Teaching the Elements of Community Analysis: Problems and Opportunities

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Although it may indeed be axiomatic that library service should be adjusted to the people served, at the time of this writing, graduate library schools do not appear to stress a community analysis component among their varied curriculum requirements. We seem to have an abundance of literature—including surveys of existing libraries, whether general or specific, partial or complete, local, regional or state—on user studies and, more recently, on attempts at measurement of library effectiveness. These may be in-house studies and publications, studies prepared by consultants, management firms, or by volunteer groups such as “friends of the library”; they may be financed through local, state, or federal funds, by foundation support, or by combinations of all these. Some of the literature may be characterized as “how-to-do-it-good” studies or surveys, some as state-of-the-art summaries, but very little on precisely how to study a community as background and prelude to planning for resources and services. In library schools, the teaching of community analysis appears to be an implicit rather than explicit component of the curriculum. This article will review general trends in teaching basic elements of community analysis, highlight some of the courses in which these elements are introduced, comment on cases of in-depth treatment where they appear, and note selected problems associated with the teaching of the subject. And because of its relevance, some comments on trends in library education will also be included.²

Findings are based on a variety of sources, including a sample of graduate schools and correspondence with selected practitioners and educators. Discussions in the literature and comments from other colleagues corroborate the results of this modest survey. At four of the twenty-five schools contacted, faculty members noted, with surprise as

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well as dismay, that on investigation they were unable to identify visible or substantive units on community analysis anywhere in the curriculum, although they assumed, as did the author, that many such units existed. In one accredited program which does include a small unit, the instructor remarked that the brevity of her bibliography (in a course on materials selection) "suggests the dearth of information useful in developing a community study." In other instances, instructors noted that the two most useful references were far from current: (1) Lowell Martin's 1943 University of Chicago conference contribution cited above, and (2) ALA's 1960 Library Community Project manual, *Studying the Community.* Another library educator, in commenting on both the antiquity and paucity of the literature, speculated somewhat facetiously that Joseph Wheeler's 1924 publication, *The Library and the Community,* might really be best of all!

RELATED TRENDS IN LIBRARY EDUCATION

An overview of selected aspects of contemporary library education is introduced here as reminders, as much to practitioners as to educators. While generalizations have their limitations, they also have their uses, especially in reference to that age-old dispute on the "core." With the decrease in importance of the core curriculum, and with the attendant increase in the choice, number, and diversity of library school electives, today's library science graduates may receive less than did their predecessors in what can be termed required curriculum elements. For example, in its thirty credit-hour AMLS program, the University of Michigan now requires only ten hours from master's degree students: collection building (three hours), general reference (three hours), and cataloging/classification (four hours). For the remaining twenty hours, students elect from a wide range of more than fifty courses in library science, approximately one-half of which are usually available in any single term. Furthermore, of the elective course options, students at Michigan may choose, if they wish, up to six hours of graduate level work outside of library science. Given this increasingly common pattern of electives, students today are less likely to receive the basic elements of librarianship, however defined, than were students even as recently as one decade ago. Given the present library job market, student course preferences include what can best be described as an eclectic cafeteria mix, opting for surface diversity in order to increase job flexibility. Those who hire today's graduates may not be aware of this trend and its attendant implications for service,
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staffing and promotion. To be sure, the trend toward fewer core courses is not unique to librarianship. It is a pervasive one in undergraduate education and increasingly in other graduate and professional fields. Perhaps library literature has not stressed it, nor has the matter come forward at conferences, workshops and institutes.

When combined with several other aspects of recruitment to librarianship and the nature of continuing professional education, the impact becomes more significant. Consider the matter of the undergraduate liberal arts degree, a typical requirement among library schools. It is assumed that today’s applicants to library school have a broad base of knowledge. In reality, as library school student profiles show, very few have a liberal education—if one assumes this to mean a solid mix of all three areas assigned to the liberal arts: humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Library school students are preponderantly humanities majors, strongest in literature and fine arts; much smaller percentages come equipped with social science backgrounds—mainly history and education, rarely economics, political science, sociology, or business; and rarely do students come with solid course work in any of the natural sciences. As a result, although often service oriented, new library school graduates have had limited exposure to the broad spectrum of liberal arts and particularly to the social sciences and research methodology. It often seems that students have little inclination for or sympathy toward planning, logic, and scientific investigation. This, along with certain patterns of graduate school electives and the already noted reduced core, suggests that a significant number of MLS degree students can, and indeed do, graduate without a wide variety of course work, of which community analysis is only one field.

AN OVERVIEW OF COURSES WITH COMMUNITY ANALYSIS COMPONENTS

As limiting as this sounds, the reality of education in the area may be somewhat more encouraging than it initially appears to be. Elements, admittedly modest, do surface in different courses, some required, other elective. Frequent and early appearances are apt to come in the general and introductory survey courses, usually called “Libraries and Society” or some variation of that title. In the context of learning about the overall library environment, material is included on contemporary and future impact factors characterized as demographic, technological, social, political, cultural and economic. Course
requirements can include, in addition to general lectures, a term paper or special project of choice which allows the student to explore a type-of-library or type-of-service aspect within a total or specified environment. Although typically an introductory and first-term subject, in a few instances the survey course is a terminal one, as at Wayne State University, where the "Issues in Librarianship" course comes at the end of the MLS program. As instructor of this course, Genevieve Casey stresses an overview of librarianship, including synthesis, issues and relationships. As a course requirement, students work in small teams, using an existing "real" library and all available survey and community data as their basis for further analysis and long-range planning. Emphasis is on identifying information gaps and weaknesses so that student analysis and recommendations can benefit from and build upon earlier studies. It should be remembered, however, that many schools no longer require an overview survey course, introductory or terminal; the University of Michigan dropped that requirement three years ago. A three-credit course, there, originally called "The Library as a Public Service Institution," has been made into a two-hour elective with a narrower focus, entitled "Libraries in American Society."

Within schools which stress a foundations approach to the core curriculum—notably Case Western Reserve University, Drexel University, and the Universities of Illinois and South Carolina—one can discern certain aspects of community analysis, although individual elements may not be so identified. Given the overall nature of a fundamental requirement, all students receive an introduction to concepts such as community diversity and the varied needs of clients, communications processes and patterns, research methodology, management tools such as sources of information and statistics, and approaches to problem-solving and evaluation. Because of the compact and lock-step structure of most foundation courses, the needs of interests of individual students cannot be met as easily as in separate courses when taught by a single instructor. However, this lack of flexibility may be offset by a reasonable assurance in the elective courses which follow that certain curricular aspects have been covered or stressed or, for that matter, completely omitted. In addition, the team-teaching approach may facilitate and encourage subject-matter teaching by those faculty who are most interested and expert in particular units or modules.

Traditionally, elements of community analysis are introduced and particularly stressed in collection building courses. The latest edition of
the volume by Carter and others continues an earlier practice of including a small unit on "The Community Survey." As in the Martin article, Carter stresses the importance of knowing the community, although the various purposes are not developed in any great detail. An attempt is made to differentiate between formal and informal surveys (this section is brief, however), to note common sources of community information, and finally to include generalizations as to what the collected survey data may or may not reveal. The bibliographic citations on surveying the community include the two major ones already noted, plus three others, none of which carries a date more recent than 1960.

In the material selection courses, instructors attempt, through special assignments, to link aspects of the community and special clientele with the selection process. Library selection policies are examined to determine the relationships, if any, between criteria for subject matter selection and particular community characteristics and needs, however expressed or known. Circulation records may be studied in an attempt to correlate library usage with materials actually available in both fiction and nonfiction. Area librarians and staff may be interviewed for insights into how community knowledge is obtained, how community change is monitored, and how this information is subsequently used in the selection, collection building and weeding processes. Special studies may be undertaken, using community profiles and attempting to match these with actual media expenditures. User studies may also be undertaken, in which circulation trends are studied and user groups compared.

This writer has often wondered whether the notion of community uniqueness, in its myriad aspects, does in fact register with students and carry over into other aspects of library service such as program and service planning, staff selection, and the setting of library goals, objectives and priorities. This transfer does not appear to be readily made. It seems that studying the community for selection purposes is divorced from studying service needs in other areas. Perhaps, as John Boll has noted, what students need before admission to graduate school is undergraduate work in the field of logic: "What is lacking is general, preparatory overall background that makes the student conscious of the role of clues, of the weighing of clues, of cause and effect, of establishing patterns out of scattered evidence, of synthesizing, summarizing, generalizing, and projecting." If all students were to have this required background, perhaps course work in library schools could indeed be of graduate caliber, building on
required introductory elements presented at the undergraduate level. Logic can be used to good advantage not only in research methods and administration courses, but in almost all aspects of library science, because of the climate of inquiry and the questioning attitude it engenders.

A logical extension of the use of community study in selection courses is that which is introduced in subject bibliographies and courses called "sources of information." By their very nature and specificity, such courses suggest not only a specialized literature, but specialized and knowledgeable clients who will use the materials. Depending on the faculty member, methods of instruction used, and the diversity and appropriateness of assignments, these courses should engender an understanding of library users—actual and potential—and how such users differ in their needs and approaches to their literature. If students learn something of the uniqueness of subject fields and specialized approaches of different occupations/professions, they may come up with a sensitivity to search strategy that both transcends and complements the knowledge of individual fields. By learning to differentiate between and among users and their subject specialties, students may learn to understand the diverse professional and occupational groups which are part of any library community. One cannot select, for example, for business, commerce, and industry without an understanding of the economic climate of the geographic area and the country, major trends in specialized business or technical fields, and the specific literature of those fields. In some bibliography courses, mini-studies are made of local or state business enterprises, using census data, governmental surveys, technical reports, etc., in an attempt to design specific subject guides to the literature for targeted audiences. These may be for the local chamber of commerce, small business enterprises, research staffs of area corporations, and governmental agencies as an indication of types of information in library collections or to which libraries can provide ready access through network affiliation.

It takes some ingenuity on the part of faculty to devise new and different exercises which, by their very nature, instruct the specifics of community analysis in what will appear to be natural learning environments. As one example of a topical concern, students can prepare selected and annotated reading lists for businesses which are required to meet federal affirmative action standards. This might first entail identifying government agencies which can provide such regulatory materials and, through market research techniques,
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determining which businesses and agencies are most likely to be
affected by the regulations. Students can develop appropriately useful
guides to the literature, sources of information, and method of referral
to meet client needs. In other instances, exercises can be reversed; that
is, simulated library clients become those who may be discriminated
against—women, minorities, the disadvantaged, the handicapped.
Guides are addressed to them, not to the institution, on how to press a
grievance, how to prepare supporting documentary evidence, how to
obtain legal aid, etc. If effectively devised, such exercises can lead
students to examine a community, its neighborhoods, or particular
ethnic groups for special as well as common characteristics. This can
lead to library service with a more active or anticipatory stance, as in
information and referral work, than the more traditional one in which
librarians respond only if and when asked.

One example of the continuum approach, of the wide range of library
planning with as contrasted with planning for the community, can be
found in some of the adult independent learner materials prepared by
the members of the College Entrance Examination Board project for
the experimental public libraries involved. Margaret Monroe of the
University of Wisconsin has developed a “four-model” approach to the
library as a community learning center, with models ranging from the
provision of requested materials and subjects to the information
clearinghouse model, to that of the library as a community learning
center, to a model in which the public library utilizes the community
task force approach, working with other agencies, groups, and
individuals in the identification and solution of community problems.8
By the use of the four-model approach (or any other series of models),
students can begin to see alternate library response styles and degrees
of responsiveness. Class exercises and projects using real or simulated
library communities can contribute to an understanding of both this
process and the variety of its content. It can, of course, have
applications for other than information and referral course work.

Courses in library administration frequently include components of
community analysis, whether general administration or type-of-library
administration. Knowledge of particular community characteristics is
usually introduced as a basis for understanding clientele, resources,
services, standards and priorities. Attempts are made at using the case
method and other simulations so that specific community
characteristics can be examined whenever particular problems or
issues are examined. Martha Zachert, at Florida State University, has
pioneered in the special library field, although her new book makes it
clear that these techniques have wide application. Another example of simulation material was devised by Robert Brown through his Joetta Community Library, a public library case study devised for use in an administration course at the University of Illinois. Brown is also preparing an academic case study for use in the same course. Simulations, if well presented and used, provide students with one kind of bridge between theory and practice. Assuming a problem-solving approach, the dynamics of a community—its special characteristics, economics and politics—can be shown to make a difference in the setting of goals, objectives and priorities and the decision-making which follows. Case studies do not always present extensive community background, emphasizing situational and generic problems with simplified descriptive information. In the writer's view, these are more properly called exercises, valid as an instructional device but not correctly called case studies. Nor do they all deliberately set out to teach or even to illustrate elements of community analysis.

Advanced seminars in administration, where they exist, provide rich opportunities for community study, especially if students are required to read, analyze and critique existing surveys and reports. In preparation of her course on library buildings, the writer has noted a surprising number of planning documents that lack adequate presentation of substantive community information—current and trend—that the administration and board surely must need before architectural space can be considered.

Given the interest in and need for viable library cooperative efforts, an example of community and library study is the recently published *A Library Facilities and Services Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin*. This study could be used to extend students' vision, going beyond a single type of library and its geographic place/community to that of the larger area through which user needs might be more effectively and efficiently met by cooperation. Blasingame and Lynch, in a paper entitled "Design for Diversity: Alternatives to Standards for Public Libraries," remind readers of the difficulty of defining the term community and caution librarians to recognize not only what they term the place community, but also interest community. For purposes of this issue of *Library Trends*, both elements are equally important. And for emerging new professionals, not to overlook practitioners, library educators must not be guilty of stressing geography, institutions and their jurisdictional boundaries over people and their community, diversity and levels of interests. All elements are crucial in the context of studying and analyzing the community or the neighborhood.

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Using a "problems in modern librarianship" approach, Syracuse University now provides an advanced seminar in which students actually study and evaluate an existing public library. This is a "hands-on" course, with the instructor as resource person, facilitator and coordinator, directing students working in small teams in their compilation of an actual library study. In one instance, the study was that of a small public library; in another, the class project was a study of a community served by a public library branch. Many educators have espoused the need for selected experience in real work situations—not simulated ones—in which students can begin to see and test the application of theory, principles and practice, and in which faculty can do likewise, constructing, extending, and modifying accepted theory. Not only can this ensure the vitality of the profession, but it can also extend knowledge and scholarship.

This approach, as is the case for a field-work practicum to be discussed below, is a demanding but rewarding one. Time and schedule requirements are burdensome for students, faculty and the staff of the practicum library, becoming increasingly demanding as projects progress. Without exception, every respondent has commented on this particular aspect. At Syracuse University, Roger Greer is now trying a two-term sequence: in the first term, background reading is done, a study is formally undertaken, survey questionnaires are designed and distributed, and data are collected and analyzed; during the second period, actual report assessment, writing and refining are completed. In his case, Greer conducts the course as a research seminar, with all students participating equally. Rotating student members act as recorder so that minutes are kept of actions taken, decisions made, and assignment allocated. Not only do students prepare all written material and drafts, but they are also responsible for questionnaires, findings, recommendations and calendars. Oral reporting to the library in question is also part of the course requirement; a presentation is given to the practicum library before a final draft is completed. "Needless to say, it's an enormous amount of work for the students and for me," says Greer, "but everyone has agreed, so far, that it is the most valuable experience in library school."

Given the rather small number of students involved in such advanced work (usually eight to twelve), and the extensive staff-hour expenditure of students, faculty and library staff, one begins to recognize the limitations of problem-focused seminars as a regular option in all library schools. It raises questions about the purpose and appropriate length of the MLS program, the possibility of a two-year
approach (the present Canadian pattern), and even the alternative of formal internships after the completion of course work and as a condition or prerequisite for awarding the final degree.

An interesting curriculum development, one which began in the 1960s and had continued, is that of identifying and reaching special clientele. Initially, emphasis was on inner-city minority groups including Blacks and Latinos. Today, the range appears wider, more diverse: Appalachian poor, American Indian, inmates in prisons and other correctional institutions, migrants, ethnics who may be indigenous to particular geographic areas such as Cubans in Miami and Puerto Ricans in New York City, and older more established ethnic groups now seeking visibility, understanding and pride in heritage. In many courses, both required and elective, students use the study of special clientele as a means of linking project requirements with those of community analysis. And while they do not complete a total community study, students find it profitable to investigate special-client characteristics, needs, and interests—looking particularly at needs assessment. In addition to its popular appeal, one of relevance and human dimension, the special-client approach makes it possible for the instructor to illustrate the important concept of community diversity and plurality. Application of the special-client approach can be made in the selection of materials, provision of reference and information services, selection of staff where language and culture are important, and in planning community outreach programs for almost any age group. Sensitivity to changes in the composition of the population in cities and suburbs has had interesting effects. The writer has noticed, for example, a carryover into the public library field with a reexamination of the public library’s main audience, stereotyped from earlier surveys as the so-called WASP (white Anglo-Saxon Protestant) middle class. Special clientele studies are beginning to include investigations of reading interests and information needs of blue-collar workers and their families, senior citizens, single parents, and the varying professions. In connection with the latter, a new (or renewed) interest has arisen concerning workers in health sciences and health education fields, as differentiated, for example, from knowledge industry workers or those in the computer field, or in information science and its related technology. What may have started initially as an examination of certain peoples in the inner city has resulted in greater sensitivity to population diversity everywhere, with implications for collection development, service priorities, and programming. To the library school, multiculturalism and special-client interests can and
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should become an integral part of the curriculum, especially in its community analysis aspects, as libraries attempt to meet the needs of an ever-changing population.

Certainly, the ALA 1970 policy statement on library education and manpower noted this, perhaps with different phrasing and emphasis, as in Item 28 on the objectives of the master's program. The MLS degree program should "prepare librarians capable of anticipating and engineering the change and improvement required to move the profession constantly forward." What more appropriate way is there than emphasizing community study?

Service to community groups, organizations and agencies has taken on a new dimension and emphasis, particularly due to interest in information/referral programs and the neighborhood information center concept. For libraries going into this area of service, a frequently used approach is that of "community walks." Staff members are encouraged (required?) to study their own branch neighborhood in a regular and organized fashioned. They are being asked to do minisurveys in order to relate branch programs and resources to the special needs to the unique population in their area of service. A critical dimension of the neighborhood community walk is the fact that practitioners claim they feel ill-equipped for this responsibility and require on-the-job training for it. This suggests a special kind of attention in library schools—and not merely as an elective or optional element somewhere in the curriculum. Just as public libraries are developing information and referral programs and are becoming aware of meeting diverse neighborhood needs, so are school media centers, community college libraries, and academic libraries. Increasingly, such libraries are becoming sensitive to the diversity of their students, whether in terms of community background, educational objectives, learning capabilities, or age distribution. Knowing the territory, to use Professor Hill's favorite slogan from The Music Man, may become as important an emphasis in library schools and libraries as it was in River City, where the market was for trombones, music and big brass bands.

An especially ingenious use of the community walk approach, although not in a library school, is one reported by the public library in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Under a 1973/74 proposal, a Higher Education Title II-B institute grant was received from the U.S. Office of Education. During the year-long institute, the library used a variety of technology, including videotape, to develop awareness of community resources among selected staff members. Visits to community agencies...
were organized and planned in order to understand their mission, objectives, services, and problems. Interviews were held, tapes made, information recorded and in-service training classes held—all in a demanding but vital "hands-on" approach. As stated in the institute report, the overall goal was "to have each participant gain a working awareness of community resources and to become a better, more communicative information contact in order to give more effective, relevant library service to the community." As the project director noted, all the staff had been trained in an earlier pattern of service, before Bridgeport’s large influx of minorities. Few of the staff, they found, participated in or were even knowledgeable about current local community organizations; they "lacked a good first-hand understanding of the city—its agencies, institutions, organizations, people, neighborhoods, its failings and its good points." Participants felt that use of group visits, and videotapes to supplement, complement or even substitute for printed materials on individual agencies and resources was an effective information and learning device. There were limitations too, including the need for extended time to make an in-depth record of each agency’s physical plant, staff and services, doing justice to the city’s diversity, complexity and changing profile.

Type-of-library courses, especially those stressing service as opposed to management, frequently show examples of the community analysis approach. More typically these seemed to be in the school and public library fields, rather than in special or academic library courses. This may be a matter of chance or the result of the author’s own choice of library school contacts, many in the public library field. One minisurvey example, that of block surveys, has been used at Columbia University in a course on library work for children and youth. Using the Morningside Heights area in which the university is located, student teams surveyed that community by blocks in order to prepare a community/access profile of agencies and libraries serving children and youth. Brief guidelines, maps and special forms assist students in their neighborhood walks and observation visits to various agencies. As noted by Greer’s students at Syracuse, those at Columbia are also enthusiastic about the community emphasis. One of their suggestions—that of studying a community of their own choice—was tried as a variation of the Morningside Heights block project.

As part of the requirements in the public library service course at Drexel University, Dorothy Bendix includes a community study unit. Special attention is given to three types of communities—urban, lower middle class, and suburban. Students working in two- or three-person
teams chose geographic areas in and around Philadelphia for their focused community walks, studies, and class reports.

Somewhat different in focus is David Kaser’s academic library administration course at Indiana University which includes a substantial segment on the library in its several “environments”: campus (relation with students, faculty, administration), intellectual (teaching, research, and service), external (alumni, government, press, foundations), and professional (other libraries, professional associations). Special and governmental library courses frequently stress this same environmental approach, emphasizing staff specialties, company product, research and service as a focus for attention on particular communities being serviced and priorities which must be met.

Where services and collection building courses are combined, as they are at Indiana, succinct information is prepared to highlight for students those elements of community study which are unique to each major type of library: academic, school, public and special. Lowell Martin’s article16 has been reproduced for student use at Indiana, with selected emendations in an attempt to update the material. A simulated county library case study is used for illustrative and exercise purposes, somewhat similar to (but in considerably less detail than) the Joetta community library simulation used at the University of Illinois. Here too, according to faculty, students comment on the value of being able to use an applied library situation, albeit a simulated one, instead of discussing generalities.

COMMUNITY ANALYSIS, THE PRACTICUM, AND FIELD EXPERIENCE

Selected aspects have already been treated, although not as a deliberately designed and total practicum or organized field work, internship or clinical experience. Because this topic came up so frequently—in the literature, through correspondence, and at meetings of the American Association of Library Schools—it seems useful to treat the matter separately. Student interest in field work is well documented, highlighting a genuine desire for contact with what students consider the “real” library world as distinguished from the classroom lecture experience. Faculty also express a sustained interest in trying to relate theory and principle to the practice of the profession. Historically a required component in most schools, field work has become not only less practical from an organizational and management
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point of view, but also less rewarding from a learning point of view. Library schools in this decade are not engaged in any wholesale support of the field work concept. For sustained effectiveness, it requires an adequate supply of good "teaching libraries" (in the medical sense of a licensed "teaching hospital")—places where students are welcome and receive, year in and year out, appropriate guidance and supervision in a dynamic learning environment. It also requires administrative and financial support to make field work possible on a regular basis. Faculty need time to work, on a one-to-one basis, with students and library staff members alike, in a sustained manner similar to field experience in social work or practice teaching in education. The practicum idea has certainly surfaced again in a variety of forms. Some of these will be discussed, particularly because they relate to the mainstream of this article—that of teaching elements of community analysis.

As noted earlier, faculty members recognize the purpose, value and appeal of the field experience. If faculty react negatively, it is because they recognize the enormous burden field work places on all parties—library staff members, teaching faculty, and students. The burden is personal, professional, financial and organizational. The University of Michigan, for example, graduates between 275 and 300 master's degree students each year. The logistics of placing that many individuals in field work or practicum situations of their choice is mind-boggling, even if not all students opt for such an opportunity. In a one-year master's degree program, which is what most U.S. schools offer, a field work component can complicate what is probably already one of the shortest graduate professional degree programs. Alternate proposals include lengthening the program or offering an internship after all course work is completed. There are other proposals as well, although this is not the forum for such a full discussion. What is germane is a review of selected schools that already include such a component, how these work, what they include, and what they may possibly portend, whether short- or long-range.

Faculty involved in such experiences note the tightrope they walk. They must make community study projects meaningful to students, useful to the host library, and appropriate as a graduate course in a professional school. An especially felicitous arrangement, it seems, is the one used at the University of Toronto. There, in the public library field, John Marshall has devised an approach whereby cooperating area libraries first propose and outline a specific community service or outreach project in which they are interested. These projects must be
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self-contained, completable within a 13-week period or about eighteen hours per week, represent some special study, analysis or work effort which the library needs and plans to use, and take the student out into the community. Although proposed projects are described by cooperating libraries, they are developed in close consultation with the instructor. The matching of student and project is the instructor's responsibility, as are other course requirements which include a substantive final report, regular seminar discussions, observation meetings, process records, and appropriate requirements to be designed on a case-by-case basis. In this writer's contacts with Toronto's Community Services Practicum, she has seen two reports, one entitled "Information Needs of Native Peoples in the City of Toronto," and another entitled "A Study of the Francophone Population of North York in Order to Determine its Library-Information Needs." As is obvious from their titles, the reports are in fact extensive studies of narrowly focused aspects of community analysis, the first for the Toronto Public Library and the second for the public library in North York. Authors seem positive in their evaluation of the professional and personal value of the practicum experience. They are also overwhelmed concerning the actual time involved, far in excess of 200 hours. One assumes that host libraries feel these experiences are positive and that they found the reports useful. The Toronto approach is presented as a special development, one that might suggest other, perhaps smaller models or adaptations, especially for library schools in areas less culturally endowed than Toronto.

Columbia has also tried the community services field work approach on a more limited basis of one day each week for a twelve-week period. This is more akin to the observation/participation experiences in the library, than to the single and terminal community projects at Toronto. But even within the observation/participation structure, field work varies simply because of the uniqueness of each local situation as a teaching library. Understandably, because of present budget problems and staff shortages, most libraries tend to find field work students an added burden at a particularly stressful period.

Other urban experimentation can be noted in Columbia's specially funded U.S.O.E. Community Media Librarian Program (COMLIP) described in a recent issue of American Libraries. Central to the COMLIP project was a practical and reality-based understanding of the inner city, its residents and their information for survival needs. Because of his unique experience with New York City's Community Development Agency under former Mayor Lindsay, COMLIP's
curriculum coordinator, Major Owens, brought special expertise and community focus to the Columbia program.

Whatever the limitations to practicum experiences, they do add a vital dimension to the learning experience of recent graduates. It would be wise to pool and share these experiences for further refinement and possible extension to others in ways that would be mutually beneficial to student, practitioner, faculty and host library. With library, schools collectively graduating close to 10,000 persons annually, the matter of the practicum, clinical experience, or field work option is not to be taken at all lightly, whether in terms of long-range recommendations or immediate response to increased need. Since this matter relates to aspects of community analysis, inclusion seems germane and educationally appropriate.

AN OVERVIEW OF AND SOME COMMENTS ON THE LITERATURE

Because of the dearth of community analysis study materials and the age of the most frequently cited items, this writer would like to include several items which seem to have particular promise. Although there is substantive scholarly and technical literature on community study and development, referred to in other chapters in this issue, what most library schools are seeking are items which can be easily read, used and understood in a variety of library school courses. This is not to suggest that students should not be referred to, and urged to read, for example, Warren’s landmark publications The Community in America or Studying Your Community. These are basic in their field. Students should become familiar with them and with other major writers in community study.

One of the best of the newer items to be cited is the February 1975 issue of Illinois Libraries, which reports on PASS 2, the second in a series of statewide programs designed to improve the quality of public library service in Illinois. The theme for PASS 2 was “Analyzing Your Community: Basis for Building Library Service.” The Illinois State Library deserves special commendation for its continuing effort—a cooperative one with the Illinois Library Association—to foster an understanding of the planning process necessary to achieve quality library service. This continuing education effort culminated in eight regional meetings held during April and May 1974, the highlights of which were published in Illinois Libraries. Included in the February issue is consultant Ruth Warncke’s step-by-step discussion on analyzing...
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a community and Muriel Fuller's keynote address. Much of the workshop effort was devoted to small groups in an attempt to demonstrate to trustees and librarians just how to go about a local community analysis, using PASS 1 and PASS 2 data which, collectively, covered library standards, goals, objectives, and community study.

As part of the Library Service Guide series, the Appalachian Adult Education Center at Morehead State University has prepared *Assessing Community Information and Service Needs* by Priscilla Gotsick. This guide focuses on identifying library service needs of disadvantaged adults. The 24-page guide discusses the planning process, collection and interpretation of community information, and development of an action plan based on community needs, priorities, and cooperative efforts with other agencies.

The League of Women Voters has a useful national publication entitled "Know Your Community." Made possible by Carnegie Corporation funds, the 46-page pamphlet outlines how to make a local government survey. Perhaps more than the others cited above this publication concerns itself with governmental structure, organization, and the various agencies connected with government. The first part is general, focusing on "Your Community—Its Background." Other sections include the financing of local government and descriptive approaches to collection information on services such as public protection, transportation, education, housing, recreation and libraries. In all, it is a handy and succinct guide, suggesting local league members as potential community resource personnel for how-to-do-it methodology and skills.

In the same category as the league publication is *Obtaining Citizen Feedback: The Application of Citizen Surveys to Local Governments*, by Kenneth Webb and Harry Hatry. Citizen feedback through questionnaire and interviews is one method whereby libraries can discover how well their own services are received when compared with those of other governmental units, including police, schools, parks, sanitation, etc. Webb and Hatry provide useful and practical information on such items as dangers and pitfalls in citizen surveys, survey procedures and costs and funding sources. Also included in the volume are sample questionnaires, procedural instructions and form letters. From the National Board of YWCA comes an informal, short, yet practical publication entitled *Look Beneath the Surface of the Community*. Although prepared with the mission of the YWCA in mind, this pamphlet has sound, easy-to-follow community guidelines and study suggestions for the collection and interpretation of data.
Moving closer to the library field itself are two recent American Library Association publications. One, a modest pamphlet published in 1974, carries the title \textit{Libraries: Centers for Children's Needs; A Practical Guide for Developing a Community Information File}.\textsuperscript{27} Prepared by the Children's Services Division Committee on Library Service to the Disadvantaged Child, this brief how-to-do-it guide emphasizes community agencies and resources which may have special relevance for service to children. Somewhat similar in general purpose, although more detailed and addressed to the needs of young adults, is \textit{Look, Listen, Explain: Developing Community Library Services for Young Adults}.\textsuperscript{28} Prepared by an ad hoc committee of ALA's Young Adults Services Division, this outline guide can be used in considering services to other age groups as well. It is applicable, in spirit as well as in content, to the concept of the community library as a first, catalytic and dynamic port-of-call. The guide is especially resourceful in its analysis of how to discover traditional and nontraditional youth culture groups and community agencies which relate to them. Taking an activist and positive stance in studying the community, \textit{Look, Listen, Explain} suggests a variety of creative methods, resources and contacts.

An interesting and provocative study which should be reexamined for possible replication is reported in \textit{Public Opinion Quarterly}. Written by Edwin Parker and William Paisley, the study is entitled "Predicting Library Circulation from Community Characteristics." The authors conclude, with various caveats and a statement of concern, that "further research should be devoted to the problem of the extent to which the book stocks of libraries are shaping (rather than being shaped by) the demand structure in the communities."\textsuperscript{29}

For information in the special clientele category of blue-collar workers, volume 3—\textit{Decentralization}—of a series entitled \textit{Citizen Participation in Urban Development} has a useful article entitled "Who's Left on the Block? New York City's Working Class Neighborhoods."\textsuperscript{30} To be sure, there are a number of full-length volumes on ethnic and minority groups and on blue-collar workers. Several that come to mind include Shostak's \textit{Blue-Collar Life},\textsuperscript{31} Sexton and Sexton's \textit{Blue Collars and Hard-Hats},\textsuperscript{32} Binzen's \textit{Whitetown, U.S.A.},\textsuperscript{33} and Wattenberg's very readable \textit{This U.S.A.; An Unexpected Family Portrait} of 194,067,296 Americans Drawn from the Census.\textsuperscript{34} For purposes of course assignments, however, it is often not possible to assign such extensive readings, as valuable as the background would be, except perhaps in reading courses.

For a short and succinct article on the suburban phenomenon, \textit{Time}
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magazine's March 15, 1971, issue, entitled "Suburbia: A Myth Challenged," contains the article "Suburbia: The New American Plurality," which differentiates among four types of suburbs. Today's reader might challenge Time's categories: affluent bedroom, affluent settled, low-income growing, and low-income stagnant. However, there is also the possibility that students will be disabused of considering all suburbs as being homogeneous. For more extensive and substantive readings on suburbia there are the following: Suburbia in Transition, The Radical Suburb, and The Levittowners. In connection with the libraries of suburbia, Gilda Nimer's article "The Suburban Reality and Its Implications for the Role of the Public Library" is still very germane. For students without a frame of reference to suburbia, some combination of these references is necessary if they are to relate to its unique community characteristics.

The above citations are not meant in any way to be either representative or definitive. Rather, they are illustrative only and are included as a means of demonstrating how resourceful and adaptive library educators must become in order to locate appropriate sources of information for community analysis projects, whether large or small. That in itself, in discussion with students, can prove to be a salutary reference and research experience. Certainly, this issue of Library Trends will become a major tool for the pool of new and integrated information it makes conveniently available.

Various professional documents have been consulted for final comments on the importance of careful and regular community assessment if the nation's libraries are to meet the needs of an ever-changing population. Library school students, as the new practitioners, must surely be sensitized to and prepared for this prime and ongoing responsibility. There is no greater charge than that of making institutions responsive to and congruent with the special needs of their constituencies. The National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, in an attempt to develop a truly national program, has focused on the complexity of devising an appropriate framework to meet all the library needs of a country as diverse as the United States. In its recently completed "Goals and Guidelines for Community Library Services," the Public Library Association may perhaps speak for all librarians when it states that changing societal patterns are to be "studied and evaluated regularly in order to plan and implement new services, or to modify existing services as needs are identified or to identify users and potential users" (emphasis added). Throughout the document, stress is placed on study, analysis, and
responsiveness to meet the human needs of people within their individual but diverse communities, making libraries outer-directed and user oriented. With this as a specific charge, it would seem appropriate to conclude that teaching the elements, process and methodology of community analysis should be mandated in all library science programs, whether general or specialized. Further, it might also be urged that other states follow the lead of Illinois and present statewide training sessions in community analysis for practitioners, trustees and others who have leadership responsibilities for library development. If library schools consistently include units in appropriate components of their curriculum, if state agencies and state associations cooperate with in-service training, and if national organizations simultaneously stress community analysis (through preconference institutes, programs, and publications), we will then have personnel who do know how to study their library’s particular territory and who can make their institutions catalytic, assertive, and responsive in helping to meet societal needs. As Samuel Johnson has noted, “The future is purchased by the present.” By working only on the present, we blur and obscure the requirements of the future. What can provide a vision of tomorrow and a bridge to today is the teaching of community and neighborhood analysis and their symbiotic relationship to library services, resources and personnel.

References


2. Information in this article is based on an examination of the literature, contacts with selected practitioners, the writer’s experience in the library field, and a brief 1975 inquiry sent to library educators at 25 graduate library schools, with responses from 15. Summaries of programs are the author’s; she takes full responsibility for their selection and application—but with grateful recognition to those who responded to her inquiry.


7. Martin, op. cit.


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28. American Library Association. Young Adult Services Division. Ad Hoc
ROSE VAINSTEIN

Committee on Outreach Programs for Young Adults. *Look, Listen, Explain: Developing Community Library Services for Young Adults.* Chicago, ALA, 1975.


