily life of the community he is studying while at the same time he maintains the necessary detachment of the scientist.

The dual role pattern involved even our bibliographical assistants. Initially these students were assigned to work for individual members of the social sciences staff. They were expressly given the responsibility of interpreting the individual needs and demands of the instructor to the library on the one hand, and the necessarily bureaucratic regulations and procedures of the library to the faculty, on the other. They were expected to work closely under the supervision of the project librarian, not only in order that what they produced would profit from his professional knowledge and skills but also in order that they might demonstrate the value of library competence. In this role we expected them to be good-will ambassadors for the Project. In their role of assisting the faculty, we expected them to adopt the values and style of the academic researcher.

Here, however, the dual role pattern failed. Almost every assistant formed a fairly firm one-to-one attachment with his faculty principal. Most of them avoided the supervision and guidance of the project librarian. They were reluctant to report to the research analyst on the nature of the tasks the faculty asked them to perform or on their own relationships with the faculty. Actually, some instructors used the assistants merely as messengers, some treated them like apprentices,

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and some gave them a sort of junior colleague role. But however they were treated, they saw themselves not as representatives of the Library Project but as research assistants for the faculty. Perhaps this was the only model of behavior with which they were familiar.

There was no notable difference in the operation of the social distance factor on the Project during the first semester. But there was a new development in the effect of the factor of the group organization. During the period before the Project started, the social sciences staff worked together as a total group. In the fall of 1960, however, having grown from 10 or 11 to 13 or 14 in number, the staff decided to break into small committees for preliminary planning of various segments of the course. The three principal Library Project staff members, therefore, spread themselves among these committees. Meeting with groups of two or three or four, we were able to get more library assignments accepted than either before or after this period. But the assignments were not very successful. One difficulty had to do with the fact that three or four people can discuss informally rather than call a formal meeting. Since our offices were not close to the faculty offices, Donahue and I were often simply not around when informal gatherings took place. We were frequently not fully aware of all the considerations involved in the committee's plans. Consequently, some of the assignments we proposed, though accepted, were not really in tune with the units to which they were expected to contribute.

Another difficulty which stemmed from the changed organization of the social sciences staff arose from the fact that the total staff did not feel fully committed to the plans developed in committees, plans which did not reflect the thinking of the staff as a whole. As a result, individual instructors worked quite autonomously in their discussion sections, emphasizing those aspects of a given unit with which they felt sympathy, de-emphasizing other aspects. The aspect most often de-emphasized was the library assignment. The chain of relationships might be summarized as follows: With the increasing cohesiveness of the committees, the solidarity of the total staff decreased. As the solidarity of the staff decreased, its power as a reference group diminished, and students or "generalized others" gained reference group power proportionately.

The Second Stage. During the second semester of our operation, which was from February to June 1961, all four of the structural factors had a negative influence on the development of the Project.

It was at this time that we extended our operation to include not only the social sciences division but the natural sciences and the humanities divisions as well. We provided bibliographical assistants for the instructors, and we began to meet with them in their course-planning sessions.

And now we began to meet lack of acceptance of our dual role pattern. As executive secretary, I had by this time become an *ex officio*, non-voting member of the Administrative Council of the College, which is made up of the three instructional divisions. I was never conscious of this making any difference in my role as director of the Library Project, but evidence later appeared that some instructors saw me primarily as a member of the reputedly powerful Council. My role as a librarian, attempting to serve the instructional goals of the faculty, or, at worst, trying to gain acceptance for my own library goals, was quite overshadowed. Similarly, as we began to work with the faculty in the two additional divisions, all three Project staff members were seen not so much as representatives of the Library Project but rather as social scientists or quasi-social scientists meddling in the business of natural scientists and humanists.

In a sense, this view was justified. Ballingall is, indeed, a social scientist and Donahue and I, by training and inclination, probably merit the label "quasi-social scientist." Nevertheless, in our Library Project roles we did not see ourselves as representing the social scientists. We were, in fact, painfully conscious of the fact that the librarians among us had never won full membership in the social sciences staff. We were unprepared to find, therefore, that the Library Project had come to be identified not as a general educational effort, but as a social science enterprise.

Now these comments on our relationship with the humanities and natural sciences divisions should not convey the impression that we or the Library Project were completely rejected. I should make it clear that I am describing neither outward behavior nor individual relationships. The natural sciences staff was gracious and friendly in inviting us to participate in its deliberations. What I have tried to express, rather, is the general, perhaps largely unconscious, attitude of the "ideal-typical" instructor. Certain individuals on each staff were most sympathetic to both our aims and our methods. They really acted as sponsors for the Project. And some instructors were always willing to give us a chance to try out our ideas, whether or not they found these ideas persuasive to begin with. Our experience

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during these months, nevertheless, indicated a breakdown of acceptance of the dual role pattern. It reflected, furthermore, the considerable horizontal social distance between the three staffs.

The group organization factor created additional difficulties for the Project in the second semester. As we continued to have trouble relating ourselves to the sub-group organization of the social sciences staff, we were now faced with a similar sub-group organization in the other two divisions. The natural sciences staff had from the very beginning tended to organize itself into subgroups based upon disciplinary specialization. The humanities staff, consisting of only four members, had no need of such subdivision. On the other hand, the three rank-and-file members often gathered informally. The chairman of this division was also Director of the College and was frequently occupied with general administrative duties. Formal meetings of the humanities staff, therefore, came more and more to serve the purpose merely of crystallizing the results of informal discussion. The formal meetings of the natural sciences staff served similarly to crystallize the plans developed in the specialist committees. When the Library Project personnel participated in these meetings, therefore, we found that we could contribute little. The library assignments we suggested were likely to be out of tune with prior discussion. We succeeded in getting acceptance of one assignment in the humanities course and one in the natural sciences course, but neither of these was successfully carried out.

As we ended the second semester of the Project, our morale was, understandably, at low ebb. We felt ineffectual and rejected. Naturally enough, we began to turn to one another for comfort and support. Eventually, as we became increasingly aware of our own solidarity as a group, we found ourselves able to take a more constructive approach to our work.

The Third Stage. During the summer of 1961, we devoted major attention to analyzing and discussing our experiences thus far and to developing plans for what was to be the last semester of the Project's operation. By the end of the summer, we had decided upon three important changes in our organizational structure. We dropped the attempt to meet regularly with the three divisional staffs. Instead we asked one member of the natural sciences staff and one member of the humanities staff to serve as Library Project representative for his colleagues. Our research analyst continued her dual role in relationship to the social sciences staff. These two teaching staff repre-

sentatives met with the three Project staff members to consider the objectives and methods of the library program in general. We worked with them individually in making detailed plans for assignments in their respective areas. Our new structure preserved the dual role pattern—in fact, it extended it—but it also recognized the importance of full membership in the interacting faculty group responsible for course planning. We felt that by giving the dual role responsibility to the instructor we would make it possible for library assignments to be in tune with the objectives and pedagogical style of the faculty and to be presented at the crucial decision-making moments in the course-planning process.

The second change in our organizational structure was the discontinuation of the individual assignment of bibliographical assistants to instructors. We decreased the number of assistants and pooled those remaining into a group who would work directly under the Project librarian. Requests for bibliographical service were channeled through him to whichever assistant he thought best qualified for the particular job, though for a long-term or highly specialized project he might send the assistant to work directly with an instructor. All of the assistants were given a carefully worked out training program which included a series of bibliographical problem tasks. As a result of these changes the bibliographic assistants became a highly cohesive group, a group which clearly identified itself with the Library Project. By the end of the term, as their employment by the Project was about to terminate, some of them felt so competent that they took tentative and, as it turned out, inconclusive steps toward setting themselves up as a bibliographical search service. Five of the fifteen, incidentally, decided to become librarians. Two of these, I believe, are now in library school. In general, this new organization of our bibliographical services departed from the dual role pattern, but it created a loyal, cohesive group, capable of producing high quality work.

The third major change in our structure was in the presentation of assignments to students. The assignments, themselves, were considerably different from those we had tried previously. Our experience with previous assignments had taught us a good deal about what kinds of library instruction and experiences are appropriate for college work. In our new assignments we found ourselves at last with a product to sell that the faculty would buy. (This change, of course, was a crucial factor in the acceptance we managed to achieve in the last semester of the Project. But it is not a structural change, so it is

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not pertinent to the present discussion.) The structural change we now put into effect was that of having librarians take an active part in the presentation of assignments.

We had originally assumed that the librarians should remain as much in the background as possible and had left the implementation of library assignments to the faculty. Now, beginning in the fall of 1961, every assignment, once accepted by the teaching staff, was presented by and discussed under the leadership of one or another of the three members of the Library Project staff. We made every effort to see that each instructor demonstrated his support by participating fully in discussion of the assignment and by showing that he considered the assignment an essential part of the student's experience. This change in procedure reinforced the power of the divisional staff as reference group because our very presence in the discussion section represented a staff decision. At the same time, the new procedure gave us an opportunity to contribute to students' thinking about the assignment and thus to influence the standards that they, as a reference group, presented.

As the final semester of the operational phase of the Pilot Project ended in February 1962, we felt that we had finally arrived at a workable social structure for our purposes. In the future of the Monteith Library Program, we plan to maintain this organization. A review of this structure may serve to summarize the findings just presented.

The organization calls for the dual role pattern which is accepted in the Monteith structure, but by shifting the dual role assignment to a representative of each of the three staffs, it attempts to ensure that each role is fully accepted. The instructor who serves as a Library Project representative will have already been accepted to full membership in his staff-colleague group. We know from our own experience that he will have no difficulty attaining full membership in the smaller and intensively interacting Library Project staff group. We are reasonably certain that in this group he will acquire a more sophisticated view of what real knowledge and skill in the use of library resources involves.

The new arrangement also recognizes the impossibility of having two or three librarians participate effectively in the dispersed subgroup organization which exists in each of the three divisions. Our faculty representative will have a much better opportunity to do so. He should find it possible to play the role of Library Project sponsor at those crucial points of interaction when presuppositions are being

expressed, when ideas are taking shape, when plans have not yet crystallized.

The participation of an instructor from each division, together with the Library Project staff, in discussions pertaining to one element common to all three course sequences may help to bridge the social distance between the three staffs. It should, in any case, lessen the significance of this factor in the development of the Library Project, since no one identified with one staff will be put in the position of having to concern himself directly with the teaching plans and procedures of the others. And finally, our new procedures for presenting assignments to students helps to overcome the problem of the instructor's reference group ambivalence.

Implications for Library Research

The significance of the structural analysis of the Monteith Library Project as a sociological study must be determined by others. Its significance as a demonstration of the value of applying sociological-anthropological concepts and methods to the study of library problems seems to me unquestionable. The insights associated with this type of approach were manifestly crucial in helping us at Monteith to understand and overcome the difficulties we encountered in the Pilot Project.

Such insights would probably be similarly useful in helping us understand, and perhaps overcome, some of the problems we face in other parts of the library world. Think, for example, of the academic library as an organizational element in the overall structure of the college or university. By its very nature, the library has a much more sharply hierarchical organization than the college, which strives to carry on the tradition of the "community of peers." In such a situation, there is a natural tendency for the library to feel uncomfortable unless it adopts the mode of social control which prevails in the larger institution. But the pattern of professional peer group control may be meaningless in the steeply hierarchical organization of the library. It may, indeed, jeopardize the efficiency of an organization whose operation depends so heavily upon the coordination of a great many and diverse activities, upon reasonably uniform rules and procedures. On the other hand, the library suffers from the tendency of every bureaucracy to value its rules and procedures for their own sake, losing sight of the ends for which they were established. A strong identification with the interest of the client, that is, the faculty and

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students, as defined by the profession rather than by the organization, may serve to guard against over-bureaucratization. This dilemma for the academic library is revealed through the use of social science concepts.

The field of library cooperation offers another example in which such concepts might be illuminating. In the state of Michigan, we have found that librarians of small, substandard libraries are often reluctant to support a state plan which calls for regional cooperation. This reluctance can be understood as stemming from the difficulty that such librarians have in identifying with the standards and values determined by the profession. These isolated librarians are likely to receive status and recognition locally from the patrons they serve. Seeing their situation in this light, we might be less likely to embark on educational or promotional programs to overcome their reluctance and more likely to attempt to find ways of providing them with a different kind of group support, perhaps by improving their status in professional circles, perhaps by attempting to enlarge their patrons' understanding of the library resources and services made possible by cooperative library programs.

Here, then, are examples of two library problems upon which a sociological approach could probably shed some light. We hope that our application of sociological concepts and methods in the Monteith study will encourage others to try such an approach to other library problems such as those suggested.

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