Cooperation Among Art Libraries

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Too often the antagonists of cooperatives are overly concerned with the unjustified fear that participation in networks will result in loss of prestige and autonomy. Their protagonists, however, are frequently less than honest in verbal and published summations of their cooperative measures. This attitude on the part of the latter is not difficult to analyze in light of the oversell philosophy of the immediate past. But since the consumer is becoming more circumspect in his approach, it is time, in the library world as well as in the consumer world, that those having experience in innovative programs be straightforward in their reports, relying on the good judgment of the reader not to allow honest reporting of some failures to eclipse the more positive aspects of their programs. Widespread exchanges by networks of reports of meetings or of newsletters such as that of the Southwest Academic Library Consortium could assist immensely in opening avenues for exchanges of solutions to common problems. It is senseless for new networks to waste time and effort repeating errors already experienced and resolved by more established groups.

After a brief rebuttal of one critic’s opinion, this article will touch upon the pros and cons of existing cooperative systems directly affecting The Ohio State University Libraries’ Fine Arts Library: the Inter University Libraries Council Reference and Interlibrary Loan Service, the Ohio College Library Center, and the Center for Research Libraries. The main emphasis, however, will be placed on the projects of the Art Research Libraries of Ohio and how similar networks based on this group’s practical approach can be readily adopted or adapted by the regional chapters of library associations.

Recent studies of library circulation patterns reveal that only a small percentage of materials published ten or more years ago are heavily used, the rest varying from very slightly used to rarely or never

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consulted. Even though these statistics reflect more exactly the research patterns in the sciences than in the humanities, it must be admitted that a large portion of a library’s fine arts collection, often the most expensive titles, is infrequently consulted. Given proper funding, such statistics would be of little concern to librarians involved in supporting in-depth research, but inflation and, in the case of some academic institutions, decreasing enrollments are forcing librarians to revamp their collection enrichment programs. Major purchases of lesser-used materials, whether they are retrospective titles in original or reprint editions, catalogues raisonnés, facsimiles or deluxe editions, affect the number of more frequently used materials which can be purchased. This makes it difficult if not impossible for new libraries, or libraries on the upswing of their collection development, to fully succeed in their attempts to provide library users with the research materials needed to support in-depth research in all areas or periods of the history of art. Therefore, the only feasible solutions to augment available resources are cooperative programs which eliminate the duplication of infrequently used materials through clearly defined voluntary programs of specialization in each participating institution; concentration on purchases unique to a city, region, or state; the compilation of regional union lists of serials and assignments of responsibility for fill-ins; exchanges of duplicates; and the establishment of regional computerized bibliographic controls. Except for the latter, the Art Research Libraries of Ohio has had excellent results in all of these areas and its library users have greatly profited from the efforts of this close-knit cooperative.

The inability on the part of many to fully understand the problems faced by most libraries is disturbing. In a special series of articles on library cooperation published in the *Library Journal*, Ralph Blasingame states: “I must take issue with Dougherty’s first idea: that tough financial times reinforce a need for cooperation. Perhaps the very opposite is the case. Certainly the most successful academic and large public libraries, according to the profession’s ranking, have not grown great as a consequence of cooperative efforts. Widener Library at Harvard and the New York Public Library, to cite only two obvious examples, are not in the forefront because they have cooperated—or even been much concerned with cooperation except as the strongest may stoop to aid the weakest. . . . Cooperation does, after all, cost money which might better be spent on buying more books in *this* library.”¹¹ No one can dispute that the Harvard University and New York Public Libraries have superlative collections, but are these

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institutions being equally well supported in 1974? The recent, highly publicized plight of the New York Public Library answers this question only too clearly. It should also be pointed out that the Harvard University libraries have been cooperative in their relationships with other institutions without giving the impression of “stooping” to lend assistance through interlibrary loans. Furthermore, both institutions are not so self-sufficient that they have not in turn had to depend on other libraries for needed materials, admittedly at a lower percentage of return. Harvard University is in fact taking an active part in several cooperative efforts including the Center for Research Libraries and the Research Libraries Group. Blasingame’s reasoning is unrealistic. Many institutions suffered greatly during the depression years, the golden years of European research in the field of the history of art, and it has taken large sums of money and many years to overcome these years of neglect. The 1950s and 1960s witnessed an upsurge on all levels of library support and many art libraries were able to make great strides towards their goals of providing primary sources, but the prospects for the future are no longer bright. While few library budgets are being openly reduced, they are not increasing at a rate commensurate with that of inflation. Inevitably these constrictions, along with the publication explosion of the 1970s will result in further gaps in library holdings.

A supreme example of the benefits of cooperation is the agreement between the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Louvre to reunite and exhibit intact on a three-year rotating basis a rare neo-Sumerian statue. Each museum retains ownership of its part of the statue. Another cooperative effort by the same museums is their joint purchase in 1973 of a medieval ivory which will also be exhibited alternately in each museum. Rather than diminishing the stature of the museums, these measures are proof of the sensitivity of their administrators to the primary function of their institutions: serving the public.

Some degree of cooperation between libraries has always existed but the ability to provide users with the best possible resources hinges on improved relationships between institutions. The more personal approach of reasonably small networks usually results in mutual respect and a greater willingness to lend materials. There is no room in cooperatives for arrogance and it is far better to avoid, no matter how strong its collection, an institution more obsessed with self esteem than with the needs of its users.

In the Library Journal mini-symposium mentioned above, John F.
Anderson and Ellsworth Mason express well-balanced opinions. They each admit there are obstacles but they feel that cooperation is essential and that problem areas such as recompensing large institutions whose facilities are heavily drawn upon by smaller institutions must be resolved without delay. Two reasonably successful solutions to this problem are presently in effect at The Ohio State University Libraries. The State Library of Ohio pays The Ohio State University (OSU) library system a modest sum for the heavy usage made of its collection by Ohio's public libraries. Another cooperative is the Inter University Library Council Reference and Interlibrary Loan Service (IULC-RAILS). Eleven state-supported Ohio colleges and universities finance the staffing of this unit which is based in OSU's main library. This service is totally separate from the regular interlibrary loan division and is solely intended for the loan of OSU materials to other Ohio institutions. The fees are to defray the cost of processing the loan requests and cannot be applied towards the purchase of library materials by the OSU Libraries. RAIL's brisk activities have been of great assistance to the students and faculty members of the borrowing institutions and the loans, at least in the Fine Arts Library, have caused little if any inconvenience to users. Few abuses occur but when they do, the problem is diplomatically but firmly discussed with the borrowing library. This leads directly to one of the most important "commandments" of a successful cooperative network. Problems must be promptly, diplomatically and honestly discussed, thus avoiding undercurrents of discontent. It is rare that these difficulties cannot be easily and amicably solved.

Another Ohio-based cooperative system, the Ohio College Library Center (OCLC) has two primary goals: to reduce the cost of cataloging and to increase the availability of library resources through cathode ray tube terminals connected to the bibliographic records of the center's computer. Chartered in 1969, OCLC is a nonprofit corporation which in 1970 began to provide its members with an off-line catalog card production system based on the MARC II data base. One year later the on-line cataloging system was activated, thus allowing each member to gain immediate access to the computer and to share original cataloging with its fifty Ohio members and numerous out-of-state affiliates by inputting bibliographic records not yet available on the data base. Technical discussions of the shared cataloging systems can be found in publications by Frederick Kilgour and Judith Hopkins. Both the emotional and practical impact of OCLC has been enormous. At first catalogers felt threatened by the system; then, as time went by and
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adjustments were made in the work flow, attention turned to adapting to the new system, concentrating on original cataloging and, as time permits, tackling the backlogs. At present OCLC has resulted in reducing the amount of time between the receipt of a title and its availability to the user. In comparison to the more traditional system of cataloging there seems to be a higher ratio of errors with the new system, but the publication explosion was making it impossible for catalogers to keep up with the materials to be processed and backlogs in cataloging as well as card production were growing at an enormous rate. In time, the percentage of errors, which is not so great that it can be called a severe problem, will certainly be resolved. Those working in public services have been especially interested in and impatiently waiting for the availability and future expansion of the center's computerized bibliographic records as a tool for purchase decisions and interlibrary loan requests. To date, except for the Ohio State University Libraries, whose total shelflist is reflected in the data base, the members' holdings are limited to materials cataloged since OCLC became operational. But, as is true of all innovative efforts, it is essential that outside pressures be resisted and that each step's problems be totally resolved before undertaking new projects. At present OCLC is justifiably concentrating on the standardization of cataloging methods and not on the conversion of all of the members' shelflists to a machine-readable form.

At Ohio State University, fears that OCLC would inconvenience users through heavy interlibrary loan demands on the Fine Arts Library collection have not materialized. A large majority of that library's extensive loans are still from out-of-state institutions not affiliated with OCLC. One surprising result of the use of OCLC for interlibrary loan requests has been that instead of automatically turning to OSU for loans of the more current publications, OCLC members have discovered that some of the needed materials are more conveniently available in nearby libraries.

OCLC has had a direct influence on the Art Research Libraries of Ohio (ARLO). Author cards for all additions to the art library collections of Oberlin College, Ohio State University, Ohio University and the University of Cincinnati are sent directly by OCLC to the OSU Fine Arts Library for inclusion in the ARLO Union Card Catalog. This direct shipment of cards releases these libraries of the burden of having to produce extra cards for the ARLO catalog.

Faculty members of institutions taking part in OCLC activities receive reciprocal direct borrowing privileges. These privileges are
limited to circulating materials and the length of the loans is confined to each institution's student, not faculty, borrowing regulations. The direct borrowing privileges up to the present time have been intended solely for their own use and not for their students. Abuses do occur. A library can decline issuing materials which are in heavy demand by its own users and can set a limit on the number of titles issued on any one subject, but since the full-time staff is not always on duty to screen the materials being charged out, users have at times been seriously inconvenienced by occasional depletions of titles on a given artist or subject.

Some thought is presently being given to extending these direct borrowing privileges to all of the students of the academic institutions in OCLC. Cooperation on such a large scale can only be feasible if the lending institutions are fully recompensed for the demands made on their collections. Means of implementing such a plan are presently being discussed and it is fairly certain that the liberal direct borrowing privileges for students will soon be given a trial. How this policy will affect the OSU art library is not yet known. The projection is that it could well be detrimental to the research capabilities of its users since its collection and those of a few other academic libraries are heavily consulted, in-house, by out-of-town students. The OSU art library could well lose control of its collections and suffer irreparable losses. Without substantial assistance for the purchase of duplicates and the replacement of lost books as well as guarantees that the institutions will take action when students abuse these privileges, the only recourse to overly generous cooperative efforts such as this will be to declare the fine arts collections totally noncirculating for all users, including the library's own. At present only about one-fifth of OSU's art book collection is noncirculating.

In the case of large-scale ventures such as direct borrowing privileges, one must agree to a certain extent with Ralph Blasingame when he states: "This is a pluralistic society... and I, for one, hope it continues to be so. I am not suggesting here that institutions cannot cooperate and still maintain differing points of view, but rather that the colleges and universities we have are not likely either to disappear or to grow uniformly stronger according to some standard pattern. The pressing problem is to select objectives which are realistic and then to move toward them without worrying too much about what any particular group outside the institution thinks. If cooperative efforts can be developed to aid in reaching the resulting multiple objective, fine: if not, they probably won't and certainly shouldn't survive."
Although Blasingame’s pluralistic society has no place in the library world, it is true that overly ambitious plans can be detrimental. Academic libraries are not alone in feeling ever-growing demands on their collections and staffs. Art museums and public libraries also provide, usually without recompense, substantial reference assistance and loans to students and faculty members from nearby colleges and universities. Complete success of large-scale cooperation will only be feasible when all levels of governing bodies take a hard look at their appropriations and reshuffle their priorities. Increased staffing of interlibrary loan divisions, computerized machine-readable access to the holdings of all libraries, public as well as private, would be of far greater benefit in the long run than uncontrolled direct borrowing privileges.

Another important cooperative effort, the Center for Research Libraries (CRL), formerly known as the Midwest Inter-Library Center, was incorporated in 1949 as a depository for the infrequently used materials of ten universities. As time progressed and the center’s collection improved through deposits and cooperative purchases, its membership expanded considerably and it is now a nationwide cooperative library. CRL members are spared the substantial expense of purchasing infrequently used but vital materials through centralized acquisitions programs, centralized storage and joint ownership of complete runs of journals, newspapers, printed foreign dissertations, monographs, etc. The center also purchases large-scale microfilm publishing projects and will acquire upon a member’s request microfilm copies of nonprinted foreign dissertations.

CRL’s purchasing programs deserve the close attention of art librarians. Articles on this library and its own Newsletter tend to publicize purchases made in the fields of literature, science, law and political history. In fact CRL’s resources have considerable potential for art historians. The collection includes guide books, monographs, serials, microfilms of early European and American printed books including all American architectural books printed prior to the twentieth century. It is the duty of art librarians to encourage the center in this direction by taking an active part in recommending purchases, becoming better acquainted with the center’s holdings and informing users of the center’s resources. Each member receives catalog cards for all additions to the joint collection; however, CRL does not limit its borrowing privileges to members, and materials can also be located through the National Union Catalog and CRL’s printed catalogs and Handbook. In an era of diminishing serial budgets, this well
established, effective cooperative venture may well prove to be the lifeline for the preservation of research in the United States. As is true of most cooperatives, the members can use their funds to purchase more frequently requested titles, depending on the center to acquire the more esoteric materials.

All of the cooperative projects discussed above are well subsidized, but less ambitious projects can also be beneficial. Organized areas of specialization in collection building, mutually agreed-upon programs of responsibility for the ordering of fill-ins of serials, and shared resources by means of direct consultation or interlibrary loans can result in sizable savings without sacrificing the quality of the individual collections. In addition, cooperation results in first-hand knowledge of other collections and in an ability on the part of a network's participants to inform their patrons of the existence of special collections in nearby libraries.

Before turning to a discussion of ARLO's various activities it is important to again point out that no network can be truly successful without convenient access by all participants to one form or another of a complete author union catalog. In ARLO's case all attempts to receive either public or private funding for such a project have been unsuccessful. An ARLO author union card catalog has been maintained since 1970 in the Fine Arts Library of OSU, but this catalog, with its 28,000 main entries, only reflects an infinitesimal portion of the materials available through the network's combined art collection of approximately 380,000 volumes. In addition, all grant applications to support the purchase of retrospective titles in the areas of specialization of each member have also been unsuccessful. Curiously, it seems that foundations are not willing to support such programs unless the materials are housed in one library, thus defeating the participants' efforts to each develop a spécialité de la maison.

ARLO's efforts could be overlooked since they are not spectacular but they have worked and have resulted in better use of funds and improved services to Ohio's library users. Those directly involved with budgetary limitations and the constant struggle of providing students and scholars with a maximum of research materials have expressed interest in ARLO's efforts. International requests for copies of its published preliminary study containing descriptions of the methods employed to establish the network and photocopies of two subsequent annual reports are proof of that interest. It is ARLO's hope that these reports on its consortium which was established by trial, error, and correction can assist others in establishing similar cooperative
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measures without experiencing some of its early errors in planning and judgment.

There were few consortiums in the United States when the feasibility study for an Ohio art library cooperative began in 1968, and those that were operational were and still are well subsidized and run by full-time staffs. ARLO has no formal budget and no full-time administrative staff, yet comparisons of its objectives and accomplishments against those of the large cooperative systems reveal that its ratio of completed projects and effective cooperative measures places it quite high on the growing list of successful cooperative systems.

Needless to say, no library should neglect maintaining a well-balanced collection. On the other hand, numerous important but infrequently used materials need not be duplicated if they are available in a nearby library. Since most libraries already specialize on an informal basis, a clearly defined program for purchases of the more expensive titles in specific areas of specialization can result in better use of available funds. Three consecutive Library Services and Construction Act grants received from the State Library of Ohio between 1968 and 1971 resulted in a network of eleven libraries representing nine institutions: four colleges and universities, two public libraries, and three museums. The sole criteria for membership has been strength of collection and an unselfish attitude. The feasibility study began with a questionnaire which was sent to twelve institutions. The prompt and enthusiastic responses led to visits to each library and the discovery that a large majority of the libraries had strong research collections which purely by chance contained clear areas of specialization not duplicating those of the other libraries. Until that time, most of the libraries were unaware of the number of exceptionally strong art libraries in Ohio.

Before establishing definite commitments for specialized purchases, each ARLO participant consulted with his or her administrators, curators and faculty members. All have been fortunate to have the consistent backing of their administrators and users even though the years have seen changes in four directors and seven art librarians. Within one year of its establishment ARLO implemented several cooperative measures in order to attain fuller use of the present collections. These included cooperative purchases of expensive materials, liberalized interlibrary loan policies, decreased prices for photoduplication of articles, exchanges of duplicate serials and finally bibliographic checks. There are no set dues. When funds were needed to subsidize the final phases of the ARLO Union List of Serials, a policy
of self-assessment was established. Some contributed $100 to $200, others $25.

In the course of the 1968 feasibility study, some librarians objected quite strongly to the inclusion in a cooperative network of any institution having a noncirculating policy. During the first meeting it became evident that a majority of those present had for quite some time been reluctant and in some cases had refused to honor interlibrary loan requests made by a museum library whose collection was totally noncirculating. It was pointed out that the museum's policy, combined with the excellence of its collection and reference services, had been of great benefit to scholars. Out of this frank discussion came a better understanding of each other's problems, total cooperation and, most important of all, mutual respect. As a gesture of appreciation, the Cleveland Museum of Art offers extensive photocopying services to ARLO members at a reduced price. The success of any cooperative hinges on sensitivity to the needs of the total membership and it is essential that each member be treated equally.

The success or failure of a cooperative network is also often dependent on factors outside of its jurisdiction. Except for the lack of a complete union card catalog, ARLO's primary obstacles for complete success are to a certain extent the photocopying and interlibrary loan codes of some of its institutions. ARLO would like to, and without great inconvenience could, provide its members with prompt direct photocopying services at five or ten cents per page and no service or minimum charges. Most ARLO members have been able to do so but two have not been able to bypass their institutions' normal price scale and procedures. Wrongly or rightly, this has been circumvented through the devious means of stating, off the record, that requests can be sent by one librarian to another as a personal request between friends, and reimbursements are made to the librarian, not the institution. Since no institution is overly burdened by direct photocopying requests it is regrettable that this modest but important cooperative effort has forced some members to resort to clandestine methods in order to provide reduced rates.

ARLO's decision to provide liberal interlibrary loan services has also been critically affected by the policies of other departments or divisions. Requests for loans of expensive or rare noncirculating materials from an ARLO member are much more likely to be honored than similar requests from other libraries, but some members are only willing to lend such materials if they are sent directly to the art librarian and not through regular interlibrary loan channels. The reasons for
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this are not restricted to Ohio libraries. Infractions of the national interlibrary loan codes are frequent topics of discussion at annual library conferences. It must be stated that the interlibrary loan staffs have performed a yeoman service throughout the existence of this, one of the oldest cooperative ventures, and these criticisms are not meant to belittle their capabilities but rather to point out that little attention has been given to providing functional space to fit the needs of one of the most important departments of a research library. The largest number of complaints revolve around the by-passing by many borrowing libraries of the lender’s “in-house use only” stipulation on the use of the materials. If the lending institution’s own users are not permitted to take such materials home why should others be permitted to do so? In the absence of proper security in interlibrary loan offices and the lack of study space, rare, noncirculating materials lent to an institution as a favor to assist research should be sent to the rare book or fine arts library where their use can be supervised. This would also prevent the ravages of indiscriminate photocopying of irreplacable materials. Strangely enough there seems to be less fear of loss in the mails than there is of damage by the user. Once again systems have been established which circumvent the usual channels and such publications are shipped directly to the fine arts librarian with the stipulation that the materials be used under the supervision of the staff. Scholars and advanced students have gained immeasurably from these liberal but unconventional methods of lending materials. Admittedly special arrangements such as these for photocopying and interlibrary loans are only feasible if the number of participants in the network is small.

In order to compensate for ARLO’s lack of a complete union card catalog, it decided to make a bibliographic check of Mary Chamberlin’s Guide to Art Reference Books and E. Louise Lucas’s Art Books; A Basic Bibliography. Master indexes showing the location or locations of each title were compiled and distributed to the participants. Additional purchases of titles listed in these bibliographic tools are reported on special forms and updates compiled and distributed. These master indexes are poor substitutes for a complete card catalog but they do contain some of the major titles for advanced research and their page or item numbers are often listed by antiquarian bookdealers in their bibliographic descriptions of books for sale. If a library is contemplating purchasing an expensive book it can check these two indexes to see whether the book is available within the ARLO network. If it is, the library will probably purchase another equally important title not available in one of ARLO’s collections. Users are also
encouraged to use the compilations as location guides for either interlibrary loan requests or direct consultation since quite frequently the Ohio locations of these titles do not appear in the National Union Catalog. A statistical study of mutual “Chamberlin holdings” revealed that a considerable amount of unnecessary duplication of materials had occurred prior to ARLO’s establishment. Of the 2,372 titles listed in this bibliography less than 100 were not available in member libraries and only about 11 percent were available in only one library. Another project intended to provide users with a better record of holdings is the expansion by 200 artists’ names of Lucas’ Art Books and listings of holdings of monographs on these artists. A future project will involve each participant’s acceptance of a commitment to collect all available materials on specific artists. As much as possible these assignments will coincide with each institution’s area of specialization and, in the case of the academic members, their institution’s graduate programs.

Lists of new acquisitions are compiled and distributed by only one member; the rest were forced to cease preparing them due to the volume of materials received each month. The curtailment of these lists was regrettable since some members found them valuable in solving some of their original cataloging problems. To alleviate this problem it was attempted to issue quarterly ARLO joint lists of new acquisitions based on the cards received for the union card catalog. This was a foolhardy project since the work had to be done after hours and the amount of time required for the project was too great to be feasible on a regular basis. Some thought is presently being given to compiling a list limited to books published prior to the twentieth century.

There is no doubt that cooperative purchases such as those mentioned above can in fact be effective on a smaller scale in cities having several art libraries. Through better communication, libraries could ensure that all G.K. Hall book catalogs are available somewhere in the city. References from such bibliographic tools can be shared through telephone or mail requests. The same is true of purchases of reprints, microfilms of source materials and the enormously expensive reprints, microfilm programs and catalogues raisonnés. Local cooperation of this type is long overdue and regional chapters of the Special Libraries Association and the Art Libraries Society/North America are perfectly suited for such projects.

ARLO’s most important direct contribution to library users is its Union List of Serials compiled and edited by Stephen Matyi of the
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Cleveland Public Library. Early in 1970 each participant was asked to record all his art library serial titles on 3 by 5 inch slips. Matyi compiled a checklist and each member was then asked to list his holdings. Before it was realized that the union list was going to be published by the Ohio State University Libraries Publication Committee, participants had agreed that each title be listed on a separate page so that additions of titles would only require the insertion of pages and not new editions or supplements. Although making electroprint copies for each member is expensive initially, this method is recommended for any unpublished union lists of serials. The list includes about 2,000 titles. Since serials budgets have not been sufficiently increased to support the rise in cost of renewals, not to speak of new subscriptions, the ARLO Union List of Serials is going to be an important tool in the unfortunate but necessary task faced by most institutions of having to cancel lesser used serials. The list will be studied before final decisions are made and no subscriptions cancelled without first checking with the other members, thereby preventing the possible cancellation of the same titles by two or more institutions. Every effort will also be made not to drop titles available in only one member library. The list will also be used to assign responsibilities for the purchase of fill-ins. Since research libraries cannot function without excellent periodical holdings, the group has agreed that duplication of fill-ins of the basic periodicals is a necessity. But in the case of more specialized foreign journals the responsibility or ordering fill-ins will fall if at all possible on the institution holding the most complete set.

Important gifts, transfers, and exchanges which would never have taken place prior to ARLO's establishment have been made between member institutions in order to place key research tools in the library best suited to make full use of them. Exchanges of lists of duplicate serials have also been of great assistance in filling in gaps. A similar exchange of lists of duplicate serials has been established during the past year under the auspices of the Art Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries.

Even though ARLO has had some disappointments, its members feel that it has succeeded in its goal of establishing and maintaining a strong network of cooperative art research collections. This is especially true of the projects which were solely dependent on the participants' enthusiasm, incentive and willingness to devote a considerable amount of personal time to their implementation. Considering the fact that ARLO members meet only twice a year, the ratio of completed projects clearly demonstrates this network's firm belief in the benefits of
cooperative programs. Now that the major projects are completed, its participants are looking forward to meetings devoted to sharing ideas and information.

Once a network's acquisition program is well established it is essential that librarians keep their users informed of the potential of each member library and bring to their attention the available bibliographic tools. All studies, bibliographic checks, union lists, statistical surveys of types of holdings in each library, and lists of acquisitions should be readily available to the users. During the past year faculty members, graduate and upper-level undergraduate students have been making trips to the ARLO libraries for direct consultation of the specialized collections. The quality of the students' work and the increased publishing record of the faculty members are silent witnesses of the powerful impact of cooperative measures, and ARLO has also begun to fulfill one of its unvoiced objectives: to combat the mistaken idea of some students and scholars that in-depth research in the field of the history of art is impossible in the Midwest. ARLO has become a potent factor in recruiting superior students and scholars by some of Ohio's academic institutions.

Although hard work, taking part in cooperative efforts is a rewarding experience which not only benefits library users but also nourishes professional growth of the participating librarians due to the challenge of keeping abreast with the abilities and the knowledge of their peers. Cooperation, regardless of the opinion of some, is not a dirty word. It is here to stay and if not allowed to become overly ambitious, library users will have much to gain from it and nothing to lose.

References

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9. ARLO members and their areas of specialization are: Cincinnati Museum of Art—early Christian art, Near Eastern art, engraving, costume; Cincinnati Public Library—twentieth-century art with special emphasis on deluxe editions with original prints, Picasso; Cleveland Museum of Art—Festschriften, Oriental art, serials; Cleveland Public Library, Art Department—American art, antiques, porcelain; Cleveland Public Library, John G. White Collection—Oriental art, Near East, folklore, original manuscripts; Oberlin College—Dutch art, medieval architecture, early American architecture, baroque art; Ohio State University—medieval and renaissance art including Northern Renaissance, Byzantine art to a lesser degree; Ohio University—nineteenth-century European art, American art, 1900-1945; Toledo Museum of Art—history of glass, catalogs of private and public collections, sales catalogs; University of Cincinnati, Classics Library—ancient art, serials; University of Cincinnati, Design, Architecture and Art Library—history of architecture.