At first reading of the preceding essays, it would appear to the library administrator that book-oriented librarians have been defenestrated. A closer look, however, will suggest that they can stay on the inside of the window; they are asked only to change focus. That each writer suggests using his own lens is to be expected. Because the expansion of scholarship into such new fields as pop culture has been disconcerting to the traditional librarian, large libraries have been slow to move into the nonbook field. Pop culture, of course, may properly be viewed as the natural expansion of the collections of folklore and humor which American libraries have been acquiring in quantity for some time. Stevenson goes further, however, by suggesting that librarians of pop culture must also abandon standards in their collection. This is hard to accept, for it implies mere collection, not selection—and in days of space and money shortages! Selection will certainly continue to be imposed on libraries, not only by librarians for budgetary and curricular reasons, but also because the scholar-collector, when his academic reputation is at stake, will naturally turn into a scholar-selector. The collector of pop culture will then decide the library must select only materials in certain areas, usually confined to his own interests, of course, but with the realization that pop culture in its entirety is a very broad field.

The scholar has always defined the focus of library collecting. “Traditional” scholarship, of course, used to mean working with texts and producing critical work in Milton or Shakespeare, for example, and collecting practices were directed toward the first and early editions of such authors. Today, however, there is very little left for libraries to collect in the way of important editions of major writings

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from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, at least at reasonable prices; even the mines of the eighteenth century have been stripped of all the stray nuggets, which amount mostly now to pamphlets and broadsides. It is well to remind ourselves that traditional collecting was not always that scholarly. If the University of Illinois collected the traditional Shakespeare and Milton in the 1940s and 1950s, for instance, it also collected what was pop culture for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: school texts, grammars, catechisms and hymnals. Admittedly, such collections were essentially book oriented, with only occasional pictures, drawings, memorabilia, and ephemera.

Many of today’s research libraries do make extensive use of movie criticisms and scripts, as Stevenson confirms in his article. In my own experience, there has been a high degree of selectivity imposed on the library by the film scholar himself. What is common to both the traditional and the newer scholar is the intensity which they bring to bear on the task of collecting; anyone who has not been confronted by a film buff building a background collection has not been near a research library lately. That this film buff has also turned elsewhere rather than to the library for the physical film is also evident. Many film scholars even seem to enjoy wrestling with film rentals. Eventually, as scholars may tire of this chore, the problem will return to the library; but for the present there is an intensity of collecting centered on the script and the background book.

Jussim notes a new attitude toward collecting of visual materials, one person’s trash being another’s treasure. The statement is not quite so startling as it might seem, because scholars frequently see each other’s material as trash. A common scholarly complaint is that the library should invest more in his/her particular kind of scholarship, and not waste funds on the trash used by a colleague.

One of the positive things in these essays is the plea that the materials will require a new kind of specialist trained to work with the documents as source materials. Jussim mentions this for film; Bogue stresses the same need in the handling of tape and data processing. Insofar as we may be seeing a differently trained person coming to library school, it is possible that some of the needs expressed here will be met earlier than might have been expected. Certainly, the role of libraries will be expanded because of the new breed of library school student.

Winger reminds us that increasing numbers of texts once long out of print and expensive to find (if one could find them at all), are now available at small cost. Even a small library with a good budget can
now bring texts into its collection for its individual scholar, either in reprint or microfilm, at a fraction of the cost of a rare book collection in the 1940s and 1950s. Unfortunately, there is no longer a reasonable budget in many small libraries, and some of that opportunity to build collections for the new scholar has gone. Miniaturization enables today's social scientist to use historical census material on film or fiche; and, as Bogue suggests, tomorrow's scholar will use it in a different format, on a computer tape, in which the data can be further manipulated. The costly microform census sets are one example of the kind of material which may force even large libraries to buy cooperatively, perhaps through the Center for Research Libraries. Unfortunately for libraries, some microfilm manufacturers do not permit cooperative buying. Convenient as the microform may be, there may be a need for the original, as Winger also points out. In fact, Tanselle notes that the analytical bibliographer may need several. As Winger states, it is sometimes cheaper to send the scholar to the original than to buy it, and various California schools have used this method to avoid duplication of scholarly texts. This concept presupposes good bibliographic control and even better location devices, however.

The most obvious problem that strikes an administrator is budgetary, for anyone who has been in the job more than two years has suffered at least one severe budget trauma. Good ideas, unlike Mr. Gump's good taste, cost more. If libraries were to take up pop culture as enthusiastically as Stevenson suggests, or to go into the collecting of visual materials—particularly film or video cassettes which are still expensive—new money would be needed or old established funds, already heavily burdened, would need to be reallocated. Many libraries have yet to start collecting movie films. Because of the expense this may be understandable, although the original decision may be questioned considering the value of the film as an esthetic, educational, and archival medium. To begin now to go deeply into collecting new formats, however, presents large established libraries with a problem similar to that of small libraries trying to establish themselves: both will find that lack of money has impeded expansion. Some of Jussim's visual files or Cobb's maps, of course, may not require large sums of money for initial acquisition, but they do require special handling, cataloging, and indexing, as well as specially trained personnel.

The costs of displaying the visual form in the library for the user must be considered, since movie or slide projectors, inexpensive in
themselves, are expensive to maintain. Furthermore, many display units must be available if whole classes are to take advantage of visual files. Some libraries have been clever and farsighted enough to call on the National Endowment for the Humanities or the National Science Foundation grants for equipment, but others will need to begin acquiring this type of equipment using their own operating budgets. The cost of machine maintenance has long plagued libraries, and the life span of a tape deck or a video cassette depends on how well it can be serviced. The library may decide to require the users to provide their own machines, although admittedly there are presently few fiche readers in private hands. The University of Chicago Press has chosen to be innovative; it is able to provide many more pictures through its fiche publications than could be furnished in a regular format at the same cost. Chicago’s strategy is obviously based on hopes, either that microfiche readers will come down in price, a long-promised dream, or that libraries will make quantities of machines available. The demand may create the needed machinery, and we must thank the University of Chicago Press for testing the market. Television sets, standard in many but not all libraries, can display videotape, but the library must give up room for these which might have been used for other purposes. Again the old problem of priorities arises. The library may be reduced to handing out the film, the videotape, or the microvisual as it hands out a book. Since most libraries have rarely provided more than 20 percent of the seating space of its possible clientele, this is not quite so bad as it seems. But libraries like to be accommodating and to meet as many demands as possible. It would be nice for the library to furnish the equipment and have the user view the material at a convenient time and place within its walls.

Use of computer tapes through libraries, as suggested by Bogue, presents a somewhat greater problem. Indexing, cataloging and identification of computer tapes require special skills. Bogue has reminded us that most libraries or archives do not have the resources to clean a local data base as they receive it, and then to catalog, maintain, and circulate it. Special help is often needed in using this material, even when a ready-made program is provided for each tape. It is likely that most libraries, presented with the tape or disc pack collections, would simply hand them out and hope that the user knows what must be done with them. There is also the prospect of duplication of research effort in using computer tapes. How can one researcher who has manipulated files of a census bank inform an-
other researcher that there is no need to do what has already been done? Duplication of research has long been a problem, in all fields. Where it has been most costly, as in many scientific fields, there has usually been some special funding available to help libraries in their efforts to solve the problem; and where it has not been costly, the scholar has been left to his own devices, as in many humanistic and historical fields. We now face the prospect of the latter becoming costly, and can only hope for the special funding needed to minimize duplication.

The Samuel article, concerned with what has been happening to music libraries in the past decade or two, speaks of events which have affected academic libraries in general. Expansion of doctoral programs called for further library resources, but the financial situation has now changed, and often these resources can not be properly used. Rapid growth carrying its own momentum and the slower shift to reduce—or even to eliminate—these programs present a particular problem for libraries, which after all are trying both to anticipate curriculum and research needs and to balance collections to fit existing programs. This split, which bothers libraries even in times of good budgets, is exacerbated when an institution is further forced to modify its objectives because of unpredicted budget reallocations.

Samuel, like most of the other contributors, clearly appreciates the problem of specialization, which has always had budgetary implications and which has often discouraged librarians from even hoping to build a balanced collection. The "squeaking wheel" approach to collection building has been minimized in libraries over the last few years by two main strategies: (1) the appointment of collection development officers, and (2) the development of acquisitions policy statements.

Indeed, most of the essays in this issue are well-prepared statements which will be accepted on the basis of the principle of the "squeaking wheel." On such arguments, acquisitions policy is formulated and reformulated to meet the realities of the special pleader. The reforms which are called for in many of these essays do not really involve drastic changes in direction; rather, they represent special pleading, which the library administrator must and should recognize. The point is clear that, when such major collections of nonprint materials are available, library policy and practice has no choice but to change.

What still remains to be understood is the absolute necessity for a university administration, an entire faculty, and the library to agree.
fully on the implication of these practices. There are still too many faculty members puzzling over the most cogent library acquisitions policy when that policy conflicts with the research program for which they were hired.

For the present, if libraries are to incorporate the new formats, one obvious answer to the budget problems is cooperation. This concept, much honored in library literature, is currently being discussed in many circles, the most ambitious experiment today involving the Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and New York Public libraries. The even larger concept of a national periodical data bank, sponsored by the Association for Research Libraries (ARL) and the National Commission on Library and Information Science (NCLIS), and similar to the one now operating at Boston Spa in England, will probably have to be sold more to the faculties of large institutions than to those of smaller ones. Cooperation promises to save money for smaller libraries, and leave the largest libraries as resource centers, although these in turn would need to be supported by regional or federal funds if both traditional and nonbook collections are to be maintained. If funds cannot be found, there will have to be an increase in the recent trend of charging for services, such as many private institutions are now imposing for interlibrary loan. If libraries are to participate in the operation of data banks, as suggested by Bogue, or are to supply information to their clientele from commercial data banks such as Lockheed’s, the user may be forced to pay at least part of the burden directly. Reference service has traditionally been free, but one wonders how long it can remain so without some kind of support beyond that furnished by the individual institution. If these additional services are to be furnished (and there is every evidence that faculty and students, at least in the sciences, and very probably in the social sciences and humanities as well, will demand them), then some budget rearranging and priority sorting will be required if traditional service is also to remain constant. In a budget crisis the new programs are often the first to go, and these, of course, are the ones which the data bases support. Changes of focus are scarcely new to libraries, however, and there are innumerable book collections lying fallow after a professor who specialized in them has left the institution.

New forms, as these authors usually mention, require a reallocation of space, and often a building of new space. Old space may be occupied by an entrenched force that may prove to be immovable, forcing the administrator into a Solomon-like stance. Even so classic a change as moving from the physical research book or newspaper to its
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microfilm version calls for a redistribution of shelving, and usually the purchase of new shelving or cabinets, as well. The danger of disservice to the bibliographer, as Tanselle points out, is obvious—and his message in effect asks nothing less than that the circulation librarian, not just the rare book librarian, should be a specialist in analytical bibliography. Computer tapes do not vary in their physical components from visual or audio tapes; but the fact is that we are not exactly sure what kind of storage is required for full preservation of any tape media. Certainly, some kind of temperature and humidity control, obviously highly desirable for books, would seem to be essential for film and tape. In addition, microforms differ from each other enough in size to make space designers join company (for a change) with librarians in wishing that the much-vaunted standardization talked about in the second quarter of the present century had really taken place.

Meanwhile, little or no mention is made in these essays of the idea that the library might produce some of its own materials, particularly in the newer forms. Should it undertake this additional task, there is also additional cost for even more special equipment, space to house it, and trained people to operate it. We can only guess at the problems for libraries if computers are to be housed in the library, although minicomputers would now seem more to be what is needed. Cobb has noted that a big collection of maps, traditional in large libraries, always creates a demand, not only for those monstrous map cases piled up to the ceiling but for reader space with large desks. Stevenson points out the sheer bulk of material in a popular culture collection. A variety of different sizes will in itself create a demand for reallocation of space, which may not be readily available in the first place. In fact, the user of the pop culture collection is nudging the map user, the microform user is nudging the user of the visual collection, and the differing needs of these users have political ramifications. These new needs, as Stevenson points out, all amount to “an assault on the traditional.” Stevenson further notes that his “materials are scattered everywhere, [and] it is nearly impossible to gain a comprehensive view of what is happening.” He is referring to the secondary sources of popular culture, which not only lie at hand in the journals devoted to the subject itself, but which also must frequently be captured from the most unlikely of sources.

The library, if it is to maintain bibliographic control over its resources, has found that a new kind of specialist must be hired to work through vast quantities of material and make it available.
Computerization has made concordances, keyword indexes, or plain indexes more readily available either in printed form or, often more ideally but also more expensively, on-line. Use of a computer terminal brings its own problems, among them the need for a staff which must be retrained or specially hired to do work which is not available commercially. At the University of Illinois, a 50-year-old collection of Italian local history was sitting in boxes unused after the incunabula and the Renaissance material had been siphoned off. New directions and accomplishments in scholarship demonstrated that what was once taken to be ephemeral material, not worth the effort of full cataloging, was in fact a rich source of valuable nineteenth-century reprints of Renaissance writings and of risorgimento material. Computerized indexing was the answer here; thanks to budget shortages, however, no regular staff could be diverted for this task, and it was obvious that a grant would be needed. Fortunately, funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities were obtained, and one more library was introduced to the world of grantsmanship.

Hiring specialists is a theme that runs through most of these essays, no matter what the source of funds. In reality, can the eager and knowledgeable graduate of a library school move immediately into a position where he is responsible for major decisions on the handling of pop culture items? One wonders; here the task of the library school enters the picture—and at a time when specialization is a threat to marketability of library school graduates. Stevenson expects many of these noncomputerized materials to be handled like archival collections. But, as he also mentions, the “future of popular culture as a discipline will depend on the quality of its research.” There can be no research if the scholar cannot identify the material he needs, or at least be allowed to spend the time to wade through vast quantities of documents looking for it, in a suitable area where it can be stored for indefinite use without being disturbed. Once the scholar has a grasp of the material he finds, he may find it desirable to handle the data he has gathered on a statistical basis, and within the library—a kind of in-house data processing which libraries have not faced.

Another problem of bibliographic control involves the huge sets of microforms poured out by University Microfilms and other firms, some of which provide neither cards nor printed indexes to their contents. Some libraries have not subscribed to or have canceled these sets for lack of adequate indexing. Libraries may similarly decide not to acquire a needed body of material, whether in pop culture, visual, or even rare books, when there is no ready access to it. In fact, the
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Stevenson, Jussim, Samuel, and Bogue articles in particular do seem to open up the same prospect of large, unclassified objects in many formats waiting year after year for proper processing.

It has been pointed out in several of the essays that the needs of the user have changed; in fact, the user has changed. There are those of us librarians who secretly welcome such a change, for there is nothing so demanding (or challenging) as a passionate scholar in pursuit of his subject. The new scholar, however, will probably prove to be more demanding and even more challenging. The new kind of librarian or information specialist may be in greater demand than the traditionally trained reference librarian, not only because of the insistent ways of the scholar, but also because of the peculiar characteristics of the material. Querying the new data bank, for instance, may require new skills for which the scholar will be forced to depend on the librarian, simply because the time and money spent on gaining access to the data bank will take the scholar back to the librarian who has the needed skills. Time is money these days, particularly when dealing with the very expensive commercial data banks. The more time the scholar can save by using an expert, the more money left over to use on the query.

Many of the formats may be new, and many of the objectives themselves are also new. Nevertheless, the problems are old insofar as they are basic to all librarianship; the challenges thus tend to resemble the ancient battles called "getting the book through processing"—in terms of the frustrations involved, the ingenuity needed, and the prospects of success.

References

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