Libraries and Society: Research and Thought

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and

Margaret F. Stieg

Issue Editors

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Introduction

PHYLLIS DAIN
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Most writings on libraries and librarianship focus on the library world and bring in the rest of the world almost incidentally, as a bow to "background." But libraries can be neither understood nor their directions charted without serious consideration of the sociocultural milieu that molds them. Though they have a life and an influence of their own, in a large social sense libraries have not been primary institutions; they tend to be reflexive rather than initiative, part of the superstructure rather than the infrastructure.

This role can be observed variously. For example, the basic responsibility of libraries has been to collect, document and organize records of human thought and behavior, records whose existence has in turn been determined by, among other things, intellectual and esthetic modes, individual sensibilities, political and commercial exigencies, and technological possibilities. The changing technology and the different theories of library management and operations seem to be largely the history of the adaptation of ideas and techniques first developed for nonlibrary uses. The scope and quality of library use are related to social trends and cultural values; libraries, conceived either to serve direct educational functions or to support education and research in supra-agencies, have been creatures of educational, intellectual and scientific currents. The institutional structures of libraries, their governance and their place in the political process, cannot be discussed without considering political theory, public policy and patterns of governance in other institutions. Funding sources and alloca-

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tion of resources have been in substantial part a result of value judgments of the wider society, its attitudes toward private philanthropy and public responsibility, as well as the vicissitudes of national and local economics and politics. Libraries share also in the problems generated by unequal distribution of wealth and power in a society where such attributes as income, sex, race, ethnic origin, religion and age, among others, determine status and condition. Further, the profession of librarianship suffers from ambivalence and ambiguities related to cultural concepts of the value of books and information and, more recently, to skepticism about professionalism generally.

In our conviction that this wider approach to libraries, especially in a time of centennial stock-taking, is both valid and important, we planned this issue on "Libraries and Society: Past, Present and Prospective Research and Thought."\(^1\) We wanted to gather together a group of thoughtful, scholarly, intellectually stimulating essays which would take as their starting point one or another of the societal elements that seemed to us to be crucial to libraries and would look at the latter within that broader context, not merely as "background" but as a vital part of the foreground. There was the hope that the exploration of research and thought about libraries and librarianship in relation to society and culture would help to build a stronger intellectual foundation for the library profession and contribute toward a general understanding of social institutions. Although for practical reasons the main focus was to be on the United States, the approaches would be various and the range interdisciplinary. The result would be a critical survey and interpretation of what has been learned and theorized in a serious way about libraries and society, together with a projection of directions for the future.

We knew that to achieve this would not be easy, not only because of the inevitable problems of finding authors with the time and inclination to write such articles (resulting in the elimination of several interesting topics), but because the task would be difficult for the willing and very able authors who did agree to contribute. Serious thinking and research by librarians on many of the themes we chose is not plentiful, and sociologists, historians and other nonlibrarians have, with very few exceptions, not been really interested in libraries or librarianship, however important librarians may think the profession is to society and however indispensable libraries have been to scholars. Our authors had therefore in many cases to work as much, or more, with their own thoughts and experiences as with those of others.

The ensuing collection is a perhaps kaleidoscopic but, in our view,
very interesting and provocative mixture of the thinking of a group of knowledgeable, thoughtful and sophisticated librarians and information scientists on subjects close both to their hearts and to their professional interests. As a number of them commented, this was an opportunity to "say something," to go beyond summaries of the literature to speak their individual pieces on important questions. It was a chance to articulate ideas that they had been mulling over, to see where their years of professional work and study were leading them and could lead the profession. If there are common threads running through the articles, they seem to us to be a readiness to question some of the basic assumptions and truisms in librarianship, a willingness to accept and adapt to basic change, and an awareness of complexity. The authors thus respond not only to the workings of their own lively minds, but to the diverse challenges presented by the realities of our time.

The variegated originality of these articles is aptly characterized in a passage from Jackson Bate's recently published biography of Samuel Johnson. Speaking of the difficulty of neatly labeling or bracketing Johnson as a literary critic, Bate writes (with quotations from Johnson):

No one of his time was more aware that in the arts and humanities — as distinct from works "raised upon principles demonstrative and scientific" — difference in opinion is inevitable simply because so many different considerations have to be taken into account, and that "as a question becomes more complicated and involved, and extends to a greater number of relations, disagreement of opinion will always be multiplied, not because we are irrational, but because we are finite beings, furnished with different kinds of knowledge, exerting different degrees of attention, one discovering consequences which escape another, none taking in the whole concatenation of causes and effects . . . each comparing what he observes with a different criterion, and each referring it to a different purpose." As a result, Johnson — in his formal critical writing if not in his conversation — never forgets that "he who differs from us, does not always contradict us."

References

1. For the initial conception of the theme of this issue, the editors are indebted to Francis Miksa.
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Up through the 1950s, and even into the early 1960s, a student of the professions could say: "Everywhere in American life, the professions are triumphant... The college graduates of today are... convinced that the future belongs to the professions..." without danger of dissent from listeners or readers. By the early 1970s, a similar audience concurrence would greet a statement like this: "Everyone is down on the old-style concept of professionalism today: those who are served by professionals... the students... the paraprofessionals... and finally, many practicing professionals themselves."

While neither of these statements was meant to refer to librarianship as such (indeed, their authors would probably not have admitted librarians to the august company of professionals at all), the shift in attitude they reflect is a pretty accurate description of the change among librarians in their outlook toward professional status. What happened to cause such a reversal?

Well, what happened between the 1950s and the 1970s was: the 1960s. This term, "the 1960s," will be used throughout this paper as a generalized designator for that period, and more loosely for the viewpoint that characterized it: a posture of dissidence, questioning and revolt against the Establishment that for librarians sprang already full-grown into the 1969 conference of the American Library Association (ALA) in Atlantic City. This viewpoint had its roots in the 1950s and still has its adherents in the 1970s; as the reader will discover, many of the more cogent statements of this "1960s viewpoint" will be from publications...
issued in the 1970s. The term is used not as a strict chronological concept, but as a kind of shorthand for a revolution in attitude. It is an important factor in any discussion of the topic of this paper, for "professionalism" is an almost perfect symbol for that which the traditionalists revered as an enviable ideal, and what the dissidents saw as the very essence of all that they detested about the Establishment. The 1960s marked the turning point.

The earlier view seldom criticized professionalism as an ideal toward which librarians should strive. In this, librarians were no different from most other occupations. As L. Carroll DeWeese points out:

"Occupation has gradually replaced traditionally accepted status-gaining attributes such as ancestry, ethnicity, religion, and political affiliation. . . . Occupation reveals more about a person's social standing than any other single attribute, with the possible exception of race. . . . If a practitioner wishes to improve his occupational status, he must adopt one of three strategies: (1) leave his occupation for one of higher status; (2) increase his status within his occupation; or (3) improve the status of his occupation."

The first two strategies are, of course, personal solutions for individual situations, but the third is more generalized and appears frequently in the library literature. The basic assumption is that improvement of the status of librarianship would be most readily accomplished if librarians could win acceptance of it as a profession, and the attempts to gain that acceptance take certain familiar forms: (1) the outright claim that it is a profession, in the hope that someone will believe it; (2) attempts to draw parallels between librarianship and already accepted professions to substantiate the claim to the recognition; or (3) proposals that librarians assume more of the familiar characteristics of the acknowledged professions to press their claim more convincingly.

It is interesting, in the light of the continuing struggle to gain professional recognition a century later, that Melvil Dewey in the first issue of *American Library Journal* made bold to claim it as already accomplished. "The time has at last come," said he, "when a librarian may, without assumption, speak of his occupation as a profession." "At last," indeed! The struggle had hardly begun.

Dewey's overconfidence reflects not only his familiar, personal self-assurance, but the spirit of the time. Librarians began to be conscious of their status and their identity as a definable calling at the same time that
practitioners in many other fields were doing so. Professional associations began to appear in the latter half of the nineteenth century—the first national law association was founded in 1878; social work in 1874; and between 1864 and 1888, nine separate specialties within medicine all established associations. Even sports began to professionalize; 1876 marks the establishment not only of the ALA, but of the National League as well.

Until the turn of the century, these strivings for professional status were generalized and uncritical. The traditional professions had associations, so other occupations formed associations. The traditional professions put their training programs into universities, so other occupations developed university training programs. The traditional professions had codes of ethics, so other occupations wrote codes of ethics. The "inevitable" result, that was sure to come if one did the right thing, was sufficient justification.

The first really critical look at what "professional" means, and whether these indicators of professionalism were really sufficient, came from Abraham Flexner. In 1910 he published his *Medical Education in the United States and Canada*, and in 1915 gave his influential address, "Is Social Work a Profession?" All current discussions in any professional or would-be professional field about its professional status and its prognosis for successful acceptance as a profession derive from these two sources. In librarianship the parallel landmark title is, of course, Williamson's *Training for Library Service*, which raised the same kinds of questions about library education that Flexner had raised about medical education, and introduced the same kind of drive within the field toward critical analysis and tangible improvements.

It was also in the second decade of this century that Louis D. Brandeis formulated a definition of a profession that served as a core for almost all definitions thereafter until the dissidence of the 1960s. It is useful to repeat that definition, because its elements recur throughout the subsequent discussions of professions up to the present time: "First, a profession is an occupation for which the necessary preliminary training is intellectual in character, involving knowledge and to some extent learning, as distinguished from mere skill. Second, it is an occupation which is pursued largely for others and not merely for one's self. Third, it is an occupation in which the amount of financial return is not the accepted measure of success."

In his 1915 address, Flexner added to Brandeis's insistence on an intellectual component and an altruistic motivation the ideas that professional practice puts knowledge to use, and that this craftsmanship is
teachable, learnable and socially useful; that society turns over control of the profession to the profession itself for self-policing, accepting the premise that the quality of professional performance is capable of judgment only by its own practitioners; and that a profession transcends rigid and mechanical application of rules: "what matters most is professional spirit."\(^{10}\)

From that time forward, explorations by different occupations of their own qualifications for professional standing looked to existing definitions, and then added elements of their own. It is a standard format for articles and books about an occupation's professional status, not only in librarianship but in all fields, to begin with definitions already formulated by others and to examine the occupation for evidence that these requirements are being met.\(^{11}\) But as the 1960s approached, the social scientists increasingly placed their emphasis on intangible indicators and not just on such easily identifiable attributes as whether the field has a lengthy training program, has an organization, and provides a full-time occupation for its practitioners. An interesting variation was introduced by Nathan Glazer, who examined the characteristics of those occupations which have not yet qualified for professional recognition rather than those which have.\(^{12}\) As shall be seen, the parallels between librarianship and the not-yet-professions are as great as those which librarians had so assiduously been trying to draw between librarianship and that "in" group.

But while librarians tried to come to terms with the discrepancies between the accepted definitions of what constitutes a profession, and what they found in their own occupation's theory and practice, there was never a doubt that professional status is what they wanted and that if there were areas in which they did not yet measure up, the logical course of action was to work to remedy these inadequacies. The tangible ones were comparatively easy; they could simply go out and get one of each thing they now lacked. Shaffer's study is typical in its treatment of the characteristics of librarianship as unfavorably compared with those of the accepted professions:

No form of internship or student librarianship is required. . . . Medicine, law, and theology all require supervised training experience. . . . Not every library school is accredited by the American Library Association. In contrast, every medical school is accredited by the American Medical Association. . . . Only one third of the eligible librarians throughout the country are members of the American Library Association. . . . Of the 228,926
Barber derides the marginal or emerging professions for this kind of surface approach to the establishment of professional qualifications; Pierce Butler identified this tendency much earlier, and put it in its place: "[The librarian] has always been inclined to imitate the outward forms of the other professions before attaining the corresponding internal development."

This does not mean that librarianship exhibits none of the essential characteristics of the established professions. A key indicator—one that turns up in virtually every set of criteria in the literature of professionalism—is altruism. It appears in a variety of formulations: "an orientation toward service," a "primary orientation to the community interest rather than to individual self-interest," "a service orientation, which means that he [the professional person] uses his expertise on behalf of the particular needs of his client," "commitment to the social welfare... altruistic, public service-oriented," "the ideal of service," and from the very beginning, in Brandeis, "an occupation which is pursued largely for others and not merely for one's self." Until the 1960s, this was seen as a sine qua non of professionalism. Certainly the distinction between the professional and the businessman has rested almost solely on the professional's more direct concern with community interest and the welfare of society rather than profit and self-interest. Shera and McFarland suggest that one of the reasons that information scientists seem less concerned than librarians about establishing their credentials as professionals may be in part because "information science is only incidentally service-directed."

This devotion to the client's interests rather than to one's own, this "dedication to a 24-hour day," came to be questioned in recent years; it was no longer seen as particularly admirable that the one thing that really gave librarianship its claim to professional status was its adherence to Brandeis's criterion: "an occupation in which the amount of financial return is not the accepted measure of success." But the question is raised about the validity of the criterion itself, not about the librarians' failure to meet it. So long as this selfless commitment to service was considered a professional value as such, library service received very high marks.

This is not so in all areas, however. Most of the definitions stress a body of information and theory that is more than simply empirical. Flexner stated that the members of a profession must "constantly resort to the laboratory and seminar for a fresh supply of facts"; Maureen Harris
specifies that professional knowledge is "a body of information and theory which has been analysed and tested, and which is capable of extension through research"; Greenwood stresses that the special knowledge of the professional cannot just be skills per se, but skills that "flow from and are supported by a fund of knowledge that has been organized into an internally consistent system, called a body of theory." Preparation for a profession, says Greenwood, "must be an intellectual as well as a practical experience."

Librarians themselves have recognized their weakness in scholarly research and publication, and the social scientists have not been diffident about reminding them of it, lest they forget:

The essential missing ingredient [in librarianship] that keeps it from attaining professional status is some important creative content to the profession itself. . . . the characteristic of the intellectual occupations is that they add to the core of our culture rather than serve the fringes. Certainly librarians are the keepers of our culture and without them much that is central to our intellectual heritage would disappear in a welter of confusion. But it is the scientists, humanists, writers, philosophers who add significant increments to our cultural heritage. Librarians share with teachers and advertising personnel the characteristic of being close to the intellectual life, but not in it to the same degree that are the creative professions.

More than fifteen years have passed since Rossi's indictment, and there have been some creative contributions to the literature since then that he could not have considered, but the progress is slow. There had also been an 11-year lapse between Rossi's statement and the cold comfort of Butler's observation that "many considerations suggest that among librarians the development of a complete professional scholarship is retarded rather than unnecessary." The necessity meanwhile has become more urgent, but the retardation seems not to have been notably reversed.

It is at least conceivable that the library field's inadequate creation of an intellectually respectable body of knowledge and theory has affected its success in achieving two other important hallmarks of professionalism: autonomy and authority. Autonomy is related to the client's confidence in the professional as one who, because of extended technical education or training, knows better than anyone else what is good for the client. For that reason, the professional subjects his decisions only to the review of colleagues, and demands autonomy of judgment of his own performance.
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This is seen as "the ultimate criterion of professionalization according to most sociologists." Such confidence is based upon the body of knowledge which is exclusively that of the professional group. "The fully fledged profession can claim the right to be final arbiter in problems under its jurisdiction by referring to its codified knowledge, over which its mastery is greater than that of any other group." Jencks and Riesman go even further:

We do not regard an occupation as a profession simply because it requires advanced training or expert knowledge. We use the term only to describe an occupation that is relatively colleague-oriented rather than client-oriented ... professionalization means that the practitioners seek the exclusive right to name and judge one another's mistakes.

Librarianship has achieved this status to a certain extent: its programs of preparation for library work are accredited by its own organization, and the standards were set by librarians. But appointment to "professional" positions in libraries is not limited just to those who have the accredited degree; neither the public nor the field itself is convinced that successful achievement in librarianship must be based on the systematic knowledge or doctrine that can only be acquired through the long period of prescribed training. By and large, the degree stands primarily for some training in skills, and many librarians themselves seem to want it that way. Under the circumstances, and in view of the librarians' frequent public insistence that they are not prepared to tell people what to read, it is not surprising that the general public is not completely convinced that the librarian knows better than anyone else what is good for the user of libraries.

The relationship of autonomy to authority is clear. In the field of technical competence, the professional has a monopoly of judgment. Thus, the professional serves clients, not customers (the customer is always right). Ideally, the client derives a sense of security from the professional's assumption of authority, and concurs in surrendering to the professional the judgment and prescription. But this is precisely what the librarian almost never does: he does not prescribe. And for that reason, Goode feels that librarianship may never attain true professional status.

At present, the librarian has little power over his clients. They do not pay individually for his services.... The client has the right to check out and use the materials of the library even if the
The librarian believes he cannot use them to advantage. The librarian is a gatekeeper who can exclude almost no one... a stockroom custodian who must hand over any of his stock even if he is sure the person really wants or needs something else...

This comes dangerously close to the position taken by a minority of librarians, that their duty is to give the people what they want. In such a conception... he yields a central meaning of service, the commitment to run personal risks in order to fulfill a high obligation to the society, to educate the reader and the public. This strain between the wishes and the real needs of a clientele is perhaps to be found in all professions, but in established professions more often it is resolved by the professional's decision.

The failure—or the reasoned refusal—of the librarian to prescribe and to dictate goes back in part to the absence of a body of knowledge unique to the librarian on which he or she can base the judgment of what is best for the client. It is not simply that the client—the library user—initiates the relationship; that is true of the medical doctor and the patient also, but the difference is crucial: the doctor determines the solution to the client's problem, not the client, and may withhold professional service unless the client agrees to follow the advice given. "Professionals profess. They profess to know better than others the nature of certain matters and to know better than their clients what ails them or their affairs. This is the essence of the professional idea and the professional claim."

While librarians have tended, since about the end of World War I, to back away from this authoritarian mandate, it was not unknown in the history of American librarianship. In the past librarians saw selection of materials as one of their most important professional responsibilities, and they carefully put into their libraries only those things that they thought the library's users should know. They exercised considerable control over what the public could have access to, and if there were materials that were—in the judgment of the librarian—suitable for some but not for others, they had no qualms about closed shelves, guided reading and even the elimination of information from the public catalog that might lead the "wrong" people to the potentially dangerous works. Since the early 1920s, however, the conviction has been growing among librarians that the free public library should be both free and public, and they have moved increasingly in the direction of absolute freedom of access. In its
statement of policy, which takes on the character of an official statement from the profession as a whole, the Office for Intellectual Freedom of the ALA has presented the extreme absolutist view:

In basic terms, intellectual freedom means the right of any person to believe whatever he wants on any subject, and to express his beliefs or ideas in whatever way he thinks appropriate. . . . The definition of intellectual freedom has a second, integral part: namely, the right of unrestricted access to all information and ideas regardless of the medium of communication used.35

It is the second part of that statement that has been taken as the description of the librarian's role—to facilitate unrestricted access for all persons to all information and ideas, subject to no judgment as to the value, appropriateness, or even potential harm to the patron.

Not all members of ALA, to say nothing of the entire membership of the library occupation, are willing to go this far. There are many different reasons why librarians back away from so absolute a position, but in the context of this paper, the key concern would be the professional person's obligation to exercise some kind of expert control over the materials disseminated by the library for which he or she is responsible. Even in the militant 1960s, an echo of this view of the librarian's responsibility, as the holder of special knowledge, to use that knowledge to prescribe, continues to find support.

The professional, by virtue of his training, experience, and specialized knowledge, offers the client the counsel, service, or prescription which he views to be appropriate whether or not this is precisely what the client wants or thinks he wants. The professional's guidance may not always be followed, but the judgment and recommendation of the professional are not open to question or debate by the layman. The professional knows.36

Thus, even at the height of the antiprofessional movement there was recognition that: A "qualified professional is supposed to be an authority on his subject and an expert on its application to the solution of particular problems presented by clients. . . . Professional authority in its pure form is in the nature of advice."37

But here one encounters an interesting reservation that has traditionally been placed upon the professional person's authority. The traditional premise is that the professional's knowledge is assumed to be specific; that is, "a professional does not have the license to be a 'wise man'
outside the area defined by his training.” Professional persons are expected to limit their services to their own area of competence, not use their cloak of authority to cover other areas in which they have a personal or private interest but no technical expertise. This “functional specificity,” as Talcott Parsons calls it, would seem to limit librarians to bibliothecal matters, but rule out their giving advice or taking positions on matters of subject content. This has always been a sticky point in librarianship which, as shall be seen, caused a great deal of trouble in a variety of interesting and contradictory ways in the social responsibility debates of the 1960s.

After the 1920s, the library could begin to claim to be meeting the professional standard of functional specificity in a sense. The objectivity and neutrality embedded in most professions’ codes of ethics had become a guiding principle of library service. Provision of materials on all sides of an issue was seen as an essential of the library’s role in the society. Librarians might exercise judgment about the quality of a book, but not about the ideas in it; in that sense, librarians believed that their role paralleled that of the doctors who could not refuse service because of political or moral views held by the patient with which they disagreed. As a private person, a librarian could believe in and work for any cause that he or she chose, but in one’s professional capacity one was to remain objective and uninvolved. The analogy is not quite exact; it is true that the physician does not withhold service on the basis of the patient’s political or moral views, but he or she may refuse a service which in his or her judgment would be detrimental to the patient. The librarians’ expertise in the realm of books and reading inevitably touches upon subject matter in a way that health care does not, and the client of the library assumes that it is on subject matter as well as format that the librarian possesses special knowledge. The librarians’ absolutist view of free access to all ideas was meant to meet the professional criterion of neutrality, but the concept may not be transferable without considerable distortion.

This leads to another characteristic of the established professions: a code of ethics. The code of ethics is a recognition by an occupational group of the responsibility that goes with its privileges. Because a great measure of control is handed over by the society to the profession itself, it becomes necessary that a profession be governed by a code of ethical conduct, not only to protect the interests of the clients, but to protect the profession as well against charlatans and improper practitioners. “The general performance norms [regulated by ethical codes] refer primarily to peers, since incompetent or slovenly performance, or failure to protect a client’s interest, necessarily reflects discredit on the professional collec-
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tivity. Thus, codes of ethics are a means for controlling possible abuses that could arise from the monopoly granted by community sanction. These abuses would affect the public adversely, but if they were to become conspicuous they would also lead to revocation of the profession's monopoly. Both altruism and self-interest dictate the formulation of a code.

The library occupation has several documents in which some aspect of professional conduct is regulated. Policy statements — such as the Library Bill of Rights — are related to ethical professional conduct, and several sets of standards for different types of libraries contain elements of an ethical code. This formal code of ethics has never met with much approval, however, either among librarians or among nonlibrarian students of librarianship as a profession. Boissannas says of the 1938 Code of Ethics of the ALA that: it does not set forth "the laws and rules which members of the profession must abide by in their relationship with their clients and among themselves. . . . It tells the librarian to obey his employer and to live for the library and its users." Goode is even more outspoken: "How lacking in this code is any sense of drama, of moral urgency! How absent is a sturdy awareness that the profession has a task, a destiny, a set of issues about which it is concerned." Others had taken an equally dim view; as a result an ALA Council Committee on Professional Ethics worked for four years on a new "Statement on Professional Ethics" (note that it is called a statement, not a code) and asked for reactions from the membership. There was little response, and a second call for reaction was solicited in late 1977. As of this writing, no formal report has been made by the committee, but Shirley Fitzgibbons, writing in the ALA Yearbook 1977 says that Goode's criticism of 1962 "is applicable again in reaction to the 1975 statement." Librarianship is not, it seems, absolutely alone in this failure. Bledstein accuses the professions in general of "regularly mistitling practical codes of etiquette by referring to them in the lofty name of 'codes of ethics.'" A code of etiquette merely describes the conventional forms of intercourse by which practitioners relate to each other; a code of ethics should prescribe the moral responsibility of the professional to the public. It remains to be seen whether the librarians will write such a document — and live up to it.

Of all the characteristics identified with professionalism which librarianship has been striving to attain, the one in which they have been least successful may be that of "sanction of the community." Community sanction, of course, grows out of the community's acceptance of a profession's ability to demonstrate the other characteristics: its altruism, its
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possession of expertise in a special field of knowledge important to the community, its authority. Convinced that a particular occupational group does exhibit these qualities, the community acknowledges its sanction by according it the right to accredit, control admissions to the field, preserve the confidentiality of its relationship with its clients, and regulate and police itself. It is thus a demonstration of community trust, confidence and even awe in the face of the social value that the occupation preserves and delivers.

Librarianship has not yet convinced the community at large that its services are necessary in the same way that law and medicine have been able to do. In this connection, it is useful to note a distinction which Wilbert E. Moore draws between prestige (the recognition and awards that accrue to a position in a fairly organized social system), and esteem (the deference accorded superior role performance in a position). In librarianship there are likely to be more instances of esteem earned by individual performance than of recognition and awards accruing to the title “librarian” as such. One does not get the preferred treatment from a headwaiter by announcing that one is a librarian that he or she might well receive by announcing the title “doctor”; “the public considers hospitals indispensable and also nurses; considers schools indispensable and also teachers; considers libraries indispensable but not librarians.” The reason for this, Gwinup believes, is that librarians have not distinguished between what is professional work in their occupation and what is not, and as a consequence have failed to create the favorable public image that calls forth community sanction.

An important aspect of this failure is the public’s perception of the comparative importance of the librarians’ decisions. As Goode suggests, “the claim to autonomy or trust loses its point unless the client or society can in fact be harmed because of unethical or incomplete work by the practitioner.” This represents, of course, an element of risk that is part of the responsibility of the professional person, who must make decisions and act on them, recognizing that the consequences of that action can be vital in both its strict and in its extended sense. “The image of the librarian is primarily deprecatory, not threatening: he is thought to be able to help, but not to harm.”

Librarians have corroborated this image by their refusal to prescribe, their self-effacing evasion of decision-making responsibility (“Who am I to say what a person ought to read; I’m only the librarian”), and their unwillingness to face the consequences if their professed ideals were carried out in practice. Within their own ranks, they are not agreed that
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theirs is a body of knowledge that must be mastered to assure professional performance; that those without the qualification perform less well than those with it; that a degree in some other field isn't equally useful in preparing for acceptable performance; that librarians do bring to bear a certain knowledge, skill and aptitude that is not matched, let alone surpassed, by the common sense and goodwill of the interested volunteer and amateur. The image is inoffensive, nonassertive, compliant; it does not command the deference and the respect that leads to the community sanction accorded the well-established professions.

There is a social factor involved here which Peter Rossi thinks may well be the major reason that librarians find it difficult to achieve a true professional status: "Any occupation in which there is a high proportion of women suffers a special disability. . . . Women depress the status of an occupation because theirs is a depressed status in the society as a whole."55 Note that this is not an attack on the abilities of women, but rather on the society which jumps to a foregone conclusion about women's role. The feminist writers have noted the same phenomenon, citing it to show that the depressed status of a predominantly feminine occupation occurs not because women are incapable of performing at a professional level, but because the society has been — and continues to be — so stereotyped in its view of "feminine" characteristics that the criteria for professional status would seem not to be fulfilled in an occupation which women predominate.56

As a result of this stereotypic approach to libraries and librarianship, the dominance of women in the field has held down salaries and social status and thus has limited the field's appeal to men — and to many women — who sought a more challenging and satisfying prospective career. Moreover, where women do accept the role that society has defined for them, they do not consider it appropriate to exhibit the sense of commitment, the drive to lead rather than to follow, the necessary assertiveness required to prescribe, or to demand professional rights and responsibilities. The accusation thus becomes self-fulfilling. Several psychological profiles of librarians, constructed in the days when the masculinity-femininity measure was widely used in personality testing, found the so-called "feminine" characteristics to be typical of librarians, whether male or female.57 It could hardly have been otherwise, when love of books or a preference for reading were considered to be "feminine" traits. It is difficult to break out of a vicious circle.

This, then, was the state of librarianship on the threshold of the "1960s." Social scientists and librarians alike were agreed that librarian-
ship did not yet come up to very many of the professional standards. The pessimists among them concluded that it never would: "Many aspiring occupations and semi-professions [of which librarianship is one] will never become professions in the usual sense: they will never reach the levels of knowledge and dedication to service the society considers necessary for a profession." Depending on how near or how remote the chances appeared to be for breaking into the charmed circle, they listed librarianship with other "aspiring professions" like pharmacy and nursing — or with plumbing, janitorial work and tree surgery. The optimists, on the other hand, were convinced that the areas of weakness could be identified and repaired; they saw professionalism as a continuum, with librarianship "on its way to becoming an organized profession." A full decade after being characterized thus by Leigh, Goode saw librarianship as being still on its way.

As consolation, librarians preferred to think of "professionalism" as a kind of abstract ideal rather than a description of actual practice in any occupation. They decided it would be more accurate not to use the term professional to describe a field, but rather to raise the question of "how professionalized" it is, and to seek constantly to move toward the "high" end of the scale. What no one questioned, however, was that the ideal of professionalism as such was one toward which librarianship should aspire.

The 1960s changed all that. The major planks in the platform of the 1960s' dissidents were an opposition to structure, to the status quo, and to the Establishment. Social change was the watchword, and change, not as a means but as an end in and of itself, was seen as a value. As Paul Goodman put it at the time: "Along with science, the young discredit the professions in general, and the whole notion of 'disciplines' and academic learning... Rationality itself is discredited." Abstraction, exploitation, domination were the enemy — and all of these were characteristics of professionalism as they saw it. Typical of the attitude were such statements as these:

I no longer believe that professionalization is the solution. On the contrary it is the problem.

My aim is... to alert middle-class librarians to their unconscious class prejudice, embodied specifically in elitist ideas like "Professionalism."

No one who has accepted the title of professional, or who aspires to it, can be anything but quiet, careful and conservative, because his entire status rests on these qualities.
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Given the drive toward change, almost every characteristic traditionally assigned to professionalism began to be seen as a fault rather than a virtue: formalization of qualifications, testing and screening for credentials, institutionalization of procedures, recognition of certified authority, professional rather than community control of standards and ethics, emphasis on formal education, esoteric knowledge, system, respectability, meritocracy, ambition, prescription. As to the professionals' claim that their focus was on service to others rather than on self-advancement and advantage, the dissidents simply didn't believe it. Dissidents saw themselves as "primarily concerned with the well-being of people, and with the social change necessary to achieve it," but when a professional practitioner claimed to believe also in the goal of the well-being of people, when the accomplishments in the social realm were cited along with an acknowledgment of abuses, they were called liars, finks, mystifiers, or deluded. What the dissidents wanted was simply to heal, teach, serve justice, or communicate information — and they saw instead that one had to become a doctor, teacher, lawyer or librarian — a member of an established, institutionalized and rigid profession with its complex system of training schools, licensing procedures, professional associations and regulations. When asked whether, in any social order they could envisage, it would not be necessary for engineers to know about stresses and strains, and healers of the sick to have special knowledge, they replied, no, "it was important only to be human, and all else would follow."

This is, of course, a description of an extreme among the 1960s positions, but it touches on a basic concern of the time, i.e., that "the traditional paradigm of professionalism encourages a static condition which is incompatible with the dynamism inherent in a truly client-centered (including non-user clients) professional orientation," and that therefore the forces of change become the antitheses of the basic characteristics of professionalism. The questions were being raised about all professions, whether firmly entrenched or only aspiring, and librarianship was subjected to the same scrutiny about its practice and its goals. What was being urged upon librarians, unheard-of in their previous developmental history, was a new idea of professionalism that questioned the traditional one, a professionalism that would exhibit an indifference to credentials, display an attitude of criticism, be impatient with the present rate of change, accept consumer control, and be animated by compassion and concerned with the well-being of people. Not all of these requirements would necessarily have entailed equally radical changes in the goals of
traditional professionalism, but their proponents saw all of them as threatening to the status quo, and their opponents tended to be intimidated into accepting that evaluation.

Certainly one of the areas in which the threat was real was in the attack on the concept of the professional's special knowledge. The traditional librarian has always seen this special knowledge as the key to library service; it was a skill which made possible their particular contribution to the well-being of others, and would earn them the social recognition of their contribution.

The income of professionals averages higher than that of other occupations because their services are needed (they have the knowledge to solve a problem) and there are no alternatives. In single supply-demand terms, they have a monopoly over a valuable product. On the prestige market, too, their product is valuable because of their dedication to the service ideal, because their education is high, and because their performances are above those of average people.  

Until the 1960s, such a statement would have seemed to be in praise of professionalism, with its stress on special knowledge put to use to discharge the service function and to foster excellent performance. In the 1960s, the other elements took precedence: "no alternatives" suggested that recruitment and preparation of people have been manipulated to keep the knowledge arcane; "monopoly" carried bad connotations of cynical control to serve self-interest; the high level of education became an unnecessary requirement unrelated to any real social need ("education has little necessary relevance to occupation"); and the idea that the professionals' performance is above that of average people was, of course, elitist and meritocratic.

One might consider this quotation from Wilbert Moore, which is deliberately left unfinished here: "Some people know things and how to do things that others do not. If the knowledge that is not universally shared is at all useful or important for those who do not have it, then those who do possess it . . ." The traditionalist would complete such a sentence with something like this: "...are in a position to perform a useful and needed service which benefits society." But Moore's quotation continues: "...have a relative advantage. These simple truisms provide one basis for social inequality."  

It was social inequality that became the focus in the 1960s. The emphasis on skills and knowledge came to be seen as merely a self-serving
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ploy of those who wanted the elitist advantage of professional status; professions were seen as deliberately and artificially keeping their knowledge esoteric by a variety of devices designed to hold down the number and character of those initiated into its mysteries, in order to keep themselves on top and the uninitiated at their mercy. "Professionalism, supposedly service-oriented, still provides the means to control others and maintain privilege over them.... The mystification centers around what professionals do and who can be part of the group: knowledge and skills are closely guarded and credentials jealously meted out."74

The threat to tradition lay in the ideas that special skills and knowledge aren't all that special; that the kind of education considered essential may not be necessary after all; that the quality of service may even be reduced rather than enhanced by the emphasis upon professional education. One of the strongest expressions of this mistrust was to come not from wild-eyed radicals but from the government itself:

When the reliance on education credentials compels individuals to spend tedious hours and years in school against their interest, perpetuates social inequality, gives one group in society unique and arbitrary power over the lives of many, establishes conditions in which people will be dissatisfied and unhappy with their jobs, undermines the educational process, and all this unnecessarily — then the time has come to change these practices. (italics added)75

"All this unnecessarily" is the phrase that introduces the 1960s approach to professional education. Traditionally, as Mayhew points out: "One of the basic assumptions on which the whole edifice of formal professional education is based is that the individuals with potential for professional work can be identified, and that the work offered in the professional school assures successful professional performance."76 Now this assumption was being called into question. A key word was "relevance," a term that had many aspects. Given the new demand for librarians who would serve audiences hitherto ignored or unreached, who would act as advocates for all who were being denied rights to which they were entitled, who would become more directly involved in social services than in narrowly bibliothecal problems, the content of traditional library school curricula was seen as sadly wanting. "Whether consciously or unconsciously, the 'better' schools of librarianship tend to place their emphasis on that content which prepares higher administrators, research workers and potential teachers in library school to the alleged neglect of training for the
central role of the practitioner.” In other words, the “central role of the practitioner” was being redefined, and with it the appropriate content of preparation for that role.

Another question of relevance was raised about the schools’ monopoly over screening and granting credentials, and particularly over the criteria in carrying out the screening function. The attack was aimed at the use of educational requirements and standardized tests which introduce cultural elements that discriminate against certain groups in the society, and at certain traditional academic screens that seemed to bear no relation to the demands of the job. Among these was the possession of a college degree before admission to library school. Mayhew cites a number of studies which seem to show that there is a minimal positive or even slightly negative relationship between job performance and length and level of education: “If such studies are further validated, professional schools, if they are to continue to warrant the support and regard they have achieved in the past, will be forced into radical revision of the entire process of education, beginning with techniques of admission and extending to organization of courses and requirements for graduation.”

An underlying assumption in many of the attacks on the schools is that educators are politically and socially conservative — if not reactionary — and that the whole process of schooling is dedicated to preservation of the status quo. It is a familiar stereotype, but one might ask whether, by and large, it is not likely that the instructors in any professional field are more concerned about social amelioration than are the majority of its practitioners:

The reformers in any given profession are disproportionately concentrated in its training institutions... at any given moment the quality of practice taught at a professional school is likely to be higher than that actually carried on by the alumni of that school. Indeed the exalted image of a profession provided by its better schools may first help it attract better recruits than it deserves and then help sustain these men in the face of its often sordid and tedious reality.

Paul Wasserman also acknowledges the leadership role that professional schools have taken: “A most hopeful and striking phenomenon is the way in which the opinions, the concepts, and the advanced practice which are born in the professional schools ultimately are seen to have foreshadowed those of the professions which they serve, and in some instances, by as much as a generation in advance of their acceptance.”
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It should be noted that Wasserman is speaking not of library schools as they now exist, but of truly professional schools, and that he sees a distinction between the two. The point of his comment is that the library schools could play such a role if they would. That some of them already do to some extent is attested to by the criticism so frequently heard from new graduates that the schools have led them to expect much more opportunity to play a role in social change than the jobs permit, and by the complaints from the field that the schools pay far too much attention to principles, ideals and abstractions and not enough to down-to-earth knowledge of how to operate today's library services in today's libraries. But in the 1960s it was not considered enough for the schools to be nothing more than not quite as bad as the field.

Another attack on the schools was that they were a training ground for professionalism and inculcated its ideals. Before the 1960s, this would not have seemed a criticism. The very fact that a period of special training precedes practice had been taken to be a major justification for claiming professional status for an occupation. The "community," the "culture" which characterizes a professional group (i.e., its shared values, norms and symbols), and its ways of operating and its rules, form the basis of a professional curriculum. To become a professional, one must become acculturated, and it is to the schools that one turns to receive that acculturation. That this process can be abused is certainly possible, particularly if the process of screening for admission seeks to identify those who will "fit in" to some narrowly defined class of "superior beings." But a professional school is by definition a school that prepares for a profession. It is not as illogical as it may seem that the critics of the 1960s sought to reform the schools as a means of reforming or even doing away with professionalism: "the strategic locus for effecting change is the professional education process."**

The belief that the professional's special education and esoteric knowledge is a manufactured mystique to keep the patient/client/patron at the mercy of the professional seemed to the critics of professionalism to be corroborated by the professions' insistence on the right of self-policing. As has been noted, Jencks and Riesman had made the exclusive right to name and judge one another's mistakes the sine qua non of professionalism.

Professionalization in our lexicon... implies a shift in values, in which the practitioner becomes less concerned with the opinion of laymen... and becomes more concerned with the opinion of his fellow practitioners... As Everett Hughes noted, the very
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color of quackery boils down to the charge that a man is doing better at pleasing his patients than at pleasing his colleagues.83

This "alienation" of the professional from the client was one of the major evidences in support of the charge of elitism. Since the autonomy of the professional cannot be questioned by the layperson, the client is made dependent upon the professional rather than acting as an equal partner. The profession begins to see itself as a separate and higher part of society, subject only to the moral and ethical considerations determined by the professional group itself, and answerable to no outside authority. Even their codes of ethics, presumably designed to protect the rights of the public against the possible abuses that arise from the monopoly granted by community sanction, were seen instead as yet another means for keeping the public at a safe distance from the decision-making process that affects them. Where the professional group extolled objectivity, detachment, freedom from value judgments, and the unimpeded search for truth as essential to the integrity of professional performance, the critics saw them as coverup words to disguise special privilege and indifference to the human beings who seek the professional's services.84 It is easy to see how, in this context, the professional ideals taught in the library schools became a target for attack.

From this premise, it is a simple step to the demand that the profession should abandon its traditional stance of objectivity and neutrality, and move to become "an instrument of positive social change."85 The virtue of detachment, which allows the practitioner to remain objective and not too personally involved in the individual case, became a vice in this context. What was called for was more involvement, not less; more personal interaction, not less; more promotion of what is right and suppression of what is wrong. The 1960s would not condone the separation of the librarian as an individual from the librarian in his or her professional capacity.

Here, of course, these new attitudes came into direct conflict with the professional limitation of "functional specificity": one is not an authority outside the field of professional expertise. The areas in which the socially conscious librarians wanted to take positions were precisely those outside their specialty: legal reform, ecology, overhaul of the educational system, social equality, right to abortion, and the military/industrial complex, among others. When Paul Wasserman calls for a new professional commitment which will no longer simply match users and the information sought, but will enlist "its expertise in the cause of advancing the
needs of the client group first by pragmatically resolving their information problems and then extending beyond into other spheres which relate to a range of other requirements of the constituency. He is asking for an emotional and personal involvement in aspects of the clients' needs that fall outside librarians' traditional professional competence. Wasserman is well aware of this; he is urging that the new breed of librarians should become competent in a wide range of skills and insights which do not normally fall into today's definition of librarianship.

The traditional basis of professional neutrality had been to assure the provision of service to all who request it, irrespective of the client's age, income, kinship, politics, race, religion, sex, or social status; the rendering of service "upon request, even at the sacrifice of personal convenience." The new librarian would keep as much of that as possible, but saw it better served through personal involvement than through neutrality.

Bureaucracy was identified as one of the barriers to the kind of personal involvement that the 1960s were striving to promote. A "change institute," held in 1969, placed its major emphasis on the need to break out of the bureaucratic structure. Typical was Eldred Smith's forthright statement of his position:

I'm going to assume at the beginning that we recognize a need for change in library practice and that we also recognize the shortcomings of the library bureaucracies in achieving change. ... I think that it's becoming very clear that there is a basic conflict between the bureaucratic organization of libraries and the abilities of the individual librarian within his organization to function as a creative professional.

As so frequently occurs in the attacks on professionalism, a dichotomy was identified here between the needs of people and the needs of the Establishment. Against the loyalty to the societal responsibility of his or her calling that the new librarian saw as a commitment was pitted the institution's demand for organizational loyalty: "The professional who retains a fundamental identification with clientele commitment is inevitably forced into a position of conflict with organizational requirements." This conflict is seen as running through the whole library occupation, including the ALA: "By giving its primary rewards to those who achieve administratively, the association and the profession may greatly undervalue professional contributions. In seeking to achieve its institutional ob-
jectives, the American Library Association may fail to stress professional objectives and developments. Clearly, institutional objectives are seen here as inevitably incompatible with professional objectives:

The bureaucratic sickness of the education profession is only an extreme instance of a more general disease afflicting other professions as well. . . . The cure is the same for all: to replace the unresponsive hierarchies that now exist to serve entrenched interests with new, humane professionals that really serve their clients, particularly poor clients.

The bureaucratic hierarchy began to be seen, not only as detrimental to a service responsive to the client, but also as inimical to the full professional development of the individual staff member: "Professional autonomy and bureaucratic lines of authority are incompatible. . . . The librarian cannot exercise independent professional authority if he holds an essentially managerial position within the bureaucratic hierarchy." The drive to break down the hierarchical structure reflected this new consideration of individual satisfaction and career development. In the beginning of the movement, the anti-Establishment posture concentrated on the "people" in terms of broad issues, such as poverty, slums, racism, and social services; now it was becoming a management/worker confrontation within the library itself as well. Library staff members were becoming interested in matters beyond the content of the job functions performed, and began looking to their own needs and work environment issues. When the term "the people" was invoked in the rhetoric, it might well apply to the nonadministrative staff of the library, rather than the more familiar disadvantaged and oppressed minorities.

Thus, the advancement of the profession, once seen solely in terms of an improved public service that would automatically result in improved prestige and status, now began to entail also the promotion of the economic well-being of its members. Librarians no longer believed that if they "focus all attention on providing an outstanding service . . . adequate payment in various forms will automatically follow." Adequate payment and individual self-fulfillment had not notably followed from quiet, unobtrusive public service, but from demands, unionization, and a bit of hell-raising. As Blake put it: "Instead of issuing a superficial call for dedication beyond the demands of duty, speakers at library conferences ought to consider practical techniques for attracting and keeping first-class persons."

The new assumption was that better services come from staff mem-
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bers who are well treated, happy in their work, and free from institutional constraints that hamper their own development and satisfaction.

To call for dedicated service out of sheer love for the profession alienates the really first-class librarian. If we really want to attract top-notch persons to the library profession ... we must recognize publicly that adequate pay and personal advancement will do a great deal to attract the kind of people we want.  

One way to pursue such benefits as more adequate pay and personal advancement is through union activity, and the drive to introduce unions into libraries became more pronounced in this period. There were those who opposed unionization on the ground that it was unprofessional to participate in “demands” for pay increase (“We prefer to earn our salaries, not demand them,” as one letter on the union question put it); on the other hand, there were those who began to call for a change in the nature of ALA, away from its position as an educational organization to a more frankly protective agency. And there were those who quite openly opted to drop membership in the too-slow-moving ALA in favor of some existing union which, however remotely related to librarianship as such, seemed more likely through past experience and militant tactics to achieve the desired results. Proponents and opponents of unionization in librarianship expressed themselves with equal fervor and conviction in print and at ALA conferences, and special attention to the question of unionization began to be given in the library press in the form of special issues and symposia, or regular feature sections on the topic.

As a result, the tradition of undeviating devotion to the ideal of altruism began to be somewhat tempered by more realistic considerations. To those who still held to the idea of selfless dedication, the new emphasis on self-satisfaction, shorter hours and more pay seemed to be a repudiation of the very social responsibility it professed to promote. But the two goals were not seen as mutually exclusive by those who sought staff benefits; what they were seeking was equal attention to staff needs and those of patrons, with a firm conviction that satisfied staff might well be a better guarantor of good public service. The “handmaiden” image had become outmoded, and a term like service began to take on connotations of self-abasement and subservience that the new, self-aware librarian was unwilling to accept. In 1971 an institute sponsored by the Library Association of the City University of New York chose the title, “The Academic Librarian: Educating, Yes; Serving, No.” “Serving, No” would have been an unthinkable slogan for librarians before the 1960s’ upheaval.
Tied to this changing self-image in a predominantly feminine profession was the increasing conviction that sexism and racism riddled not only society at large, but also—some would say especially—the established professions. Once again, self-policing, freedom from outside judgment, and autonomy of the professions were perceived as devices for maintaining the status quo against the rising expectations of minorities and deprived groups.

The revolt against established authority, against what is increasingly recognized as the hypocrisy (or more objectively, the obsolescence) of the conventional wisdom, is inevitably a war against the sexism which supports it in exactly the same way that racism supported the plantation agricultural system of the nineteenth-century South.88

As can be seen, there are at least four sides to the antiprofessionalism position. On one hand, there is the view that professionalism is in itself bad and that the only way to reach socially responsible goals is to reject it and start anew outside its stultifying structure and requirements. On the other hand, there is the view that the traditional goals of professionalism are good, but that some professions or professionals may have lost sight of them; what is needed is a return to true professionalism. There is a kind of midway position, which suggests that some of the original ideals of professionalism are basically good, but that some of the developments in the professional structure are not, and that a reexamination of both the ideals and the structure is in order so that what is good can be preserved and what is bad can be changed. Finally, there is the fourth position, which urged a "new professionalism" that would alter both goals and structure to create a different definition of what it means to be professional.99

In all these positions there is a recognition that changing conditions may require changing institutions, processes and mechanisms; the conflict is over whether these changes can come from within or only from outside; whether they can come through evolution or only through revolution; whether there must be changes in the ideals themselves, in the means for reaching the ideals, or both.

Of course, there was also a pro-professionalism view that continued throughout the period. The preceding discussion may have created the impression that antiprofessionalism was a universal or at least an overwhelmingly majority view, but this was not so. There were a large number of librarians who believed in the original goals, who saw professional
structure as the best way to serve them, and who felt that the occasional abuses that occur in any human institution were the exception and not the rule, and could best be dealt with through a self-policing machinery. There were many who believed that librarianship does have a special knowledge which can best be mastered through a formal program of professional education; that this body of knowledge is an essential tool for meeting the information needs of all the people, and not a contrived mystique to keep the laity uninformed and powerless; that standards and accreditation are essential to preserve the quality of performance, not just to protect special privilege but to assure superior public service; that those who know what librarianship is are the appropriate ones to set its standards and judge its performance; that there is a distinction between the quality of service provided by those professionally qualified and by those who are not; that libraries as institutions are not barriers against the ideals of a public service but rather the best means through which to achieve them; that recognition, prestige and status do—and should—follow upon superior performance; that administrators are motivated by the same ideals of library service as the nonadministrative staff and work with them rather than against them; that librarians at all levels are sincerely dedicated to serve the needs of users before their own self-interest; and that their overall performance is testimony to this commitment.

At the very time that some librarians were condemning the elitism of the ALA and seeking to make it even more democratic and open, others were moving to establish organizations which would be comparatively even more exclusively "professional" in nature. Membership in ALA is, after all, open to anyone interested in libraries; it is not, and has never claimed to be, a professional organization in the sense that it excludes all but those officially qualified to perform as librarians at a professional level. In reaction to the dissident drive to blur or abandon the distinction between librarians and others who work in libraries, these organizations would make the distinction clear and unabashed.

This traditional position was not held only by the older librarians. In an article entitled "Is Librarianship a Profession?" published in 1964, Henry Madden took a dim view and denied to librarianship any real sense of a calling. There was a swift student response to the article, most of it defending the striving for professionalism. Typical is this comment from one student: "Many older people in librarianship have never considered it a profession, but younger people now coming in are motivated by the ideals and philosophy behind librarianship—they have the calling and
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will carry on the fight for professional maturity.”102 An interesting aspect of this statement, in view of the popular belief that the 1960s revolt was a youth movement, is its perception of antiprofessionalism as a stance of the “older people in librarianship.”

It is highly likely that for every critic who saw an ulterior, self-serving motive behind the professed goals of public service and equality, there was at least one defender who would sincerely deny the accusation, and both could point to an instance in practice to support his or her side of the argument. Thus, in the midst of all the questioning of professionalism and its symbols, the ALA brought before its membership a policy statement on the education and function of library personnel103 which attempted to define the professional person and make distinctions between professional and nonprofessional tasks, responsibilities and training. It was overwhelmingly, if not unanimously, approved. (The major opposition to the policy came not from the dissidents protesting this commitment to professionalism, but from a group of school librarians who feared that their professional status would be jeopardized by the educational standards suggested.) A new set of Standards for Accreditation,104 which reaffirmed the concept of self-regulation, was also approved after considerable debate— not over the concept of accreditation as such, but over the extent to which the standards should be quantitative, and their implementation made more rigorous. The drive for academic status for librarians in institutions of higher learning received official approval,105 testimony to the desire of librarians to be counted among the elite within the community they serve. In all of these documents there is some reflection of the themes that the 1960s had stressed: equal opportunity, equal access to services and nondiscrimination in human relations both within the occupation and in its relations to users. However, these were not seen here to be incompatible with the premises of professionalism, i.e., that standards of education and experience should be applied in the identification of superior qualifications, and that superior performance should be recognized with titles and positions of status.

It is not surprising that the thesis/antithesis confrontations of the 1960s should ultimately move toward synthesis as they seem now, in the latter half of the 1970s, to be doing. Many forces contributed to the change from the flamboyant revolt of the previous decade. For one, those who were in their twenties when the “don’t trust anyone over thirty” slogan was coined, while they have not necessarily abandoned the ideals they fought for, have passed the deadline birthday. Many of them are now in positions of authority and leadership (“coopted by the system” they
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would once have said) and are able to introduce some of their desired changes through regular channels rather than through anti-Establishment confrontations. A changing job market has altered the freedom with which students or new graduates can be indifferent to prospective employment; subtler tactics are imposed by economic circumstances. In some cases, the desired goals are no longer seen as radical but have become part of accepted thinking. And in other cases, the demands have been or are being met.

The present mood, then, is not so much one of rejecting the goals of the dissident revolt but rather of examining means for implementing them and following through on their implications. Where once the assumption was that any advance inquiry into a proposed change was simply a destructive delaying action, the present tendency is to accept the possibility that unexamined change can introduce more problems than it solves, or lose forever something that is worth keeping.

One such area of present concern has to do with the criteria on which qualification for professional appointment is based. In response to the pressures of the 1960s, such concepts as affirmative action and equal opportunity have become basic commitments of both federal and state governments, resulting in the issuance of guidelines and requirements that could have an important impact on many occupations and professions. For librarians this has come most dramatically to the fore in the actions taken in California to open professional appointments to examination regardless of previous traditional library education. Following the formal acceptance of this procedure in Sacramento, a group of county librarians endorsed the idea of cooperative research on problems of librarian selection, looking to the development of a selection system that would identify the knowledge, skills, aptitudes, abilities, and other personal characteristics absolutely necessary to perform as librarians, and that would comply with federal and state laws, regulations and guidelines on non-discrimination and affirmative action in employment. To carry out this recommendation, a consortium of thirteen city and county libraries and the California State Library contracted with an independent research agency, the Selection Consulting Center, to carry out a Library Selection Project, the first phase of which would (1) define “entry-level skills” that can justifiably be required of any beginning librarian, and (2) examine the extent to which existing library school courses and curricula provide these skills. Although the results of such a study could provide solid support for library education as it now exists, and for the criteria for admission and for appointment that now prevail, there is every possibility
that the data could raise serious questions about the validity of the present MLS degree, and the procedures by which admission to the schools, and appointments or promotions in the field, are determined.

A reflection of this concern in the profession in California was the establishment of an organization of "Concerned Librarians Opposing Unprofessional Trends (CLOUT)" to work against what it sees as "the downgrading of the professional librarian." On the national scene, ALA's Library Education Division sponsored a discussion meeting on the topic "Testing or Training?" at the 1977 ALA annual conference, and Library Journal gave major space to a special minisymposium on "professionalism."

Meanwhile other states are being pushed to alter their present requirements for professional appointment. For example, the state civil service requirements of Ohio, seeking to restrict the use of educational criteria in favor of performance-related requirements, have set a seventh-grade education as the maximum educational level that may be specified for appointment in its library series even at the professional level, although additional courses may be named as directly relevant to the duties enumerated in the job description.

The entry-level tasks defined by the California study have been published, and the interpretation of their implications is now being assayed. In 1977 the Advisory Committee of the ALA Office for Library Personnel Resources established a task force on the Validation of the MLS and Equivalencies (now called the Task Force on Minimum Qualifications for Librarians) to study the purport of these developments in their legal, educational and professional aspects. A program meeting was developed for the annual ALA conference in 1978 to bring to the general membership current information on this question of minimum qualifications as reflected in federal regulations, research and new developments in library practice. Pressure from outside may bring librarians together once more in defense of professional standards for librarianship.

The sharp questions raised during the 1960s about the traditional indicators of professional status revealed a positive as well as negative aspect of antiprofessionalism. In the past, if there were any characteristic of professionalism to which librarianship did not conform, the immediate assumption was that librarianship, not the criterion, must be at fault. The 1960s movement, by demonstrating that it is possible to examine the professional criteria and to reject them if they are found wanting, introduced a new approach to the status of librarianship. It became possible to eval-
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uate the practices of librarians on their own terms, and to decide whether criteria borrowed from other occupations are really applicable. By accident, foresight or default, librarianship has not yet fully adopted some of the characteristics of the traditional professions which are now most vulnerable. We are thus free to decide which standards will best serve the needs of librarianship and will preserve those aspects of its service which are unique.

The role of the library in giving access to information without prescription, for example, may be a value worth preserving. The tendency to instruct patrons in the skills with which they can help themselves instead of turning always to us, may be a desirable aspect of our social contribution that we do not wish to change. The long-held devotion to client-rather than colleague-oriented goals, while not always successfully attained, has been an important orientation in librarianship to which some of the other occupations are only now beginning to give serious attention. Where the 1960s would have rejected the sincerity of ideals which were not fully implemented in practice, the 1970s are beginning to agree with Moore that “ideal values and norms are not made irrelevant by failure to achieve them,” and with Andrews that “we should be careful not to let too literal a definition distract us from the spirit of professionalism.”

In other words, we may wish to concentrate on those professional goals that have withstood the critical scrutiny of the 1960s — client-orientation, special knowledge enlisted in the service of people, public benefit before private gain, for example — rather than on the symbols of particular occupational prestige. This may keep us forever out of the traditional professional pantheon. On the other hand, it could lead to the discovery of a different and better star to be the hitching post: a new, more flexible set of professional standards which would focus, not on the symbol, but on the thing itself.

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Libraries as Bureaucracies

BEVERLY P. LYNCH

Two major themes can be discerned in much of the literature on the organization and management of libraries. The first considers libraries in terms of their formal characteristics, emphasizing the relationships of hierarchy of authority, size, rules and the division of labor. The objective of the study of the formal structure of libraries is to find ways to organize the library in order to achieve maximum administrative efficiency. The study of the formal structure is guided by the concept of achieving specific objectives at minimum cost.

The second theme considers the informal processes in the library. This approach seeks to describe the experiences, attitudes and behavior of individual staff members as they participate in a complex organization. The objective of the study of informal processes and unofficial practices is to find those organizational characteristics or elements which inhibit the achievement of the library's goals of service.

Each of these approaches to the study of libraries as complex organizations complements the other. Each tells much about the organization and management of libraries. Rarely are studies of formal structure and of informal process carried out simultaneously, however, for the approaches are derived from different theoretical frameworks and require different methods of research. The management literature has sought to synthesize the two theoretical perspectives, since each contributes to the understanding of organizational behavior. The literature of librarianship, for the most part, has reflected one or the other theme with little synthesis of perspectives into a single framework.

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Bureaucracy as a colloquial expression means inefficiency and red tape; it is used most often in a pejorative sense. The sociological meaning of the term refers to the administrative aspects of an organization; it emphasizes those tasks that maintain the organization and coordinate the activities of its members. The tasks of maintaining the library are considered to be separate and distinct from those which relate directly to the achievement of the library's overall goals.

Max Weber's ideal type of organization is a bureaucracy characterized by a hierarchy of office, careful specification of office functions, recruitment on the basis of merit, promotion according to merit and performance, and a coherent system of discipline and control. Weber is not the only theorist who finds the study of bureaucracies of interest, but it is his work on bureaucracy as an ideal type which has served as a basis for important segments of administrative theory and as a theoretical source for the study of the formal structure of organizations. Weber and others, including the leaders of the scientific management school, identify size as a fundamental characteristic of bureaucracies. Weber suggests that large size leads to greater organizational complexity, more specialization, training and professionalization of staff, an increase in rules and regulations, and an expansion of administrative staff and apparatus.

Weber's theory of increase of size as a determinant of increased bureaucracy guided Paul Spence's systematic study of libraries as bureaucracies. Although there are flaws in his research design and method (for example, the independent variable, size, was controlled by selecting as libraries for study sixty-two members of the Association of Research Libraries, by definition the largest academic libraries in the United States), several conclusions drawn by Spence are similar to those reported by Peter Blau in his studies of governmental finance departments and personnel agencies. Both Blau and Spence find high correlations between the professionalization of staff and the size of the organization's administrative component. It is this similarity of results which makes Spence's study of libraries as bureaucracies so interesting. Librarians often assume that the hiring of experts (defined as professionally trained librarians) should reduce the administrative component necessary to run the library. The professional's authority, stemming from his or her certification as an expert, is expected to prompt others to follow voluntarily the professional's directive, thus eliminating the need for an organizational hierarchy, authority, or specific rules and regulations. Yet Blau and Spence find that organizations which hire experts remain organized in a hierarchical fashion. The administrative components of these organizations are not reduced.
These findings are of great theoretical interest and can help in the understanding of libraries as bureaucracies.

The work of Weber has greatly influenced the study of the formal structures of organizations. Influential too are the writings of Frederick Taylor, Luther Gulick, Lyndall Urwick, and James D. Mooney, which form the basis of scientific management — an important influence in the management of libraries. Most of these writers were managers who took time to record what they did and then organized their observations into sets of principles. The major thrust of scientific management rests in the attempt to establish normal times for various production tasks through the use of job analysis and time and motion studies. Scientific management became popular in the 1930s and 1940s when large governmental and industrial organizations emerged. Plants or divisions had to be coordinated from the top. New specialists, sales executives, engineers and scientists were added to organizations. The proponents of scientific management, seeking ways to enhance the efficiency of management practices, made the first contributions to the analysis of management in these new and large organizations. Libraries also were growing during this time, and library administrators sought techniques used elsewhere which might help them to administer libraries which were becoming increasingly complex.

In an early review of scientific management in research libraries, several elements are identified which characterize the application of scientific management to libraries. The first is the determination of standards of performance for specific library operations. Such standards, established by the library’s administration either through time and motion studies or through less formal means, identify average levels of performance for specific library operations. Another characteristic of the use of scientific management in libraries is the careful definition and assignment of work in each department. Work definition is expected to facilitate the measurement of performance. It fixes responsibility of performance and influences the hiring and assignment of personnel. The efforts to identify and to differentiate the work of the professional from that of the clerical employee reflects this characteristic and leads to a centralization of personnel functions and a codification of personnel policies, both elements of the classical theory of bureaucracy. Work definition and organizational design require careful planning, and the separation of the planning function from the operational function is another characteristic of scientific planning and management.
Library managers seeking useful management techniques to apply in their own libraries recognize intuitively the influence of the size factor on the formal structure of libraries. In the 1950s those libraries with collections over 200,000 volumes were identified as being large enough to apply the concepts of scientific management. Librarians in these libraries were interested in achieving maximum efficiency at minimum cost. They accumulated data on unit costs, particularly costs associated with the cataloging and processing of materials (which amounts to a large part of the library's budget), in order to identify ways which would reduce these costs. Time and motion studies were carried out in many libraries, textbooks were written for library managers, and studies were undertaken regularly to create efficiencies in library operations through time reductions.

The work of Mayo, Barnard and others followed that of the scientific managers and brought to industry (and later, to libraries) the human relations theories, as well as the inevitable attack on the principles of scientific management and on the elements of bureaucracy, such as hierarchy of authority and formal rules and regulations. The influence of the human relations approach in the study of informal processes in organizations has been felt widely in libraries. Professionals tend to chafe under perceived bureaucratic constraints and strive for greater participation in library affairs so as to eliminate some of the constraints. The quest for efficiency and improved performance pervades the organization and does influence the work on participation in libraries. Therefore, many of the demands for greater participation are justified by the argument that the library's overall performance will improve, because greater participation by library staff members in the overall decision-making of the library will lead to greater job satisfaction and better performance.

Library managers seeking organizational efficiency and librarians seeking the best in service programs may disagree on solutions to particular library problems. Although the decisions in many academic libraries to change from old classification systems to the Library of Congress system were for the most part noncontroversial, the decision to switch to the Library of Congress system offers good examples of both the managerial approach to decision-making with a base in efficiency, and a professional expert approach with a base in a service idea. In many libraries the decision to change classification schemes was made on the grounds of greater efficiency, as managers sought ways to reduce the costs in technical services operations. The decision to change sometimes reflected the need for updating the classification schedules for scientific
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materials. Rarely was the decision based on an extensive analysis of classification schemes or on an assessment of how the particular library's clientele used the old scheme to find needed materials and information. The decision was made primarily on the basis of operational costs. Whether the change in classification scheme is an inhibition of any consequence to the library user is a professional concern, but not one which appears to be of any major interest. The administrator strives to achieve maximum efficiency at minimum cost. Whenever the cost of attaining a particular objective rises in terms of time, effort or money, the administrator seeks less to attain that objective.

There has been surprisingly little discussion on the impact of classification schemes. It may be that all librarians, managers or not, are in general agreement that lower technical services costs are of paramount importance and should take precedence in any decision involving cataloging and classification; or, the profession may not understand clearly enough the strengths and weaknesses of particular classification systems; or, the classification scheme may have become only a shelving device, having lost the ability to help users find a variety of materials on a particular subject. In any case, the reasons for the decision on classification schemes are of little importance to the present discussion. The example only illustrates a potential conflict which has its base in a decision influenced by managerial efficiencies instead of organizational goals. Had the decision been more controversial, the conflicts may have been more readily observed.

Bureaucracy and professionalism have several elements in common. Each requires impersonal detachment and specialized technical competence. Each bases its decision-making in a rational application of standards. There are also differences, however. Bureaucratic authority rests not so much on technical skills or competencies as on the official position. Bureaucratic authority requires subordinates to comply with directives under threat of some sanction. Professional authority rests upon possession of expertise. It requires an abstract body of knowledge to support the technical skills. Professional authority is self-governing through an association of peers, professional standards of practice and ethical conduct. Professionalism has a service orientation.  

The service orientation of the professional can lead to an opposite approach to work from that based in strict compliance with work procedures, a bureaucratic characteristic, and conflict can occur when these approaches are joined. Conflict can occur when decisions are made on the basis of purely professional standards, ignoring the administrative
requirements of the organization. Yet large libraries, like all organizations of a certain size, are bureaucratic to some degree, even though they are staffed with professionals. There is someone at the top who decides what the library program will be and who assigns jobs. Specializations in tasks are determined and jobs are designed within the library to carry out these tasks. Rules and regulations are introduced and are useful in dealing with organizational issues such as staff turnover, consistency in performance and output. Among organizations the degree of bureaucratization does vary, and interesting questions center on why variations occur. For example, what conditions shape the organizational hierarchy? Does the work influence the division of labor or the nature of rules? How might the qualifications of the library’s staff influence the structure of authority in it? Within large libraries are often found reference departments in which a high percentage of staff are professionals with expert training and experience. The catalog department, by contrast, although staffed with some professional people, generally has a higher percentage of clerical staff. These units should be expected to differ in terms of their bureaucratic characteristics, i.e., authority structures. Reference departments should exhibit a greater degree of participation in decision-making than catalog departments.

The relationship between the professional skills and competencies of the librarian and the bureaucratic authority vested in the hierarchy of office in the library occupies considerable attention and is a useful theoretical issue in the study of libraries as bureaucracies. The organization model which influences the library literature is the model of the autonomous professional. The work of the librarian is most often described in terms of a librarian/client relationship, a one-to-one relationship. Yet much of the work performed in libraries is divided into specialized tasks and is conducted outside the framework of the client relationship. Rarely does a librarian participate in all the tasks required in the selection of materials, in their cataloging and classification, or even in the answering of a reference question. The library profession itself seeks ways to divide the work into those tasks which are professional and those which are clerical in order to reduce costs, achieve greater efficiency, and utilize to the greatest extent possible the knowledge of the professional. Much effort is given to separating the routine tasks from the less routine, and then to designing jobs according to the nature of the tasks. The amount of job specialization will vary in libraries and it is to be expected that the specialization of tasks or the division of labor would be greater in large libraries than in small ones — consistent with Weber’s theory that the larger
the size of the organization the greater the specialization. Spence, in his library study on bureaucratic characteristics, found no support for Weber's theory of bureaucracy regarding size and specialization, but methodological problems in Spence's study make his results suspect.

Although Weber implies that professional authority, with its basis in technical competence, and bureaucratic authority, with its basis in a positional hierarchy, would exist concurrently in organizations, the prevailing attitude among librarians is that the professional's work suffers from the constraints of bureaucratic conditions. Yet much of the work in libraries is governed by written rules and regulations. The rules are more or less stable, more or less exhaustive, and can be learned. Knowledge of the rules and regulations forms the technical skills identified by Weber as a bureaucratic characteristic. Within libraries, technical knowledge and professional knowledge exist concurrently, although variation in degree will exist.

Some of the support in libraries for the human relations approach and the study of informal processes has its basis in the inherent difference of opinion between library managers and staff members over the type of organizational structure needed to achieve organizational goals. Given the different theoretical perspectives governing the knowledge available about library organization and behavior, such conflict is predictable. The library is an organization in which tasks are arranged in a rational way and one in which a marshalling of scarce resources is the responsibility of management. The literature of librarianship reflects the effort expended by librarians to find and report more efficient ways of getting work done. The library is also an organization in which professional experts seek to provide the best service possible, sometimes with little regard to cost. The recent library literature emphasizes the conditions which affect the attitudes and initiative of librarians and derides some of the bureaucratic conditions which exist in libraries. Nevertheless, every library exhibits the characteristics of a bureaucracy to a certain degree; each has a certain pattern of behavior based on specialized tasks and role design. Libraries are expected to vary in the degree to which they are bureaucratized, i.e., in structural characteristics. Some libraries will have a greater degree of job specialization than others. Some will restrict the discretion of staff members more than others in terms of required adherence to rules and regulations. Some will centralize authority in a small cadre of administrators, while others will delegate authority to the lower levels.

The research conducted so far which attempts to compare libraries or their structural characteristics is inconclusive, though tantalizing.

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Research which compares organizational structure by type of library will be even more interesting. In the absence of specific research on libraries as bureaucracies, the studies of other types of organizations must be examined for insights and theories to guide one's understanding.

Although many professionally trained librarians seek work environments which are flexible, democratic and completely participatory, it is rare for libraries to be structured in this way. Such work environments are generally inefficient, and libraries are designed to be as efficient as possible. Efficiency demands a stable and constant environment. The library is heavily influenced by its environment and much of the library manager's time is spent trying to reduce these environmental influences. Library managers commonly use both staff specialists and rules and regulations to cope with environmental problems. Some rules and regulations, of course, are designed to assist the librarians in carrying out their work. Cataloging rules and the like are examples of library rules which are related to the work of the library. Other rules are those which do not contribute to the library's goals and objectives, but are designed to maintain the library itself. Particularly important are rules and regulations related to the hiring of staff. In a completely democratic organization each individual staff member would hire his or her own replacement, since the individual staff member is in the best position to determine the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to do the job. The hiring process, being affected by such outside factors as ability to judge potential successors, union contracts, civil service requirements, affirmative action procedures, availability of a pool of qualified candidates from which to hire, is aided by organizational rules regarding appointments and by staff specialists who are responsible for determining minimum qualifications for various positions and for finding suitable candidates for the position. Libraries often reflect homogeneity in terms of personnel, partly because of geographic reasons and the self-selection on the part of applicants, and partly because of the personnel specialists' determination to hire people with similar backgrounds and characteristics in order to increase predictability, i.e., to limit the uncertainty which a variety of backgrounds inevitably brings to an organization.

Turnover in staff entails other rules and regulations. The efficient organization will codify the way a particular person does a job and make that way the "right way." The codification is designed to minimize the differences in job performance a new person will bring to a position and to reduce the uncertainty and adjustment problems the new person might have. An organization designs many rules and regulations in order to
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exert control over the external influences upon organizational behavior. Such rules and regulations often are described as bureaucratic red tape since they appear to be unrelated to the actual work of the organization. Nonetheless, these rules serve to control and to stabilize environmental influences, enabling the organization to deal with the environment in a more predictable and routine fashion.

The emphasis in most organizations, including libraries, is to make tasks routine, reduce uncertainty, increase predictability, and centralize authority. There is an inevitable tendency toward internal efficiency. The question of efficiency depends on a stable environment.

Libraries are bureaucracies. The bureaucratic elements which critics identify have their sources, not in the red tape or pettiness of officials, but in the attempt of the library to control its environment. The elements of bureaucracy emerge from the library's attempt to ensure its efficiency and its competency and from its attempt to minimize the impact of outside influences. Although variations will exist in the bureaucratic conditions, libraries will remain bureaucratic in form.

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At the outset, before dealing specifically with trends and structures, it will be helpful to look critically at some of the prevailing assumptions concerning the relations between libraries and society. Librarians like to say that their agency reflects the social milieu. The common claim is that of response to economic, technological, cultural and educational trends. It is even asserted on occasion that libraries not only follow but create social developments.¹

To a degree all this is true. There is no doubt that libraries are conditioned by the larger society. Economic productivity provides public wealth that libraries may (or may not) share. Increasing specialization leads to greater dependence on information, which libraries may (or may not) supply. Governmental concern for persons of limited educational background may (or may not) prompt modifications of service programs. Dominant cultural values may (or may not) enhance or depress both library use and the general image of the institution. The larger context sets parameters — limits and opportunities — outside of which the library as a derivative agency cannot function.

But within these limits libraries do not necessarily follow dominant interests or reflect shifting social tendencies. The analytical observer cannot but note the limited change in libraries — that is, basic change in concept, function and emphasis — over a century that has witnessed fundamental alteration in technological applications, social organization and group values. The library is hardly a mirror image of its milieu. On
the contrary, some of its distinctive characteristics stand in contrast to prevailing social drives and goals.

A few examples will illustrate the point. If any one drive has dominated contemporary times, it is economic expansion as public policy and monetary accumulation as the prevalent private goal. While libraries have contributed to industrial growth and occupational skills, for most this has not been a conscious aim, nor does it figure largely in formal statements of institutional purpose. Popular culture is marked in these years by preoccupation with sex and violence, but this is not the typical content of library collections. In a time of technological emphasis, libraries continue in significant part to be enclaves of humanistic and social thought. Racism and group prejudice underlie many personal relationships, but the library can properly claim at least a degree of intellectual freedom. Examples of disjunction between the agency and current trends could be multiplied.

Not only have libraries not followed every flow and eddy, but the very way in which they have stood against the currents serves in part to characterize them as social agencies. Some of the library's distinctiveness derives precisely from not being "typical" or "responsive." Perhaps this is the source of what strength it has.

Contrasting evaluations can be given to the library's characteristic role. One is that it reflects the "better" impulses in society. Granting dominance of the economic motive, one can turn to libraries for the full range of human aspiration and for a balanced education. Granting the prevalence of a popular culture at times tawdry and even destructive, the library contains humankind's noble pronouncements. Granting a body of approved values and viewpoints, the collection holds the voices of dissenters. From this view, the library may be the bastion of that enlightenment which in the long run will keep society on course.

There is, however, a contrasting interpretation. Libraries overall serve only a minority of the population. Specialized and research collections naturally are used by specialists and researchers—no doubt key groups, but not large groups in the bulk of the populace. Public library collections are seldom used by more than 20 percent of adults, only part of whom use them as a knowledge source; a sizable portion of the 20 percent turn to it as a free source of diversion. This has occasioned a revisionist view of public library history, characterizing the agency as elitist in practice while it officially claims communitywide roots, a position that has been answered with perspective by a social historian of libraries.

Pejorative terms aside, it can hardly be claimed that the majority of Americans have found libraries to be of regular value to them, or that
the library clientele constitutes a cross section of the population. As to collections, it can hardly be claimed that they reflect proportionately the recurring interests of the majority. (For such an index of popular taste, one would turn to the content of television or of mass-circulation magazines.)

A related common assumption is that it is inherently desirable for libraries to reflect social change and contribute to prevailing social tendencies; and, conversely, that it is undesirable, indeed undemocratic, not to do so. Taken literally, this is the position of an agency that has no role of its own, but waits for social winds to blow in order to decide which way to turn. Following the sometimes tortured efforts in the professional literature to establish direct social connections, one has the feeling of an agency uncertain of its function, seeking to establish its identity by noting social change and making at least verbal gestures toward response.

In actual practice libraries of the several types do have a role which they play. Librarians have a core of professional standards which they follow. The role and the standards do not shift with each turn in popular values and tastes. Yet, librarians often seem more interested in stressing how they do change than in proclaiming the continuing function which distinguishes them in the social order. The winds blow but the library stands, and this may be because it has hold on a rock of purpose, whether articulated or not. Librarians will want to identify and clarify that function in preparation for a time when they will be called on to justify their existence.

What is really meant by the interrelationship of libraries and society is that the larger context sets limits which the agency cannot escape, but within these limits the library takes on a character of its own, responding to some parts of the milieu but not to others. Its role is defined as much by its nonrepresentative attributes as by its direct responses. Understanding of the agency depends on identifying this distinctiveness, and it is one of the tasks of research to lead the search.

Against this background, the content in this article can more readily be approached without preconceptions. Effort will be made to trace the major demographic trends and group structures of recent years, and to note library response or nonresponse to them — without any automatic assumption that response is good and nonresponse is bad. Then the effort will be made to look ahead a bit at the clouded future and at emerging library opportunities, from the view of what the essential strength of libraries can contribute and not in a search for some new and ephemeral
mission. These considerations will provide a vantage point from which to suggest some needed and promising research.

Unless otherwise documented, census-type statistics in this article were derived from two sources. For data through the last decennial census, the 1972 report of the U.S. Commission on Population and the American Future was used. This is a significant document worth examination—or reexamination—by every librarian, because it not only marshals the figures but goes on to interpret them and to propose a future population policy. For recent census material since the last national count, the primary source was a 1978 issue of the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science.* The several major articles assemble statistics through 1976 and organize them under such headings as population, family, consumption, work patterns and social mobility.

In relating census data and population predictions to libraries, the earlier comments about the relationship between libraries and social trends should be kept in mind. Straight-line connections can be simplistic and should be used with caution. Allowance must be made not only for demographic change, but also for the disjunction between the agency and its milieu. What happens to libraries will depend as much on what librarians do or don’t do as on changes in society.

**POPULATION GROWTH**

The preceding caution applies even in the basic dimension of sheer size of population. Short-term fluctuations can overshadow long-range trends, and by the same token, long-range trends can obscure current fluctuations. For example, one reads regularly in the newspaper that the median age in the nation is steadily increasing, which is certainly true; the statistics show that the population of persons sixty-five and older increased 17.6 percent between 1970 and 1977, whereas the total population increased only 6.1 percent. When the statistics are examined more closely, however, it turns out that the most rapidly growing group in these same recent years was the ages twenty-five to thirty-four category, which increased by 31.8 percent (a consequence of the baby boom after World War II). Still using the increasing median age as an example, a straight-line projection would logically lead to an ever-rising age level in the future, to the point where the United States would be a country of old people; in reality, the post-sixty-five age group will probably level off at about 16 percent of the total population, and do so not long after the year 2000.
Demographic Trends & Social Structure

The past 100 years has been a period of growing population, from 38 million in 1870 to 203 million in 1970; the current estimate is 220 million. This has also been a century of parallel library growth in research, academic, school, public and special collections and services. Assuming for the moment a continuation of total population growth for the next 50 or 100 years, will this lead again to parallel, steady library development — will 400 million people support libraries at double the amount of 200 million? Not necessarily, and for a number of reasons. Some social scientists argue that continued rapid population growth from this point on may lead not to economic well-being but to economic scarcity, as natural resources are depleted, as the problems and costs of population concentration mount, and as competition from the production of other countries increases. This prospect presages restricted rather than expanding funds for libraries. In fact, this prospect may already be at hand, for libraries of many types currently find it increasingly difficult to get additional appropriations, even in a time of ostensible economic prosperity. The population curve, the productivity curve, and the library curve are not inextricably joined.

A scant twenty years ago, demographers were virtually agreed that the United States would reach 300 million residents early in the next century, and 400 million well before the end of the century. The accelerated birthrate in the late 1940s and 1950s obscured the steady decline in the ratio of new births that had appeared long before. When the boom ended, the birthrate fell back not just to the preboom level but actually to a lower point. The birthrate figures are 18 per 1000 in 1935, 27 per 1000 in 1947, and 17 per 1000 today; using fertility rate (the average number of births a woman can expect to have during her childbearing years) as a measure, the figure is now under the 2.1 level required to maintain the population over the long term. The boom was an aberration while profound modifications in lifestyles continued, not the least of which was the widening acceptance and use of contraceptives. In very recent years sterilization has pushed the decline further — whatever the effectiveness of the pill, the impact of sterilization is even greater and is practically irreversible.

Today, the predictions of population growth by demographers, both in the U.S. Census Bureau and outside, are much more conservative, and usually hemmed in with medley of conditions and contingencies. The U.S. Census Bureau works with three alternative sets of assumptions concerning fertility rates, with the predicted year 2000 population ranging from 250 million to 350 million, depending on which set of assumptions
is applied. Most demographers, noting the growing divorce and sterilization rates and the larger percentage of working and career women, incline toward the lower figure. A generation ago there was concern about the looming problems of overpopulation; now concern emerges about the problems of a no-growth population.

The Commission on Population and the American Future made a strong case for the opportunities that will be opened by a more stable or even no-growth population. It challenged the traditional view that "more is better." However, the report of the commission went on to make the point that the opportunities presented by a stable population will not be achieved automatically. Conscious goals must be set in the light of the new conditions, and measures applied to attain them—a prescription which, as will shortly be indicated, applies equally to libraries.

Neither as government nor as society does the United States have a population policy for these next years that will be so different from that of the past. Demographic forces are followed, not anticipated. As the prospect looms closer, public discussion of the issue will move to the fore; within a matter of years there will be consideration of subsidies for having children.

Actually, the population of the United States will grow for a period, policy or no policy, because the women who were born during the baby boom of twenty-five to thirty years ago are now of childbearing age. School enrollments have gone down, but will turn up moderately again before reaching a stable level. The effect of a zero-growth population base will be delayed, but in time the lower birthrate, changing roles of women, and new concepts of the family will prevail—in fact, will prevail well before the end of the professional life of many librarians now in practice.

What does all this mean for libraries? At the least it means new ground rules for library planning, and at the most new opportunities now only dimly perceived.

Library policy-makers, like those responsible for other agencies, have long assumed steady population growth and concomitant growth in the economy. Without questioning, it was taken for granted that there would be more people to serve, greater economic productivity, and expanding social wealth for which libraries could compete. These at least were verities on which one could depend, with reasonable expectation of some degree of success in the competition. The library problem was seen as one of keeping up with expansion and relocation of population.

With the new predictions, the economic base will change. The effect of a stable population on the economy is uncertain. One scenario fore-
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sees periodic recessions and an overall slowing of productivity, to the point where the standard of living will be threatened. If this is the alternative, public agencies of all kinds will find it increasingly difficult to get funds as people fight to hold on to what they have gained. This, of course, can be another of the easy, one-dimensional predictions. A more positive scenario foresees a stable economy along with a stable population, with an opportunity to improve quality rather than exhausting resources and energy on quantity. If this is the alternative, increasing specialization can be forecast — in technology, in services, in human activities in general — and it is, as has been noted, the specialized elements of a society which make greater use of libraries. And if quality of life is stressed as a public aim, the case for libraries can be made on cultural as well as utilitarian grounds.

Separate from available dollars, population prospects will directly affect school and college enrollments. The elementary school population is in the process of decreasing by about 7 million pupils (and perhaps one-quarter million teachers) in the period 1975-82, and the wave of decline has now reached the secondary schools. Enrollment will turn up again by at least the same amount in the following decade, after which it will level off slightly above the present level. There are 32 million youngsters in elementary school today; by the year 2000 the figure will probably be 36 million. At the secondary school level the growth will be equally small, from 16 million today to 17-18 million 20 years hence.

Predictions for college enrollment must necessarily be more flexible, for attendance is voluntary rather than mandatory. The official predictions range all the way from 10 million to 15 million by the year 2000 (the present figure is about 9 million). Enrollment by younger adults is off slightly at present, a trend that may continue as some young people take a skeptical view of the automatic middle-class syndrome of college attendance, and as others note the increasing inability of the economy to absorb all college graduates at the full level of their training. On the other hand, the adult market for higher education, which has almost counterbalanced the decline at younger levels, may expand further as people decide to prepare for living as well as for working.

The gross decline in the number of children in a stable and older population will not be overlooked either by public officials or by taxpayers. Already one-half of bond issues for schools are defeated. The public library will be affected, for work with children has been an aspect of community service that traditionally engendered support for community libraries. With possible improvements in school libraries (which could come to pass
as discussed below), the foundation of public libraries in children's service is sure to be shaken in some way in the next years.

However, before slower population growth leads to expectations of lesser library support, the question of quality versus quantity enters the picture. Smaller enrollments, and slower population growth in general, relieve the pressure for space and more space. Money that went into buildings could go into services. One example of this might be a state that continues to support the steady growth of school media centers. Even if such growth were not rapid, in time it would equal the need (in contrast with the past, when improvement in any aspect of the educational program was overshadowed by the constant need to handle more children and build more facilities).

Even as decreased population growth does not necessarily mean less use of or less "need" for libraries, so factors other than demographic may counteract any possible negative influence from this source. Assuming the growth curve for population will level off, is the same likely to be true for numbers of publications? On the contrary, if a stable population leads to a more specialized society, the issuance of data in all forms may increase even more than it has in the past few decades. Moreover, if lessening of pressure to expand will enable libraries to improve and diversify their service programs, the small proportion of the population that now uses libraries could be substantially increased, and this would carry weight at the time of budget requests.

This kind of optimistic outlook depends upon library response and assumes a capacity to improve quality. What exactly is the new "quality" that libraries might have a chance of realizing? This is not the place for a detailed recital, but directions can be discerned: a genuine information network across the nation; full research resources readily accessible to scholars; school and college libraries that function as teaching agencies, not just as elaborate stockrooms; public libraries that serve as educational and cultural centers, and not just as free bookstores.

The prospect of decelerated population growth will provide a different setting for library planning in the next period. No longer will the automatic aim be more shelving space, more seats, more staff. The emphasis will shift from extension to improvement, and the two are not the same.

For these many years library directors, of necessity, have been expansionists. The driving force has been keeping up numerically with increasing demand, and the high point in many an administrative career has been the planning of a new and larger building. Currently, the agency
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finds itself in a kind of hiatus, between constant growth in the past and the possibility of a no-growth population base in the future. For the present, caught in the swing, library managers are preoccupied with "holding on," struggling to maintain the advances already made. This will not be enough for the next years. Instead of sharing in a rather considerable social surplus of funds, libraries will have to compete for lean pickings. Instead of aiming each year for "more," library directors and practitioners alike will have to turn in upon their agency, setting hard priorities. But more than consolidation will be called for. With a relatively stable rather than a rapidly growing population, and one hopes with concentrated attention to quality of life for all segments, library policy-makers will be called on once again to be innovative, as were library leaders a century ago who set the basic service pattern that has prevailed during the long period of expansion.

AN OLDER POPULATION

One of every ten Americans will be sixty-five years of age or older by 1980. The percentage will increase steadily to 16 percent shortly after the year 2000, approximately 40 million people at that time, and then will level off as a stabilized population is approached. In that older persons are not distributed evenly over the country, but tend to gravitate to warmer regions, some states will have one-quarter or more of their residents in the senior group, and some localities much more. These are not estimates or predictions but simple projections, for the people involved are living today.

About 75 percent of all Americans now reach the age of sixty-five, as against only 40 percent at the turn of the century. But once there, they only live four years longer on the average. Longevity as a whole results more from the control of contagious diseases of youth than from control of the chronic diseases of old age.

Professionals and others of at least moderate means usually making adequate pension provisions for themselves, tend to think of retirement years as a time of relative comfort and an opportunity to engage in long-cherished activities (reading among them) — all of which may well occur. However, this is not representative of older citizens as a whole. The average current income of the household head sixty-five or over is $6300 per year, just above the official poverty level of $6200. The oldsters of today, who obtained their formal education a half-century or more ago when even high-school attendance was exceptional, are distinctly below the average level of the population in education; just about one-half did not
complete one year of high school. This factor, along with the debilities of old age (limited mobility, failing eyesight, outright illness) account for the relatively low proportion of senior citizens using libraries.9

But the picture is changing. To begin with, the arbitrary retirement mark of sixty-five years of age is blurring. More people are retiring earlier and, on the other side, with the legal challenge to the customary sixty-five-year mark, some will retire later. Arrangements for partial retirement, shifting to part-time employment in some modification of previous occupation, will increase. From this time on, the educational level of those moving into the advanced years will be higher, as will, to some extent, their economic level.

The senior contingent will not remain a poor, voiceless and politically ineffective minority. Their influence is already felt, if at no other time than when they vote down increases in school budgets. Once united and active, this group will be a growing force, for common concerns of health, housing and taxes bring them together and feed their emotional reaction.10

Whether attitudes toward the aged will change is another matter. If any truth is beyond challenge, it is that man is mortal, but until the shadow is at the door he does not live as if this were the case. Young people are startled when told that the only way to avoid old age is to die early. To many people, the advanced in age are an uncomfortable reminder of the human condition. It is hoped that they will remain quiet and relatively invisible, but in the coming years these hopes will not be realized.

How does this situation relate to libraries? An underlying consideration is that more retired people reduce the size of the work force, so that a smaller proportion of the total population carries the load of production. Actually, this will not occur for some time, in part because the growing number of oldsters is being offset by the smaller number of youngsters, and in part because the number of married women entering employment continues to increase. In time an adjustment will occur, as the proportion of “nonproductive” older citizens grows, and if other pressures have already weakened the economy this could tip the balance. Other things being equal, longevity does not make for support of formal education and libraries — unless senior citizens can be mobilized as advocates.

While it is true that retired people as a group do not bulk large in library patronage, use surveys show that older individuals of any given educational level turn to libraries more than their counterparts at the same educational levels in the middle years. Further, where library use
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occurs at all in the period of advanced years, it tends to be more frequent and intensive than for the typical younger adult, with reading playing a more prominent role. As the educational level of oldsters increases, they will in time occupy a definite place in the library's public. This applies not only to the public library. The fastest-growing programs of colleges and universities are summer and off-season noncredit courses, with many students in the older age brackets. The provision of reading lists for further study is one of the features stressed in brochures for these offerings; these sometimes amount to bibliographies to guide self-study rather than being random grocery lists. One can even dream of a Library College for Senior Citizens, with some central source of high quality guidance in media use, with materials provided by local public, school and academic libraries. The potential is there, in the many older people sitting in their armchairs who are reluctant to turn on the television again.

The political element could also provide an opportunity. Libraries, like other agencies, will have to scramble for their dollars in the next years, which in part means mobilizing a constituency. Older people have time, many have energy, and some are consciously looking for a cause to which they can give their efforts. If the library can be made useful to them throughout the year, they can be useful to the library at budget time.

The one distinctive group service that public libraries have developed is service to children, with separate programs and special training of staff. A parallel program is conceivable for older and retired adults. Even as juvenile librarians should be knowledgeable about child development, so staff for senior citizens should have background in geriatrics, and from this, fresh service programs could be devised. This serves as an example of what is lacking in the undifferentiated mass of adult service in the public library: programs expressly aimed at identifiable groups and built on psychological principles.

Here, as elsewhere, demographic trends can be predicted within limits. What cannot be predicted with any reliability is their effect on libraries, for this depends more on what libraries do, i.e., more on response than on stimulus.

WOMEN AND THE FAMILY

The very joining of women with family in a discussion such as this violates part of the aim of the women's movement — to find a role outside the family. But the two are linked, and can be treated in association without doing injury to either the rights or the aspirations of women.
The most clear-cut demographic indicator of the changing status of women is the increase in proportion of those in the labor force. Some seek employment for career purposes, others simply for the money, and some for both reasons. Whatever the motivation, nearly 50 percent of women are now employed, and the proportion is higher for those between twenty-five and forty-five years of age. As today's married woman leaves employment to have children, she is likely to return early to the work force. At the other end of the working life, a growing percentage of women work to age sixty to sixty-four, while a shrinking percentage of men continue in their regular jobs until age sixty-five. Women are fitting family, children, work and career into a composite.

The net effect of these various changes is that women now share with men the load of economic productivity, although by no means do they yet share equally in monetary reward for comparable work. Of 14 million new jobs created in the past decade, 10 million have been filled by women.

Several of the demographic indicators for women are related to marriage and the family. The percentage who enter marriage at all has declined somewhat, from 65.6 to 63.5 percent since 1970. In the younger years the difference is more pronounced: in 1960, 28 percent of women aged twenty-two to twenty-four were single — by 1976 the number had risen to 46 percent. Once married, women tend to have children at a later age; the decline in the fertility rate is less for women in their thirties than for those in their twenties. The proportion of women going to college has inched upward to 58 percent, while the proportion for men has dropped from 70 percent in 1970 to 64 percent currently. The number of women in professional schools has jumped perceptibly. In one way or another, women as individuals are fashioning their own lives either inside or outside of marriage.

No continuous and analytical records of library use are kept that would yield a documented answer to the question of what the women's movement means for libraries. In the past, at least for the public library, a kind of stereotype was noted in use studies: women predominated in the user group, at least for all but the largest and more specialized facilities; and a large contingent within this female majority was made up of "housewives" who read "light fiction." However accurate that observation may have been, any such stereotype should be viewed with skepticism in the future. As men and women pursue careers, participate in the business and industrial worlds, and share in maintenance of home and family, sex differences in reading and library use will be minimized. As husband
and wife enter the library, the latter may go to the section on personnel management, and the former to the section on cooking.

And what of the family? Its demise is proclaimed on every magazine stand and regularly in the Sunday supplement to the newspaper. Changes are occurring, the most basic being the smaller number of children. Divorce rates move inexorably upward. The number of single-parent families is increasing, and will soon be 20 percent of the total. What all this really tells about the texture and quality of family life is hard to say. It is conceivable, given that old-fashioned ingredient of love, that the child develops better even if both parents work and share, than a child would in the traditional structure if the precious ingredient is missing.

One tangible result of the women’s movement is the proliferation of formal preschool facilities for younger children. Some amount to no more than baby-sitting on a group basis, but others provide a constructive learning and social experience. Schools can be expected to mount more programs for the early years, kindergarten and prekindergarten. Genuine media centers in schools could be an integral part of the development, but public library children’s divisions, with their greater orientation to print, may be slower to capitalize on the opportunity.

However one evaluates the women’s movement and the changing family, the fact remains that both depend less on tradition and more on fresh and conscious understandings than in the past. This could prompt the single woman, the mother, and the father alike to turn more frequently to the record of knowledge. Again the analysis leads to the same question: will libraries anticipate needs growing out of social trends and, while holding to their essential role, organize and focus special programs for identified groups? Libraries should long have had separate and vital home and family sections — treating a fundamental institution in the society as a unit — and the need, if anything, is now greater.

By and large, the potential library public is augmented by demographic changes in progress. Younger children can be served in the school and in the community before as well as during the school years. The customary male audience for career, occupational and technological materials will be joined by women, as will the customary female audience for homemaking and child-rearing materials be joined by men. Change makes for stimulus, stimulus makes for search, and the search may well lead to collections of information and wisdom. Libraries are as much or more for people reaching out as for people staying within tradition. Whatever is being liberated — women or family or both — library use is likely to go up rather than down.
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GEOGRAPHIC REDISTRIBUTION

Two shifts in location of people in the United States have changed and continue to change the face of the country: (1) the migration from the northeast and north central states to the south and west, and (2) the exodus from central cities to outlying metropolitan areas (known formerly as suburbs, the term no longer accurately describes the exurban landscape). Both may peak or at least decelerate in the next decades, as new metropolitan and regional balances are reached.

The migration from north to south and west has recently received intensified attention under the headings of “sun belt” and “snow belt,” but the shift started well before the terms were invented. In percentage figures, Florida and California are actually past their 1940-70 heyday, with growth rates today very little above the national average. The more populous “sun belt” states are now experiencing the pressures of population concentration which have endangered the older centers of the northeast.

Overall the trend continues. With a national increase in population from 1960 to 1970 of 13.3 percent, the northeast and north central states had a 9.6 percent gain, and the southern and western states showed an 18.1 percent gain. The shift has accelerated since the last national census; from 1975 to 1977, it is estimated that the former regions became almost static in population, while the latter grew 2 percent per year.12 If this trend were to continue, there would be some 150 million people in the south and west by the year 2000, and some 100 million left in the northeast and north central regions, altering the eastern preponderance that has prevailed since the founding of the nation.

But again the broad figures must be examined more closely. Some sections of the south never did experience notable increase: the central southeast group (Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi) has one of the lowest growth rates in the country. On the other hand, Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont — the quintessence of the snow belt — are growing more rapidly than the national average. Population increase has slowed down in Arizona, in part because of a prospective shortage of water and less favorable job opportunities, and the same conditions apply in parts of California. If the present situation may be described as fluid, the levels in the several containers can be expected to reach a fresh balance — but not without an impact on libraries as on other agencies.

Forty years ago Louis R. Wilson in The Geography of Reading13 documented the disparity in library resources as one between the northeast and north central states on one side, and the southern and western states
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on the other. Of course, library development has gone forward in all regions since then, most notably in the growth leaders, California and Florida. In some respects the sun belt continues to catch up; it is interesting to note that several southern and southwestern cities are going forward with plans for new central public library buildings, although buildings in various of the older northeastern cities are those most in need of replacement.

A "geography of reading" for the 1970s is lacking, but it is apparent that part of the disparity continues to exist. The extraordinary resources of the Washington/New York/Boston triad are unmatched in the country. But this need not mean a duplication of such resources in the growing sun belt. These regions have not only grown in the strength of individual libraries, but also in regional cooperative programs, so that they are far from helpless in meeting many of their own requirements. What is needed is steady progress toward a national network, so that the holdings of libraries where population is stabilizing are also available to areas where population continues to increase. To this time the design of library delivery systems has assumed people coming to libraries; in the future the basic construct will be libraries coming to people in home, office and laboratory, crossing state and regional lines in the process. The technological means exist; the test is whether the requisite social, political and professional attitudes and structures can be developed.

URBAN CONCENTRATION AND DISPERSION

One of the most evident and influential demographic trends of the past century has been the migration of people first to the urban center, and then the shift out from the center over the metropolitan area. Overall, 70 percent of the American people live in metropolitan areas; the figure is expected to be 85 percent by the year 2000. The proportion currently is 80 percent in the northeast and 93 percent in California, the highest among the states. The midsized areas, those with 1 to 2 million people, have recently been growing faster than the larger and the smaller metropolitan concentrations. Within metropolitan areas, over one-half of the urbanites live outside the central city, and the proportion is growing.

It is not too much to say that urbanization provided the soil and the climate in which the modern library emerged and grew. The city provided that combination of population concentration, unified government, functional specialization, economic productivity and cultural variety that called for the record of knowledge, and also provided the financial means to build the record. The early public library was an urban product, from Boston onward. School libraries first took root in cities. Many universities

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appeared within the urban concentration, and the greatest combinations of research library resources are in one-half dozen centers. The special library — for business, government, the professions — flowered in this same environment. Cities and libraries — for a century the two have been interconnected, symbiotic.

If urban concentration provided the vortex for library as well as other information-knowledge agencies, the half-century of metropolitan dispersion that followed has been a mixed blessing. In the early decades of suburbanization, the total library picture appeared to be enriched. Suburbs made up of families of above-average income fostered some of the more satisfying smaller public libraries, and were able to do so for two reasons: (1) an ample and expanding tax base in the locality that did not have to support the complexity which characterized the central city, and (2) circumscribed library service provision that left the more expensive facilities to be provided by the central city. The same forces made for some of the more commendable media centers in suburban schools. The comfortable suburb and its libraries thrived on wealth produced in the city and at the same time depended for specialized library service on the city from which the wealth had been taken.

The neat pattern of suburban satellites did not continue, however. The exodus from the central city accelerated and urban sprawl appeared. The flood spread across a patchwork of governmental units that had emerged long before urban decentralization was envisioned. The result is that while some of the “better” public libraries can be found in the suburbs, so can some of the worst, and similarly, some model school media centers as well as many school libraries tucked away in corners of overcrowded buildings.

In recent years a new balance has appeared in the metropolitan areas. In the earlier stages the dispersion was primarily residential, people moving to homes and communities of their liking, while still working and shopping in the center. Then the dispersion drew out retail trade, and major — sometimes monumental — shopping centers were built. More recently industry and industrial research followed on the periphery. Now some corporate headquarters shift to the outer edges. The typical suburbanite today is not a dweller on a tree-lined street, commuting to the central city for livelihood, and dependent on the center for supplies and services. Instead, families live, work, shop and play all in the outer fringes, usually with all the trees long since bulldozed. The point is that not just people, but significant segments of the economy and culture have made the shift. Rather than a central city and modest satellites around the vital
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center, there are now congeries of focal points loosely attached to a de-
clining core.

Not all agencies have adjusted to this new pattern. Some continue
in the structure that grew up during urbanization and early suburban
dispersion. The library is one of these, with the specialized foundation for
a complex technological and industrial society in the center city, and
neighborhood libraries in the many decentralized governmental units. Out
on the periphery are the new knowledge-oriented industries, many mem-
ers of the business community, a growing proportion of professionals —
while the collections with the capacity to serve them are back in the city
they have left. The library is a facility that has not developed a new
metropolitan structure. There are exceptions. In a few metropolitan areas,
countywide libraries show greater strength than a welter of small suburban
installations; in a few others, federated systems coordinate resources and
services. Interestingly enough, these structures — county libraries and fed-
erated systems — were not originally intended to deal with the metro-
politan complex, but with small-town and rural service, and for lack of
any other available alternative they have been adapted to the urban situ-
ation. They were designed to improve residential service to children, stu-
dents and adults in their general interests, and not to build specialized
resources. Moreover, most metropolitan areas lack even this partial struc-
ture of coordination.

Meanwhile, back in the center, the crisis continues, and it by no
means leaves libraries unaffected. The litany of problems is familiar:
fewer jobs, declining population, shrinking tax base, physical deteriora-
tion, mounting costs of maintaining law and order. Seventeen of the
largest cities have lost population since 1970. Many of the poor are also
here. The financial result is the specter of municipal bankruptcy.

Under these conditions, with few exceptions, the central city libraries
that were at the forefront of service innovation a generation or more
ago — developing subject departmentation, reference service, adult edu-
cation, children’s activities — are now struggling to retain past gains.
Some are discernibly slipping.

If this were the end of the story, if metropolitan dispersion on the
one hand and central deterioration on the other were the sum and sub-
stance of demographic change in urban areas in the next decades, the
prospect would be grim indeed. The road would be downhill for all those
libraries that have been nurtured by urbanization, and that means the
bulk of past strength. But an urban balance may be emerging, and in fact
some reversal of dispersion can be discerned.
To begin with, the outward flow of vital forces may not continue to draw out the whole nexus. Corporate decision-making is still primarily a city-located enterprise. Some corporations are moving their headquarters out, but others — displaying social concern in business commitments — are constructing new buildings in the central city. The financial fuel that keeps the economy going is supplied from the center, as are the bellows of advertising that keep the flame bright. Highly specialized services in medicine and law are still located there. “High” culture remains in or near the nucleus — and there also is the knowledge reservoir, the central city library and many of the special libraries.

As to population dispersion, it would be inaccurate to claim that the exurban exodus has stopped or will soon stop. The strongest outward pull now is not — as it was formerly — the dream of a piece of one’s own land and a stable community (neither is easy to find). Rather, the drawing force is the simple fact of continuing industrial development. People go out as much to get jobs as to escape social disorganization. But, harking back to the prospect of a no-growth population, part of the impetus for new industry will lessen and decentralized industrial growth may slow down. There may be fewer new jobs at the fringes ten or twenty years from now.

This is conjecture. What is definite is that the sprawling metropolitan area is there without adequate library resources at the frontier of growth. Here is where applied research and experimentation is urgently needed — not in how to build great new libraries over the metropolitan expanse, but in how to open access for decentralized endeavor to the resources already in the central city (a technological problem within reach) and how to finance that central reservoir from other than the strained resources of the beleaguered city (a social-governmental problem which is more elusive).

The conceptual framework for this research should not be the metropolitan area of the present. Rather, it should be the *urban region*, made up of connected metropolitan areas — the string of centers from Boston to Washington and beyond; Milwaukee and Gary combined with Chicago; Buffalo, Rochester and Syracuse together, not separate; and on a smaller scale, Oklahoma City and Tulsa. The social-psychological barriers to joint planning are high in such instances, but electronic communication can penetrate the barriers in microseconds.

In the city itself population change, other than continuing exodus and persisting poverty, is occurring. Some people are staying or coming back, particularly a new or at least increasing breed of “cosmopolites.”
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The cosmopolite is well educated, rather young, comfortable financially, and in business, the professions or communications. He or she may or may not be married, may or may not live alone, but in any case typically has no children. Such individuals have long characterized the upper East Side and parts of Greenwich Village in New York City, the Gold Coast in Chicago, Georgetown in Washington, and pockets in other cities. Now their number is increasing and their territory expanding to parts of the upper West Side in New York, north of the Gold Coast in Chicago, the Spring Garden area in Philadelphia, and to several sections of San Francisco. Those people who swell the ranks of this group have deep-seated values: new attitudes toward the family, women with careers, changed sexual mores, and a conscious search for identity.

Are these newer city dwellers, these cosmopolitan individuals, library users? Certainly, they are information-dependent, making their living as they do from specialized endeavor. But for this purpose they need instant, current information sources. Is this the forte of existing city libraries? These people are clearly culture-conscious, following ideas, literature and the arts, particularly the more sophisticated among them. Is this the strength of the city library as it has been known? Even as metropolitan dispersion called for a new type of outlying library that did not appear, so the newer central-city revival calls for an agency that does not follow traditional lines.

Rather than the "monolithic" library, with a continual range of subject resources without distinguishable height, depth or emphasis, the emerging central city library needs a constellation of sharply differing units — one for the business-corporate-financial community, one for the communications complex, one for the high-culture cosmopolite — and (it is to be devoutly hoped) one focused on and dedicated to the poor and the minorities caught in the backwash of the city while currents flow elsewhere.

The central city library is in reality a metropolitan resource. No matter where the central building is located, no matter what blight can be seen from the front steps, people from all over the region — as much as thirty or forty miles out — seek out the agency and use it. Why? Because they have specialized needs and nowhere else to satisfy them. Every urban library director should know how many of the patrons of the central unit live outside the city, if for no other reason than as a bargaining chip for broader financial support. Turning to the future, this "metropolitan" library (central unit of the city library) is a promising candidate to serve as the node connecting subregions to interstate and national resources.

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Part of the problem in taking on any such role is physical space. The buildings constructed a half-century or more ago are outdated and overcrowded. Should a major new investment, which in the largest places could approach $100 million, be made to build another structure in the center far away from the dispersing populace? In one form or another this question confronts many municipal authorities, and often becomes ensnared in controversy and indecision.

The further one goes the more the questions mount. Who will finance any grand new structure? Should the city somehow find money to construct a facility that will be used in significant measure by individuals, organizations and firms not on the city tax rolls? Should costs be shared by the whole metropolitan area, and if so through a metropolitan library authority? Can a case be made for federal investment on the grounds that new central city libraries will be resources for multistate urban regions? The issue will not be soon resolved, while the old structure stands and waits.

MINORITIES AND THE POOR

The various population changes swirling around the city have left behind definite pockets of poverty, and in older cities the poor are not confined to pockets, but spread through the total pattern. One in every nine Americans, 25 million people, live at or below the official poverty level. Here is the clear and hard class line in society, separating those who can afford the necessities of life from those who cannot. The more than ten years of the “war on poverty” have had a result similar to that of the Vietnam war: the elusive foe has prevailed.

A disproportionately large segment of the poor is black, Spanish-speaking or members of other minorities. The median income for white families in 1975 was $13,073; for black families, $8540. The gap between the income of black women and white women has narrowed significantly, as the former have left domestic service for factory and clerical positions, but the differential for the two groups of men has been reduced only partially. Further, what the statistics tend to hide is that the increase for blacks is not shared evenly, but is really a technical average affected by a certain number of blacks who have moved into the middle-income ranks, while most remain just about where they were.

The usual figures also fail to identify the white poor, particularly the rural white poor. This does not refer to the small-scale farmer but to the untrained individual, unemployed or working part-time, eking out existence on a small rural plot, living in a tarpapered, tin-roofed shack,
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driving to town in a rusted automobile. If poverty is cultural as well as economic, these dwellers on the back roads of hilly country from Canada to the deep south are at the bottom of the scale. While no figures exist to indicate upward mobility of this group, it is possible that breaking out of poverty is no more likely for the rural poor white than for the city black.

Outreach efforts by libraries to serve undereducated minorities reflect the approach, and for the most part the lack of success, of the wider war on poverty. Genuine concern is expressed for the problem. Some effort is extended to meet it and some dedicated individuals give their fullest. Here and there visible progress occurs in vital library service in the city slums, although hardly ever in the rural slums. Even the urban efforts touch only a fragment of the poor, however. Few programs have been evaluated to find out exactly what was achieved. After a period of time some of the experiments fade away—some because they have clearly not been effective, and others because funds could not or were not spared from established activities.

The school library in minority neighborhoods stands at that strategic point where many a slum child first encounters the world of print. At its best the school media center has a range of the communication forms with which the youngster is familiar. Here, with fresh young minds a greater opportunity exists than with set, older minds. Too often, unfortunately, contrary forces prevail: school and community are not in accord, child and institution have differing aims, librarian and instructors do not constitute a teaching team, and the youngster simply does not know how to read. Once again measures of effectiveness are lacking, i.e., not necessarily broad percentages, but documented evidence of some individuals reached and some doors opened by exposure to the school library.

At a different level, seeking to clear the way for culturally deprived individuals, some academic institutions have adopted open admissions policies. The benefactors are by no means only blacks and other minorities, but all who complete high school. This brings in individuals weak in communication skills and leads not only to remedial work but also to modifications in regular courses. It is charged by some that a lowering of standards occurs not just for admissions but also for graduation. One critic has observed that "the blacks and Puerto Ricans and Asians arriving at City College come from working-class families in which television and radio are the exclusive sources of information and in which there was no tradition of learning, no special association with books, no clear commitment to the purposes or possibilities of higher education."16

Some academic libraries have provided remedial instruction in library
skills. In this and similar endeavors the aim is to prepare the individual to use standard sources of learning, particularly in print form. Such iconoclastic questions as why learning must necessarily be conducted through books, and whether libraries should adjust to the individuals by providing extensive nonprint resources (rather than expecting the student to adjust to the library's traditional stock) have seldom been raised. There is an institution-individual confrontation involved in open admissions, both in the college as a whole and in the library in particular, and it is probable that the established institutional practices will hold firm.

With few exceptions outreach programs have been planned by professionals who are not members of the group being served. The approach has been to adapt methods built up over the past fifty years for middle-class and upwardly mobile groups. It will be interesting to observe whether a fresh and unique approach can be developed by the American Indians in their current preparation for the White House Conference on Libraries. Here is a minority on which the United States long practiced outright geographical segregation in the form of reservations. In fact, Indians have been kept so separate that the White House conference will have a special panel for them, the only minority so treated. Planning now underway by Indians in preparation for the conference will provide one demonstration of a truly indigenous approach to serving minorities.

CLASS AND LIBRARIES

If it is true that libraries serve individuals rather than groups as such, and that the individuals may or may not be representative of their statistical category, then it follows that changes more subtle than those in the census tables may affect library use and library support. One of these more subtle influences is class or group characteristics.

Social agencies can be differentiated by the breadth or limits of their patronage. Some serve all or most segments of the society, while others relate predominantly to one or another group or level. The symbiosis between agency and clientele contributes significantly to attitudes toward the agency on the part of the public, on the part of its users, and even on the part of its staff.

Schools by law serve all "classes," and they have been directly influenced by their surrounding communities. A narrower portion of the spectrum goes on to attend institutions of higher education, and their policies have been determined more by interplay with particular strata than with society as a whole.

Some agencies by their nature relate more to one or another level.
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Parks are used more by persons of lower than of upper income. On the other hand, theater and musical organizations (which to a degree are public agencies in the sense of partial government subsidization and voluntary community support) usually reach a cultural elite. Where does the library stand in relation to perception and use by the various classes?

To attempt any answer, some concept of "class" must be formulated. This proves to be most difficult when applied to American society, where lines blur and conceptions differ depending on the background of the observer. Yet most people are conscious of groups they consider to be above them or below them in the social order. Sociological studies have long found class distinctions in American communities, marked by differing attitudes, values and prejudices. The barriers of course are not rigid between groups and people shift from one level to another, but the very phrase "upward mobility" implies a recognized hierarchy of lower and higher associations.

An overwhelming number of Americans identify themselves with the "middle class," which they see as superior to some lower groups and different from and somehow more virtuous than certain upper groups. But the bounds of the middle class are most flexible; people of very modest and also of very substantial incomes put themselves into this broad strand. If one seeks to be more precise and objective — adopting as a minimum a living standard that enables a family of four to meet medical, educational (including college education), recreational and cultural costs, which now is estimated in the $15,000-$18,000 range — less than one-half of American families would qualify; in fact, according to this standard, professional librarians would not enter the "middle class" until some years after entering practice, and some would never make it.

For purposes of an education-research agency such as the library, society can be pictured as made up on the one side of a minority of persons of limited education and often of limited income, and on the other side of a minority of well-paid and usually highly educated specialists (e.g., professionals, managers, scientists). A broad middle range falls between the two with gradations of class feelings. Overall, the picture is of a relatively classless society, but with some distinctions most readily identified with amount of education and specialization.

In this relatively classless society, libraries have generally been agencies for special and privileged groups, and not a resource actually utilized by all or many levels. Studies early and late have consistently shown public libraries to be disproportionately used by persons of above-average income and above-average education. Advocates have proclaimed the potential
value of the community library for working-class and poor neighborhoods, and occasional experiments have realized part of the potential, but the statistics inexorably return to a preponderance of upper-income, better-educated users.

All this is to be expected of an agency essentially oriented to print and to a considerable extent oriented to more specialized content in print. The library is a tool of education, so naturally it is used by those who have or are gaining considerable education. If it were more an agency of multimedia communication, its clientele would be more of a cross-section, as occurs in some school libraries that have become media centers. As another alternative, if the library were more of an informational agency, dispensing utilitarian data rather than reading material as such, its usefulness to nonspecialized individuals would be increased.

Recorded, packaged knowledge, often in some depth, has nevertheless been the stock-in-trade of the library, and continues to be so at present. Even newer automated data sources, not in print form, usually aim at a specialized, highly-educated minority. Will this change in the future? Indeed, does it need to change? A specialized society requires advanced knowledge sources. Inevitably, those with more training, and therefore usually those getting more financial reward, will turn to them. Why try to serve persons who are not disposed to use libraries or whose work does not require a periodic input of new knowledge?

There are both social and tactical reasons for reaching a wider segment of the people while retaining present strength and clientele. Information is not an ordained privilege of those who have “made it.” Reasonable concern for the many others, who are “information poor,” would prompt efforts to open this source to them, and if necessary to redesign collecting and distribution policies in order to share the knowledge wealth. This is not a matter of information welfare, a handout to a small subclass, but a matter of import to a broad part of the spectrum, who may economically be in the middle as well as the lower levels, but who lack access to information they need as citizens, parents, consumers, and workers.

It is the fact that libraries are used by a distinct minority that accounts for the prevailing image of the agency. By and large, it is seen as valuable to persons with research and specialized responsibilities and to a small group in the general population who read more than the newspaper and the popular magazine. Few of those who direct policy and control the purse-strings would decry these activities, but as natural resources become limited in the nation and economic productivity slows, they will — when the chips are down — put their priorities elsewhere.
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Is this likely to change? Will libraries of the various types modify and extend programs to gain a wider social base? To this observer, the prognosis is not favorable. Over the years libraries essentially have changed very little, and where they have, it has often been to concentrate and intensify rather than to broaden and diversify. This is characteristic of institutions as they mature and settle. Today, the newer efforts are directed inward—better bibliographical control, centralized data records, regional and national networks—all designed to serve better not even the whole of the present clientele, but the subgroup of specialists within it. The forces that seem destined to change the library are more technological than social, with modifications in structure and mechanics more likely than in social purpose and wider clientele.

RESEARCH

In the same vein, research in the library field has been oriented more toward internal problems rather than outward to users or to the society as a whole. Such matters as resource-building, technical methods and institutional management have predominated. Having fairly well exhausted such topics as they apply to individual libraries, attention now turns to the same questions among groups of libraries. In the process research gets further and further away from the elemental interface between resources and users and the underlying relationships between libraries and the community at large. Yet there have been significant pieces of social investigation, probing the relation between the agency and people. Interestingly enough, these less-frequent endeavors are likely to come to mind and endure as landmarks when one thinks of "library research"; the operational investigations prove to be more circumscribed and time-bound in their impact and effect.

The problem with social research in the library field is that it has been sporadic and fragmentary. A study of insight opens fresh avenues, but few additional investigators explore the same road further. Perhaps the better analogy is to say that solid building blocks are molded by individual studies, but scattered blocks do not constitute a structure of knowledge. Librarians stand far short of understanding the impact of social change on their agency or its effect on people.

As a secondary interest, attention to social implications can be traced far back in the professional literature. The 1832 Report of the Trustees of the Boston Public Library, in a resounding phrase, foresaw their institution as enabling people to "understand questions going down to the very foundation of the social order." The 1876 national survey identified
libraries as an emerging reservoir of recorded knowledge. Over the years reflective individuals groped toward an understanding of the agency in relation to community.

The social theme took on a conscious research bent in the 1930s at the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago, with the work of Douglas Waples on reading, Carleton Joeckel on governance of libraries, and others. Yet even their work remained unfinished; the blocks of research were sometimes fitted into part of a wall, but not into a completed structure of theory which librarians could apply. Practicing professionals watched the efforts at Chicago with reactions ranging from sympathy to condemnation, but in either case watched rather than participated.

Social histories that went below the surface appeared from time to time, i.e., the works of Ditzion (1947), Shera (1949), Rothstein (1954), and Lee (1966). A recent study of the New York Public Library continues the tradition. It is possible that more is known about the relations between some early libraries and their communities than is known about these same agencies today. The occasional studies tend to stand alone rather than constituting a rounded social history of the library up to the present.

From time to time pressing problems prompted some objective social investigation. With professional concern about access to libraries in the early 1960s, the actualities of the situation were examined. As issues of intellectual freedom and censorship came to the fore, the performance of librarians themselves was analyzed. Also, on occasion, social scientists rather than librarians were brought in. The most notable example is the Public Library Inquiry of the late 1940s, at least one volume of which raised questions that have not been settled thirty years later. Social investigators were also brought in to evaluate a few of the outreach efforts of the 1960s, both in New York City and in upstate New York. The few investigations by social scientists of library use — Hajda in Baltimore City, Warner et al. in Baltimore County, Monat in several Pennsylvania centers — went beyond gross group response to bring out motivations for library use.

Much of this research was viewed by library policy-makers as "background," a polite term for peripheral or irrelevant. The next budget had to be prepared, the next building planned, the next branch opened. Administrators seeking to keep up with expansion felt little need for social research, and for a logical reason. They were not setting goals or deciding priorities; these had been set for them decades before, and within the
established framework they concentrated on the practical task of “keeping up.” The situation will be different in the future, however, with demographic change, economic problems flowing from this change, continued redistribution of population, and altered social values and lifestyles. What was background will become foreground, and hard-headed managers will perforce find themselves considering the social effects of the declining birthrate, longevity, urban rehabilitation and the changing family.

User studies have increased in number in the last decade or so, following a comprehensive report for the Baltimore area. Almost invariably such surveys deal with large groups and census-type data. Tracing of relations with individuals has been rare (the work started by Ennis is an exception), so that librarians know relatively little of the “why,” “how” and “to what effect” of their clientele. There exists at least the beginnings of a social history and of a sociology of librarianship, but only a glimmer of the social psychology of the field. This is the reason why many practicing librarians are unimpressed with the social surveys, for they know that their professional judgment on the job is applied to separate and sometimes atypical individuals and not to groups. Library social research, so far as it exists, is where sociology was a century ago, when general social surveys were the mode of investigation.

Directions of promising research are implied in the foregoing analysis. At the more elementary level, a new “geography” of library resources is needed for regions and for the country as a whole, so that the association and dissociation between facilities and shifting populations can be traced. More user studies are needed, not going over the same broad census-type ground but focusing on subgroups. Beyond groups, the library experience of individuals needs examination. Just who of the society do libraries serve? Are the users typical or not typical of their groups? What are the motivations of those who respond, as compared to their fellow creatures? For these individuals, where does the library stand among the other sources of knowledge and culture that they utilize? Is there change in response, are libraries reaching a broader or narrower range of the population as the median educational level increases? Such questions would appear to be basic to an understanding of any public agency. Only with the answers to such questions can assessments of the role of an institution be based on more than hunch and hope.

Continuing or periodic data are needed for program planning and evaluation. At several points in this article on relations between libraries and society, there was no choice except to say simply that documentary evidence does not exist. On a sampling basis it would be both technically
possible and financially feasible to keep a running record of just what is happening to library patronage, perhaps state by state. With this information, planning for new services (e.g., for older people or for members of the "working class" or for cosmopolites) would be on firmer ground. After programs are launched, a continuing record would permit evaluations of objectives achievement. At present, librarians are unsure just where new effort should be expended, and if they do strike out, are unsure later what difference it makes.

Such applied research can lead to deeper probing of the library role. Nontypical users (those not following patterns that would be assumed from their backgrounds) should be pursued. Equal attention should be given to instances where the library as an agency deviates or even stands against prevailing fashions. Often it is the fresh view which research provides from the "other" side, rather than the confirming evidence from the familiar side, that provides the greatest insight. Researchers should hypothecate social divergence as well as social adherence.

Research by definition analyzes what has been and what is, not what will be, but models of the predictable future already exist and can be isolated for examination. Population groupings typical of what will prevail a generation hence can be found today and their utilization of library and information sources studied. A few examples of metropolitan library authorities exist which merit research attention because they seek to deal with the political and financial problems of serving a functionally unified user population living and working in a patchwork of fragmented governmental units. More difficult to isolate and study is the emerging model of electronic communication from collections to users, as against the long-prevailing system of users physically going to the centralized collection. To examine this prospect, experimental research will be necessary; it is in some respects the most complex and expensive kind of investigation and might be considered by the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science as it seeks to discern the road into the future.

It is a matter of concern—both to present understanding of the agency and to the designing of future library policy—that relatively little social research of these several types goes forward currently. The library is an agency half-understood by librarians and the public alike. Until now the desire for greater understanding has been more an intellectual and academic interest. The institution itself has gone forward in modes set long ago in a young, growing, economically expanding country, and would have done so just about as it has with or without research. One does not need analysis of the terrain or a detailed map when going
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straight ahead through familiar territory. The road ahead turns, however; it is not likely to be smooth. Social research in the library field is no longer solely an exercise of doctoral students and the preoccupation of a handful of researchers. For an agency that may or may not survive through the next century, investigation is an imperative, just as it is for the many other enterprises that now turn to the library to find out what research tells them about their relation to the society.

References

8. Ibid., p. 4.
Issues of Governance and Their Implications for Libraries

R. KATHLEEN MOLZ

The Fall 1977 issue of Library Trends was devoted to the topic of "Trends in the Governance of Libraries." The articles addressed governance in federal, academic, school and public libraries. Also dealt with were the problems of governance affecting networks or cooperatives of libraries, as well as those of a special information center which markets and sells its services. Because of the relative newness of this issue, its obvious usefulness as an anthology on the subject of library governance, and its lengthy exposition of the governance of each institutional type, this article will make no attempt to cover similar ground. Its purpose rather is to examine several important dimensions affecting not only aspects of the governance of the nation but also the conduct of some of its institutions.

The first of these is the extended controversy over the equalization of educational opportunity; the second, the development of research methodologies particularly aimed at the analyses of public policy-making; and the third is the matter of accountability for public funds. These three issues are not only undeniably interrelated, but also have important implications for the nation's libraries.

Although equality of educational opportunity as a social objective dates to earlier periods in the history of the United States, the acceptance of the concept is a product of the nineteenth century. One historian of education holds that the concept took deep roots into American soil dur-
ing that century, especially in the frontier states. There "the public domain was free and open to all on the same terms," and Americans enjoyed "a quality of economic opportunity that ultimately led to equalization of political rights as well."¹ Inevitably the supply of free land gradually diminished and, increasingly, education rather than property became symbolic of the route toward economic stability and prosperity.

The attention paid to public education was based on a not unreasonable assumption that if children were exposed to a common curriculum, they would be able to seek career options other than those narrowly prescribed by the occupational outlooks of their parents. Displacing the factors of birth, wealth and family standing, education was to become, in Peter Schrag's observation, "the most effective way for an advantaged family to endow its children."²

The rhetoric with which the early common school founders promoted the cause of schooling for all children also permeated the exhortations of those who favored the free public library system. In the 1930s the concept of equalized educational opportunity became further extended when it was used as the rationale for the educationists' campaign to seek federal aid for local schooling. During the bitter years of the economic depression, it became increasingly clear "that genuine equality could not be achieved for all American children unless the federal government entered the field of school support in a substantial way."³ The librarians moved in a similar direction; under the "equal chance" rubric, the library profession sought federal aid to reduce the disparities in library availability between municipal citizens who had access to libraries and rural residents who did not.

It is important to realize that only the "opportunity" for the pursuit of education was to be rendered equal. The depression generation of educators and librarians, who pursued the goal of federal aid as the economic leaven which would reduce state and local differentials in school or library support, accepted as given that such aid would produce uniform results. Increasingly, however, the period of the 1960s and 1970s has been marked by an ever-growing scrutiny of the effects of equalized education rather than on its provision. James S. Coleman is of the opinion that this shift in interpreting the concept of equalizing educational opportunity began in 1954 with the Supreme Court's decision to end racial segregation in the public schools:

I believe the decision would have been more soundly based had it not depended on the effects of schooling, but only on the violation of freedom; but by introducing the question of effects of
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schooling, the Court brought into the open the implicit goals of equality of educational opportunity — that is, goals having to do with the results of school.⁴

In the wake of the Supreme Court decision, which reflected either an intentional or innocent shift from an assessment of opportunities to an appraisal of results, several differing but related phenomena burst on the American educational scene. One was a spate of historical studies which attempted a radical revision of long-held ideas concerning the origins of public schooling in the United States. A second development was 2-pronged in that the Court’s decision afforded a stimulus to some social scientists not only to evaluate educational performance in terms of income potential, but also to unite their efforts in active governmental policy analysis and research. A third consequence was the concept of accountability by which school performance could be evaluated in terms of results.

Revisionist history is, of course, not new. What is interesting here is that the history of American education had been, with few exceptions, the province of the educationists themselves. Within the past decade, however, historians, economists and philosophers of education, often armed with extensive data, have investigated educational history with the result that the school is seen as a destructive mechanism designed to keep the poor in line. In her critique of the work of these radical revisionists, Diane Ravitch states that it is:

characterized by their thorough rejection of liberal values and liberal society and their shared belief that schools were consciously designed by liberal reformers as undemocratic instruments of manipulation and social control. The radical indictment, in sum, is that American schools have been oppressive, not liberating, and that they were intended to be oppressive by those liberal reformers who developed them.⁵

Although the radical revision of the history of schools has served to stimulate similarly revised views of the history of public libraries (evidenced most particularly in the writings of Michael Harris⁶), its importance here lies in the fact that its influence is still unknown: the full extent to which this type of revisionist history, so popular within the last decade, has eroded confidence in American education, and in the liberal tradition credited with its creation, is a moot question.

The second phenomenon has been largely produced by social scientists rather than historians; in particular, by sociologists and economists.
Unquestionably, this movement to examine the schools in light of their capacity as instruments to eradicate social injustice began with the publication in 1966 of *Equality of Educational Opportunity*, a federally sponsored study under the direction of sociologist James S. Coleman. The report provoked wide academic interest, occasioning among other reactions a faculty seminar at Harvard University, the proceedings of which were later published under the title *On Equality of Educational Opportunity*. One of the participants at that seminar, Christopher Jencks, subsequently headed a lengthy research project to refine further the data collected by Coleman and his associates, as well as other economic assessments of educational effects. Published in 1972, the findings of Jencks's research group were, like Coleman's, controversial and pessimistic: "Our research suggests... that the character of a school's output depends largely on a single input, namely the characteristics of the entering children. Everything else—the school budget, its policies, the characteristics of the teachers—is either secondary or completely irrelevant." The Jencks study concluded with a message not unlike that advocated by some of the radical revisionists:

As long as egalitarians assume that public policy cannot contribute to economic equality directly but must proceed by ingenious manipulations of marginal institutions like the schools, progress will remain glacial. If we want to move beyond this tradition, we will have to establish political control over the economic institutions that shape our society. This is what other countries call socialism. Anything less will end in the same disappointment as the reforms of the 1960s.

This is not the place to attempt an evaluation of the merit or worth of these studies: the findings of their critics, both pro and con, have been aired in the literature. The point is that during the past two decades, research into the value and conduct of American public schooling reached the dimensions of public policy analysis.

Policy analysis, policy research, policy inquiry, or policy studies (the terms are often used interchangeably in the literature) stem from a post-war movement largely spearheaded by Harold D. Lasswell, a distinguished social scientist long associated with the Yale University Law School. In 1951 Lasswell coedited with Daniel Lerner an anthology, *The Policy Sciences*, to which a number of the nation's most renowned social scientists contributed. Although the book was widely heralded, intensive academic interest in the policy sciences did not occur until the late 1960s.
Within the past ten years the discipline has become a veritable growth industry. Institutes and graduate schools dedicated to the study of public policy abound. Some, such as the Institute of Public Policy Studies at the University of Michigan or the Graduate School of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley, are affiliated with academic institutions. Others, such as the Center for Policy Research in New York City, are independent nonprofit corporations. Although maintaining cooperative relations with the American Political Science Association, a separately formed Policy Studies Organization now issues The Policy Studies Journal, which is only one of several new periodicals in the field. Enrollment in public policy courses offered by political science departments is on the increase, and a number of textbooks dealing with the discipline have been published.

Numerous factors have contributed to the growth of the policy sciences and policy research. These include but are not limited to the following: (1) the need for evaluation of the social programs launched during the period of the Great Society, the measurement of which lay within the interest and methodological approach of social scientists in universities and private research agencies; (2) the increasing sophistication of computer technology which facilitated elaborate mechanized models for social forecasting; (3) the acceptance in complex organizations of devices to relate planning and budgeting functions to stated goals — e.g., PPBS (program-planning-budgeting system), MBO (management by objectives), and zero-based review — which place emphasis on output measurements based on objectives rather than on input data, such as funds or resources; and (4) the growing sense of disenchantment felt by some social scientists, especially those in the political spheres, with so-called "value-free" methodology, a concept derived from the pure sciences which holds that investigators must be responsive only to empirical or historical data and eschew advocacy stances or positions.

Coleman, the principal investigator of a major policy-research study, provided perhaps the most cogent discussion of the ways in which policy sciences differ from the traditional social sciences by making the distinction between "discipline research" and "policy research." The former is controlled by and responsive to the particular discipline. For example, a political scientist wishing to examine governmental policy relating to mass urban transportation would design the inquiry, carry out the research, and publish the findings in his own appropriate professional journals. In policy research, however, the decision to study urban mass transportation would originate with an agency of government rather than with
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the political scientist. The agency would then engage the political scientist to make the study, the findings of which would then be subject to governmental rejection, acceptance or modification.

The defining characteristics of policy research are two: the research problem originates outside the discipline, in the world of action; and the research results are destined for the world of action, outside the discipline. The special properties of policy research stem from the different properties of the disciplinary world and the world of action, and from the translation problems involved in moving between these two worlds.14

In a field as nascent as policy research, no one definition will prove totally satisfactory. It is possible, however, to indicate some of the characteristics of policy research: (1) it is interdisciplinary, comprising such fields as communications, mathematics, political science, sociology, computer science, systems analysis, public administration, management, etc.; (2) it is future oriented, its findings often cast in terms of alternative outcomes rather than as one solution or set of solutions; and (3) it is conceptualized as a process in that setting policy, implementing it, and evaluating it form a continuum, the end of which always brings one to a new beginning.

This brief description of policy research does little justice to the complexities of the field, nor does it sufficiently alert the reader to the contrary views held by the critics of policy research, traditionally trained academicians who view the new discipline as fantasy or witchcraft and its practitioners as meddlesome and unscientific.15 There is much to be said on both sides of the question; political scientists who believe that their inquiries and researches should be made of the government without becoming directly involved in its decisions are quite right in maintaining a healthy skepticism of the social scientist who has aspirations to play the philosopher-king. There is no empirical evidence to suggest that academicians should be credited with greater wisdom in the matter of governance than governmental officials or elected politicians. On the other hand, social scientists have increasingly been called in to advise government ever since Herbert Hoover (surely one of the more conservative presidents) established in 1929 the President's Research Committee on Social Trends, the report of which remains a model of superb data gathering and scholarly synthesis.16 In this regard, the observations made by the authors of a study issued by the Russell Sage Foundation on computer application to public policy seem pertinent:
Policy research, like policy itself, is burdened with a political history. The partnership between social science and government is not simply a product of contemporary governmental sophistication on the one hand, and a recent academic longing for "relevance" on the other. It is a relationship that has had its ups and downs for more than fifty years. . . . Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the role of experts and their research efforts in the policy process has become noticeably more prominent, especially since the 1960s, and the functions performed by policy researchers today are not what they were thirty or forty years ago. The systematic testing of policies now receives more attention than it did in the past.

The movement toward policy research is unlikely to be reversed. It results from fundamental trends in American politics and does not depend on the increasing assertiveness or recent accomplishments of researchers.17

Before attempting to show the relevance of this discussion to the library profession, a brief summary may be in order. Presently, the critics of American public education are numerous and influential. Historians are increasingly delving into the nineteenth-century roots of public education; some of them have disclosed that the schools, far from being instruments to improve the lot of children, were instead miniature factories designed to fuel the needs of a capitalistic economy. Having taken issue with what she believes are the dubious historical methodologies of some of these writers, Ravitch notes the dangers of their approach:

The historian who undertakes to demonstrate that kindergartens and vocational education were intended to "oppress" and "contain" the children of the poor directs his message at present policymakers. The historian who maintains that American rhetoric and American reality are not only far apart but are entirely contradictory has a political purpose, which is not to encourage people to close the gap but to persuade them that the gap can never be closed because American society is inherently flawed. The historian who asserts that reform in American society always fails and that reformers have always been either knaves or fools is in reality insisting on the futility of reform. These are political messages, intended to have a political effect.18

It is not without irony that while some historians are insisting on the almost pathological influence of the schools as agencies of social and
economic coercion, some social scientists, disappointed that the schools cannot be shown to have any real effect on the potential earning power of students, castigate the schools for their ineffectuality as instruments of “distributive justice.” Analyzing the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century schools, the historians perceive their importance in maintaining class and caste distinctions; analyzing the present-day schools, the social scientists find them to be “marginal institutions” (to use the somewhat chilling description of the Jencks report). It is, of course, too early to show any causal relationship between the effects of these research efforts and the successful passage in California of the Jarvis-Gann initiative which will drastically reduce property tax revenues to local governments. One can speculate, however, that Ravitch may have been far more prescient than she realized when she commented that “the repeated assertions by historians and social scientists that schooling was of little or no intrinsic value has had its impact on policymakers” — and one might possibly add, on the citizens of the most populous state.

It would be ludicrous to try to find some narrow way in which to fit current-day library policy into the overriding concerns shown by decision-makers over the role and function of the public schools. Certainly there is no rash of historical research undermining the liberal tradition on which libraries were founded, nor has there been any mammoth investigation into the economic utility of libraries in relation to the earning or spending power of their users. At the same time, the weight of probes into public education can hardly leave libraries untouched. The premises on which public schools were founded were not dissimilar from those employed to support public libraries, and rhetoric derived from the liberal and humane tradition that reading is a franchise capable of illuminating the mind and renewing the spirit has been used in support of other types of libraries. It is therefore not altogether impossible to assume that libraries too will be called to an accounting.

In noting the traditional absence of real political interest in library affairs, Louis Round Wilson wrote in 1935:

Unfortunately, the student of government has contributed but slightly to an understanding of the library's services and its governmental relationships. In the main, he has given scant consideration to the library, and when he has considered it, although he has highly rated its potential significance as a social institution, he has thought of its activities as relatively unimportant in contrast with those of other more extensive and expensive governmental agencies.
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These sentences appeared in the foreword to Carleton Joeckel’s major work on public library governance, *The Government of the American Public Library*. In his study, Joeckel carefully distinguished between “government” and “administration,” concentrating his attention on the statutory basis of public libraries and the powers granted their governing boards. His book, seminal in its own time, remains a classic example of what political scientists term the “institutional” approach. Widely used during the 1920s and 1930s, this approach:

concentrated on describing the more formal and legal aspects of government institutions— their formal organizations, legal powers, procedural rules, and functions or activities. . . . Usually little was done to explain how institutions actually operated, as apart from how they were supposed to operate, to analyze public policies produced by institutions, or to try to discover the relationships between institutional structure and public politics.21

Subsequently, political scientists tried to circumvent some of the limitations inherent in the institutional approach and began to examine the behavior of those engaged in the political process. According to one political scientist, who takes here the legislature as his example: “concern shifted from simply describing the legislature as an institution to analyzing and explaining its operation over time, from its static to its dynamic aspects. In the curriculum the course on the ‘legislature’ often became one on the ‘legislative process.’22 The effect on the library profession of this so-called “behavioral” approach toward the study of governmental agencies can be seen most conspicuously in the published findings of the Public Library Inquiry, particularly in Bernard Berelson’s *The Library’s Public* and Oliver Garceau’s *The Public Library in the Political Process*.23 Berelson analyzed actual use patterns of public libraries revealing that their services were primarily concentrated on middle-class constituencies, a factor which was much at variance with stated objectives that public libraries should serve everyone. Garceau concentrated at least part of his attention on the American Library Association, viewing it in terms of a political pressure group rather than a professional society. In short, these studies revealed to the library profession what was actually going on in their institutions rather than illuminating, as Joeckel did, the formal structure of the institution itself. No inference should be made here that the last sentence is intended to be critical of Joeckel’s accomplishment. Rather, the point is that his institutional approach was derived from the best political science models of his day, just as the be-
behavioral approach of his successors was reflective of political science methodologies current during the 1950s.

However, within the last decade, as already pointed out, another shift occurred in some aspects of the political science discipline, namely, an increasing emphasis on the study of government as a continuous policymaking process. One of the aims of such study is to provide decision-makers with a wider array of options and alternatives than were previously available in the long-range expectation that policy-making can be improved and made more responsive to the client groups in whose behalf public policies are invoked. In much of the research employing a public policy approach, institutional services are often found to be at odds with client needs. Such findings during previous periods would have precipitated loud outcries for reforms of the existing institutions; recently, however, such findings are often linked with suggestions for alternative means of delivering services outside of the institutional framework. The enormous (now abating) literature devoted to alternative or free schools is but one example of this trend.

The questions asked about libraries by political scientists inevitably reflect the period in which they were asked. During the 1930s, Joeckel exhaustively studied the laws and ordinances of over 300 American cities to classify the structure of public library boards. In addition, he analyzed the socioeconomic characteristics of board members, eliciting data about sex, age, education, religious affiliation, occupation, and other factors. The effect of these characteristics on the policies which these boards implemented, however, did not fall within the scope of his investigation. Working within the behavioral model, Berelson and his contemporaries tried during the 1950s to rank library users according to such data as years of schooling, income and physical proximity to libraries. But the issues now being raised, by at least some policy analysts, go beyond those earlier investigations. Questions in the contemporary vein might include:

Is the public library, within its present institutional framework, the most effective vehicle for the delivery of community information services? What are the priorities in determining financial support for the main library with its subject collections and its reference orientation in contrast to the branch libraries, which are the principal outlets in the library's distributive system? Should public libraries, which serve primarily middle-class, upper-income residents, charge fees for services? What percentage of property tax revenues derived from lower-income householders, who do not make extensive use of libraries, is used for library support? Such
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questions reflect the futuristic orientation of the policy sciences and their emphasis on alternative modeling.

Among the first harbingers of this type of analytical approach to libraries was the Symposium on Library Functions in the Changing Metropolis, sponsored in 1963 by the National Book Committee and the Joint Center for Urban Studies of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University. Subsequently published under the title *The Public Library and the City*, the proceedings of that conference, with its suggestions for alternative roles, fee-based services, and greater relevance for low-income citizens, occasioned quite a stir in the library profession.

Even more striking evidence of policy analysis methodology applied to libraries was the publication in 1974 of *Urban Outcomes: Schools, Streets, and Libraries*, the work of three policy analysts affiliated with the University of California at Berkeley. The book is one of several publications descriptive of the university's analyses of services in Oakland, California. In the introduction, the joint authors carefully distinguish between "outputs," which represent "the way to classify goods and services supplied by a public agency and received by (or directed at) the public," and "outcomes," which they define as the consequences of these goods and services on community residents. In the case of the Oakland Public Library (the data on which the analysts drew for the study dates to the mid- and late 1960s), the outputs were such factors as per capita expenditures for public library service, number of volumes in the collection, or number of volumes circulated. But the researchers went beyond these traditional measurements to try to determine whether or not library service in Oakland was distributed equitably. One of the most interesting parts of their investigation dealt with the allocation of the library budget in relation to the amount of property taxes paid by Oakland citizens. Low-income areas of the city, they found, received a smaller percentage of library expenditures than the percentage of tax revenues collected from them. "Our conclusion is that, if the goal of equity is to be achieved, a general shift of expenditures must be made from high- and middle- to low-income area branches."

In examining this book, many librarians may feel that the researchers actually made no new discoveries. But the significance of the study does not lie in the data or in how they were used, but rather in the methodological approach, that is, the examination of public services within the framework of redistribution policies:
This book can (and does) ask how organizational decisions lead to particular outputs. But our investigation goes further, to the unchartered territory of outcomes. We turn away from producing organization, strictly conceived, and instead focus on the citizen-consumers of its goods and services.

Our concept of outcomes includes a subjective element of evaluation because it involves human preferences—likes and dislikes, pain and pleasure. In this book we are the evaluators, and we study the distribution of outputs precisely in order to make normative judgments. Should outputs be distributed in other ways or in different proportions? Are their consequences good (or bad) for various people differently situated? Ought people who are worse off be made better off? The appearance of "should" or "ought" words signals going beyond "facts" into the realm of "values."

Although the findings of the study bear careful reading by librarians, its importance here is dictated by other reasons. When Berelson found that public libraries served a primarily middle-class, better-educated constituency, he did not necessarily urge the library profession to change its focus. A quarter-century later, these policy analysts from the University of California propose nothing less than radical change in the apportionment of library expenditures.

In summary, then, it can be said that Joeckel made his contribution toward greater understanding of the governance of the public library through his analysis of it as a political institution; at mid-century the staff of the Public Library Inquiry applied a behavioral approach to determine who is reading what and why; in the mid-1970s, the policy analysts are placing the public library within the still larger perspective of a society which is "slowly altering fundamental notions of distributive justice." Their methodological approach, which greatly emphasizes value judgments rather than mere facts, is totally consonant with similar investigations of the public schools. Here cost-benefit analysis is employed not merely to increase managerial efficiency, but to augment the effectiveness of public services for the benefit of the client group. Within such a framework, policy-makers are seen not as masters of the polity but as its servants; it is they, not the clients, who will be held to an accounting.

Accountability, then, is the subject for the last portion of this paper. Traditionally, librarians have always been held to a rendering of their stewardship, whether to the board, to the mayor, or—as in the case of
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an academic institution—to the university president or the provost. Such accounting, however, has been primarily directed to the display of expenditures, the budget itself being a device which shows allocations for the costs of books, binding, salaries, and other expenses. The library's outputs have usually been represented by gross measurements, such as circulation, registration, site use and a few others. Such measurements do not usually, however, reveal inequities in service or performance. The Oakland study serves as a case in point: to know, for example, that the public library there circulated in a given year 4.2 books per capita gives no indication whatsoever of the wide disparity in circulation among branches serving households of differing income, the lowest of which paid a proportionately larger share of tax revenues than the proportion of library expenditure allotted them.

Although the literature of the library profession is awash in evaluation studies of one type or another, these have been directed primarily toward the improvement of institutional efficiency. Borrowing heavily from operations research and cost-benefit analysis, such studies have their utility and should not be abandoned. But they do not address the accountability and distributive policy issues raised in this paper, because they are almost totally dependent on the investigation of patterns of use without reflecting the aspirations or reading needs of nonusers for whom present library services are either inadequate or misapplied.

Nonprofit institutions, such as libraries, colleges or schools, have been plagued by the persistent problem of rendering their accounts in quantitative terms. Modeling themselves on business or industrial organizations, they have sought, often desperately, to find some measurement that could serve as a substitute for the one of profit. Toward the end of the 1960s, the federal government attempted to measure the social well-being of the United States through the use of social indicators. Social accounting, however, is by no means perfected nor, perhaps, will it ever be. The difficulty of the task of accounting should not preclude future efforts to resolve the problems inherent in it. The setting of objectives having capacities for measurement is one way of improving not only the reporting of library services but also their planning and budgetary functions. At the very least, measurable goals do represent a step beyond the traditional rhetoric which has defined libraries as instruments for education, information and recreation.

This paper does not end on a particularly optimistic note. Future historians may indeed perceive the 1970s as the decade of disappointment.
in which expectations raised during the 1960s were successively dashed. Many issues affecting governance are, unfortunately, not touched on here. This examination of the literature dealing with the equalization of educational opportunity and that of the policy scientists has attempted to address what can be summarized as one of the overarching goals of the economic and social analysts of the 1970s: the increase of the social responsiveness of American institutions during a period of immense social change. That many of these analyses are themselves concluded with bitterness or despair may not be all to the bad; the expression of their disappointment might be seen as a reflection of the possibility that the goal of equality of opportunity has not yet disappeared from the American scene.

References

10. Ibid., p. 265.
12. For information on and a comparison of these new periodicals, see “Periodicals for College Libraries,” Choice 13:1260-64, Dec. 1976.
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19. Ibid., p. 171.
22. Ibid., p. 24.
26. Ibid., pp. 4-8.
28. Ibid., pp. 2-3.
The current liberal position of the American Library Association (ALA), one of supporting intellectual freedom and opposing censorship, is well known to be of relatively recent origin. The Library's Bill of Rights (the forerunner of today's ALA credo, the Library Bill of Rights) was adopted in 1939. Only in the decade prior to that action did ALA haltingly begin to assume its present position as defender of First Amendment rights of freedom of expression and access to that expression. In earlier years if librarians expressed an opinion concerning censorship, it was often to place themselves on the side of the censors, seeing libraries, especially public libraries, as instruments for improving manners, teaching virtue and "good" citizenship. Yet it is not surprising that libraries have become a major channel of unfettered access to all forms of expression, and that the public library is often the only place where the average citizen can find differing opinions on controversial questions, or dissent from current orthodoxy. Librarians, in order to protect the freedom of their libraries, have had to become the First Amendment's great champions.

This is not the place to review the frequent debates on the proper role of the American public library, nor in a brief essay is it possible to explore the causes of so monumental a change in attitude among American librarians. One may hypothesize, however, that the changed attitude toward censorship is related to changes in society and communication that have altered the librarian's concept of the role of the library, and of the library's importance in communication. How much of the changed atti-
tude may also have been a revulsion from the censorship and book-burn-
ing in the totalitarian regimes of the 1920s and 1930s can only be guessed at. In any case, the new attitude placed the library profession in the main-
stream of liberal opposition to censorship.²

From the beginning of the nation, a considerable segment of the
public opposed granting the government the authority to suppress publi-
cation of any work. When the founding fathers added the First Amend-
ment to the Constitution, it was with the knowledge that government
control of the press, through the power of prior restraint, was an instru-
ment of repression and tyranny and had been used as such in both
England and the American colonies.

In appointing the first Printer to the King in 1531, King Henry VIII
created a licensing system which gave the crown effective power over the
press. Both purchase and ownership of unlicensed books were illegal. In
1557, the closing year of the reign of Queen Mary I, with the incorpora-
tion of the Company of Stationers, greater authority for prior restraint of
publications was established and the power to prevent the publication of
objectionable books extended both through the monopoly invested in the
Company of Stationers and by the franchise of the crown.³

There was great opposition to the arbitrary exercise of power by the
Company of Stationers. The record of literary piracy, of unauthorized
publication, and of resulting civil and criminal actions throughout the
seventeenth century attest to the resistance of many printers to the power
of the company.⁴ While it is true that much of the illegal publishing can
be attributed to the desire of printers to earn a pound, legal or not, it is
also true that opposition to the government or to the established church
could rarely be expressed in a licensed work.

Although the Licensing Act was finally allowed to lapse in 1695, long
before the American Revolution, the governors of several of the colonies
perpetuated the system. It was 1734 when Governor William Cosby of
New York, finding Peter Zenger's criticism of his policies intolerable,
precipitated the most celebrated freedom of the press incident of the
colonial period.⁵

With the heritage of suppression in the colonies and the mother
country in their minds, the framers of the Bill of Rights were anxious to
prevent prior restraint of publishing and to establish rights of expression
upon which the federal government could not encroach. Both Madison
and Jefferson wrote of the importance of knowledge to an effective gov-
ernment, and since knowledge, in those relatively simple times, could be
gained readily only through the press, access to information by the citizen was dependent upon the press being free from restraint.

The press, when Madison was drafting the First Amendment, was far different than it would become in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The presses were still hand-operated and a printing of a work—book, pamphlet, newspaper or broadside—was small, often only a few hundred copies or less. At the same time, any individual or group could readily raise the necessary capital, establish a press and disseminate an opposing opinion. The government itself was small and weak, and had not yet developed the bureaucratic predilection for secrecy that has become so pervasive in recent years. The press, at the close of the eighteenth century, could indeed be expected to provide the citizens with what they needed to know, so long as it remained unfettered.

The same cannot be said of subsequent years, for the press (especially the periodical press) and the newer forms of mass communication of the twentieth century would alter the dissemination of information in ways that Madison and his contemporaries could never have foreseen. To compound the changes, the amount of information would grow to a dimension inconceivable to an eighteenth-century man.

The development of mechanized presses, no longer dependent on the power of individual men, revolutionized printing and publishing. An industry closely tied to the intellectual effort and the endeavor of individuals evolved into big business. The magnificent older tradition of personalized journalism and hand printing gradually gave way before the rotary press, the linotype machine, the telegraph and telephone, and finally to computer typesetting and satellite transmission of information.

The newspaper first became the creature of business titans, creating profitable journalistic empires, but with decreasing concern for the responsibility of providing access to information. In the period of "yellow" journalism, the daily press turned more and more to sensationalism and to banner headlines that would outsell the opposition. Publishers like Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst fought to dominate the industry and did not hesitate to distort or even fabricate the news in order to out-sell each other. Some historians claim that the sensational treatment by the press of the sinking of the Maine had more to do with the U.S. entry into the Spanish-American War than did national interest.6

In the twentieth century many newspapers have become more responsible, as a few always were, but their value in providing access to differing points of view has continued to decline. Even though there were
1762 daily newspapers in 1976, with a national population of 215,118,000, this represents a decline from 2226 in 1900 when the population was 75,994,575. At the same time, there has been a significant increase in the number of cities served only by a single daily newspaper, or by two newspapers owned by the same publisher. The situation is actually worse than the figures reveal, for many older papers have ceased while new ones have been started in growing small cities and suburbs, adding to the number of newspapers with a monopoly status, and not necessarily increasing editorial diversity. The growing ownership of newspapers by regional or national chains has further narrowed the variety of points of view that can be expected. The situation with weekly newspapers is even worse. Their number has been shrinking; those that remain are increasingly bought out by chains, and virtually all are little more than vehicles for advertising.

Even with daily newspapers, the importance of advertising renders their effectiveness in providing objective information suspect. Although no newspaper could long maintain its advertising revenues if it lost its circulation, it is the advertisers and not the subscribers who have the greatest influence. All newspaper publishers will maintain that the counting rooms do not dictate news policy, but in this imperfect world it seems likely that they sometimes do, and even if not, the publisher and his advertisers often represent the same point of view.

The best newspapers are still vital in providing access to information in ways that other media rarely can. Their relatively clear-cut constitutional protection under the First Amendment strengthens them in publishing some information which otherwise could be suppressed. Without this constitutional protection it is doubtful that The New York Times, the Washington Post, and the Boston Globe would have had the courage to defy the government in publishing the Pentagon Papers. And only the investigative reporting techniques common in major newspapers, but rare in other media, made possible the revelation of wrong-doing on the part of officials in the Watergate affair.

The mass-circulation magazines have the same relationship to advertisers as newspapers do, and the smaller magazines, while less dependent on advertisers, reach far fewer people. The precarious existence of mass-circulation magazines tends to push them to cover a fairly narrow range of reporting and opinion, and the smaller magazines, each with its own point of view, cannot redress the balance. The large number of highly specialized periodicals is vital in providing a broad range of information, but because of their limited circulation and high cost they are
directly accessible to a very small number of individuals, and often only
in libraries. Unlike newspapers, magazines tend to be dependent on their
second-class mailing privilege and are, as a result, potentially vulnerable.

Radio and television reach a far larger audience than do newspapers
and magazines. In 1976 there were 6306 AM and FM radio stations, al-
though this number includes numerous stations which provide only en-
tertainment. There were about 800 television stations, including network
affiliated, independent commercial, and educational broadcasting stations,
both VHF and UHF. Unlike the press, both radio and television stations
are dependent for their existence on licenses issued by the Federal Com-
munications Commission (FCC). The radio networks, and some inde-
dependent stations, are big business themselves, and like newspapers (many
of which actually own a radio or television station), are dependent upon
advertising revenues. Advertisers do exert pressure on the networks' pro-
gramming, and directly so when they decline to sponsor programs.

A potentially more dangerous pressure on television, however, comes
from the government through its licensing power. The FCC has tried to
increase access to information and communication through the fairness
doctrine, which requires stations to broadcast replies to their editorial
comment and provides "equal" access to political opinion. The application
of the fairness doctrine, however, is highly problematic, and broadcasters
have become very sensitive to government pressure. When Clay T. White-
head, President Nixon's director of the Office for Telecommunications,
questioned the objectivity of network news broadcasting and threatened
new legislation holding local stations responsible for network news con-
tent, the industry was thrown into a panic, since the effect of such legisla-
tion would have been to pressure local licensees to carry only pro-admin-
istration news coverage.

A major virtue of television is its ability to provide immediate in-
formation (sometimes broadcast even as an event is happening), but its
defect is that one cannot turn back to review the event critically. One
is therefore encouraged to hasty judgments and conclusions. Tele-
vision is a means of access to information which it would be difficult to
do without, but it is imperfect and incomplete, and must be supplemented
and complemented by less instantaneous information sources.

The book and other media that can be distributed by means
analogous to the book trade, such as films and recordings, play a some-
what different role in providing access to information than do the popu-
lar periodical press and the mass media. Books especially are for indi-
vidual use, and tend to record information in greater depth and breadth.
By their very nature they are less timely, although the speed with which both the Pentagon Papers and the transcripts of the Nixon tapes appeared in paperback indicates that even book publishing can be very rapid. Usually, however, the book is the product of more thought, greater research and careful editing. It generally is more permanent. Even television commentators write books when they want their ideas to be more than ephemeral.

In many ways books provide the most effective means of access to information and to mankind's thoughts, opinions and imaginings. The number of books published each year far exceeds the number of newspapers, general magazines, or radio and television stations, and is rivaled only by the number of highly specialized or scholarly small-circulation periodicals. Even though among them are found books that are trivial, biased, and even sometimes pernicious, by their number and variety they carry their own correctives and provide the individual the opportunity to compare, to sift and to choose.

In talking about access to information, however, even books present problems. Although there were 35,141 books published in the United States in 1976, compared to 2076 in 1880, the means of distributing them commercially has hardly improved. The number of retail book stores amounts to only a few hundred more than the number of television stations, and they are far less evenly distributed. Only the ubiquitous mass-circulation paperback seems readily available to the individual, and the number of titles available in newsstand-type outlets is a tiny fraction of the number in print. Even the most popular book clubs offer only a small selection of the books published annually, and almost none of the more scholarly works.

In recent years many book publishers have been absorbed by giant corporations intent on diversification and profits. The result has been that these publishing houses have become more conservative fiscally and less independent editorially, rejecting books that do not assure them profit at a high level determined by the parent corporation. The range in opinion available in books, therefore, has been diminished.

Given the enormous number of books, government intervention in book publication might be considered minor. Yet the federal government has consistently interfered with their publication and distribution. Despite the First Amendment prohibition, Congress has passed numerous laws through the years abridging the freedom of the press. As early as 1798, the Sedition Law forbade criticism of the actions of Congress and
the president; however, it was allowed to expire after Jefferson's election in 1800. In 1836 the First Amendment was invoked to prevent passage of legislation empowering the postmaster general to destroy publications of the Abolitionists sent through the mails, but since then the First Amendment has been more or less ignored by Congress.\textsuperscript{11}

In 1842 Congress authorized the customs authorities, through a tariff act, to seize "obscene or immoral" pictorial matter and to institute court action to destroy it.\textsuperscript{12} In 1865 the first law to control obscene matter sent through the mails was passed, and in 1873 Congress enacted the notorious Comstock bill. Through it the postmaster general was empowered to seize or to declare unmailable materials which he judged to be obscene. At various times since then, this power has been extended to prevent or control the mailing of publications which the postal authorities judged to be seditious or to contain undesirable communist propaganda, sometimes with, and other times without, statutory authority. The postmaster general has even revoked the second-class mailing privilege of some periodicals, thus withdrawing one of the oldest supports of an American free press.\textsuperscript{13} The post office has controlled what could be sent through the mails, and the customs service has censored importations.

Recently, in a blatant case of prior suppression, the government succeeded on grounds of national security in censoring a book, \textit{The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence} by Victor Marchetti, a former CIA employee. When the CIA demanded 168 deletions from the book before it was even published, claiming that the information was classified, the court determined that only 26 of the contested passages contained information that was classified when Marchetti was employed by the CIA. The appeals court, reversing the lower court, upheld the position of the CIA, even though the lower court judge had found that 142 items had been declared classified by CIA officials after the fact, i.e., after they read Marchetti's manuscript. Marchetti's appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court was denied. While this book, and the information deleted, may not have been critical, the significance of the case lies in a restrictive attitude of the federal government toward access to information.

While it has been largely through the post office and customs services that the federal government has censored, the states and many municipalities have enacted laws prohibiting the publication and distribution of materials alleged to be obscene, and have used their police powers to enforce the obscenity laws.\textsuperscript{14} Perhaps three-fourths of the states have "harmful matters statutes," laws which relate to the distribu-
tion or sale of materials considered harmful to minors. The story of state and local censorship is too extensive to begin to recount here, but such repression has existed since the early years of the nation.

Local, state and national governments have attempted to censor publications, particularly those which have espoused unpopular political and religious doctrines (e.g., sedition, blasphemy and “communist propaganda”) and publications with prurient appeal. That is one side of government action relating to access to information. There is, however, another side, and one more in keeping with the spirit of the First Amendment.

The very postal laws which the federal government has at times used as instruments of censorship, have also consistently been used to promote access to information and ideas. From the earliest period, Congress provided low postal rates for papers and magazines as a federal subsidy to the distribution of information. The rates have made it possible for many small journals dissenting from more popular positions to exist. The second-class postal rate continues to be a federal subsidy to diversity in ideas, even though the post office department, from time to time, has denied that privilege arbitrarily.15

Another great contribution of the federal government to the provision of access to information has been the free distribution of government publications and the development and improvement of the depository library system. Initially Congress set out to provide the record of its own activities to the officers of the states and territories, but early in the nineteenth century the initial distribution to elected officers began to evolve into a system intended to make congressional and, later, all government publications available to the general public through a network of participating libraries. As a result, the publications of the world’s largest publisher, the US. government, are available without cost to the entire population, or at least to that portion of it with access to a depository library.

At the same time, the federal government exhibits an ambivalence toward making information available that is at best disquieting, and at worst frightening. For more than a century, with general acceptance, it has kept some information secret, such as military information of certain types, negotiations with foreign governments, and a limited number of other delicate matters. Such information was usually made available by publication after a number of years had passed and it was no longer sensitive. No one can rationally argue that certain types of information should not be secret for a reasonable period of time.
Access, Intellectual Freedom & Libraries

In recent years, however, the federal government—especially the administrative branch—has greatly increased the classification of material. The power to classify documents as top secret, secret, confidential, and restricted has become a status symbol in many government agencies, and has been used with increasing frequency. Gradually the public has become suspicious that the power to classify is used less to protect national security and more to keep the public ignorant of what the government is actually doing. Publication of the Pentagon Papers turned suspicion to conviction. The frequent leaking of secret documents to the press by high officials of the State and Defense Departments, and even the White House, adds further evidence that classification may be political, and that the government itself will leak sensitive information when the release of the information can influence policy or appropriations.

The government has also become concerned. The Watergate scandal has dramatized the potential and present danger of government secrecy. As a result, Congress has taken steps, even though inadequate ones as yet, to make more information available through passage of (1) the 1974 amendments to the Freedom of Information Act, and (2) the act authorizing the appointment of a Public Documents Commission to recommend legislation on the ownership of the papers of public officials.

Even in a nation where there is probably less suppression of information than in any other, it is clear that there are many problems inherent in securing access to information. Although the various media have their defects, an enormous amount of information is available. In fact, the amount of information in existence is so overwhelming that it has become almost impossible for the individual to secure the information needed without the assistance of local, state and/or national government.

In the United States it has been de facto public policy to provide access to information, even though the policy has not been explicitly enunciated. Low postal rates for periodicals, free distribution of government publications, and especially local, state and federal support for all types of libraries, attest to the commitment of government to providing information to citizens. The nineteenth century, and thus far the twentieth, have seen phenomenal growth of libraries, of increased access to information for a growing number of people through them, and of a comparable public commitment to their support.

Libraries have several advantages as channels for access to information. They have no partisan affiliation, no doctrine to promote (except those in religious schools and colleges), no advertisers to please, and rarely
anything to hide. They function as brokers for the users of information, securing from the producers all those kinds of information that it is possible for them to process and deliver. By drawing on all the published media, libraries compensate for the deficiencies of each individual medium, and in theory provide access to all information that is not secret. Actually, no library has sufficient resources to provide for all the information needs of its potential users. Recognition of the inadequacy of individual libraries and library systems in providing access to information has forced the library profession to develop networks of libraries and to plan networks of networks to achieve something approaching a comprehensive level of access to information.

The same years that saw the growth of national and state planning for libraries and for interlibrary cooperation and coordination have also been the years in which librarians have adopted their present role as First Amendment defenders. It may be that both developments represent a maturing of American librarians' attitudes toward information, i.e., the achievement of a higher level of sophistication in defining the library's role in society, which contrasts sharply with the simplistic nineteenth- and early twentieth-century idea that the library was a defender of manners and morals. The present stance has placed librarians in the forefront of opposition to censorship, and has made libraries the prime source for all kinds of information.16

While public policy has supported access to information, there are powerful forces which would withhold information and expression. Their impact is felt in government at all levels, and in the media. These forces are indigenous to society and are older than the Republic. The very settlers who fled Europe to find freedom of expression for their own brand of dissent had little tolerance for other dissenters. Many brought rigid political and religious attitudes that have never wholly died away. America's puritan heritage has known a long twilight. In this most sophisticated of human societies, there continues to be a fundamentalist element that defines its values in simplistic terms.

The puritanical elements in American society have always opposed freedom of expression in manners and morals. Conservative political elements often, but not always from the same groups, have opposed economic, political and social innovation and have tried to suppress the writings of proponents of such change. With some measure of success, these groups have often tried to censor, either through pressure for enactment of legislation or through direct (though extralegal) pressure on schools and libraries.
Rising social consciousness in our times has given greater heed to the right of the dissenter to be heard, and to equal rights for minorities. But as expression has become diversified, as differing lifestyles have been accepted, and as new value systems are proposed and acted upon, conflicts between the changes in society and the mores and values of conservative fundamentalist groups have brought about attempts to resist such change through censorship. Ironically the very groups who have found new protection for their rights and point of view have in turn attempted to suppress ideas which they consider unfavorable to them. Attempts to suppress ideas and publications are made from both left and right.

The library stands in the middle. Some librarians deplore this position, wanting libraries to take a stand, to support one idea and perforce to oppose others. But this preachment of reaction is not the direction American librarianship has taken the last forty years, nor is it likely that it shall return to the stance of an earlier day.

Despite buffeting from the forces of repression, libraries (especially public libraries and the libraries of institutions of higher education) in the United States have achieved a privileged place in society as the acknowledged centers for access to ideas. Librarians, under the leadership of ALA, are dedicated to maintaining the library's place as the embodiment of those rights of access to expression enunciated in the First Amendment. Providing information is the library's function. Recognizing that limitations on freedom of expression are an actual or potential bar to fulfilling the library function, American librarians have made unfettered access the heart of their creed. Though access to information is imperfect and intellectual freedom always under attack, the library profession has taken its stand in favor of both.

References


2. The frequent requests to the Freedom to Read Foundation to enter cases not directly relating to libraries indicate growing recognition of the strong ant-censorship position of the ALA.


9. Ibid., p. 582.

10. Ibid., p. 588; and Historical Statistics ..., op. cit., p. 808.


12. Ibid., p. 12.

13. Ibid., p. 35.


15. Paul and Schwartz, op. cit., p. 35.

16. See Fiske, Marjorie. Book Selection and Censorship; A Study of School and Public Libraries in California. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1959; and Busha, Charles H. Freedom Versus Suppression and Censorship; With a Study of the Attitudes of Midwestern Public Librarians and a Bibliography of Censorship. Littleton, Colo., Libraries Unlimited, 1972. This research makes it clear that not all librarians are so committed to opposing censorship, but the ALA position has been steadfast.

Horace Mann devoted his annual report for 1839 as Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education to the subject of books and libraries. Concerned about the availability of good reading materials for the young, he lamented that the private stock of books in Massachusetts was completely inadequate. The homes of the poor, if any books were to be found in them at all, contained only the Scriptures and some school texts. The homes of the rich, with a few notable exceptions, were likely to offer either "elegantly-bound" annuals or "novels of recent emissions." It was clear, Mann said, that "whatever means exist, then, either for inspiring or for gratifying a love of reading in the great mass of the rising generation, are to be found, if found at all, in public libraries."1

By "public" libraries, Mann meant town, social or district libraries:

In the general want of private libraries, therefore, I have endeavored to learn what number of public libraries exist; how many volumes they contain, and what are their general character, scope, and tendency. . . . nothing could have greater interest or significance, than an inventory of the means of knowledge, and the encouragement to self-education, possessed by the present and the rising generation.²

After corresponding with school committees and "intelligent men" in every town in Massachusetts, Mann ascertained that the "public" libraries in the state had about 300,000 volumes, but that only about

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100,000 persons (one-seventh of the state's population) had any right of access. Furthermore, these 300,000 library volumes were for the most part unsuitable for the moral and intellectual needs of the young. There were too many history books which dealt only with war and destruction, and far too many novels which offered nothing intellectually substantial.

Good books — treatises on government, philosophy, education, economics, science, and the application of science to the useful arts — were crucial for a proper education. "Let good books be read," Mann thundered, "and the taste for reading bad ones will slough off from the minds of the young, like gangrened flesh from a healing wound." Books, the right books, could supplant "gaming, shows, circuses, theatres, and many low and gross forms of indulgence." Each schoolhouse, if properly provided with good books and good teachers, could be made "luminous and radiant, dispelling the darkness, and filling the land with a glory infinitely above regal splendor."³

Such evangelical rhetoric was common among school and library promoters; indeed, the period of reform in which public schools spread across the land was called "the educational revival" even at that time. A largely indifferent, if not hostile, populace had to be converted to the cause of tax-supported public schools as the way to personal and social salvation. As Mann wryly wrote:

> When I devote not a little time to preparation, and then visit a place and strive to expound the great subject of education, and labor, and preach, and exhort, and implore, I seem to myself as if I were standing, on some wintry day, with the storm beating upon me, ringing the door bell of a house that no one lives in, or perhaps the dwellers are all sound asleep, or too much absorbed in their own minds to hear the summons of one who comes to tell them that a torrent from the mountains is rushing down upon them.⁴

In attempting to discuss the historical relationship of American libraries to elementary and high school education, one must deal in general with the history of American reform movements. The reason is simple: public schools and libraries were the products of movements for social reform. They were viewed by their advocates as gateways to moral and social progress. They were planned as bulwarks of traditional republican virtues against new cultural patterns regarded as potentially dangerous. In an age of social decline (which is how reformers like Horace Mann and Henry Barnard perceived pre-Civil War America, how the
Progressives perceived post-Civil War America), children had to be rescued from bad influences in the streets and at home. The public schools were to forge a new moral order by forming children properly; the graduates of the public schools, morally and intellectually prepared for citizenship, would themselves carry on with their education in the new school district or public libraries.

Not so long ago, the mere chronological accounts of the growth and expansion of institutions such as public schools and public libraries were offered as self-evident proofs of progress and improvement in American life. Historians of education, teaching mostly in normal schools and departments of education, presented the proliferation of public schools in America as an integral part of the "march of progress." Historians of public and school libraries, teaching in library schools, presented the expansion of their favorite institutions in similar fashion. Such "house history" accounts, inspirational in tone and impoverished in historical understanding, were curiously disconnected from all those social processes which make so intricate and so fascinating the study of American reform movements: urbanization, industrialization, racism, sexism, mass immigration, politics, class antagonisms, religious hatreds, bureaucratization, and the rise of professionalism.

Since the late 1950s, the writing of American educational history has undergone an enormous change. Established historians, who had previously paid little attention to education as an area of investigation, began to examine the field in connection with intellectual, social and family history; they deplored much of what had been published earlier and suggested new approaches. Professor Bernard Bailyn of Harvard University, for example, commented in an influential 1959 essay:

The main emphasis and ultimately the main weakness of the history written by the educational missionaries... derived directly from their professional interests.... They spoke of schools as self-contained entities whose development had followed an inner logic and an innate propulsion.... To these writers the past was simply the present writ small.... they took their task to be the tracing of the careers of the institutions, ideas, or practices they knew so well. They had no capacity for surprise.... Cubberley [Professor Elwood Cubberley of Stanford University] and the others told a dramatic story, of how the delicate seeds of the idea and institutions of "public" education had lived precariously amid religious and other old-fashioned forms of educa-
Historians of education who had disputed such “burning” questions as whether the appearance of public education in seventeenth-century America should be attributed to the Puritans or the New York Dutch, Bailyn continued, had quite missed the point. “Public education as it was in the late nineteenth century, and is now, had not grown from known seventeenth-century seeds; it was a new and unexpected genus.”

Another of Bailyn’s basic criticisms of histories such as Cubberley’s much-used *Public Education in the United States* (1919) was that their authors had treated education as synonymous with formal pedagogy. Education, Bailyn urged, should rather be thought of as “the entire process by which a culture transmits itself across generations.” Formal institutions might be important in some periods, insignificant in others. School history, properly treated, is a significant chapter in nineteenth- and twentieth-century intellectual and institutional history; however, many other topics are important as well — and more important for earlier periods. Bailyn suggested that any reasonably comprehensive treatment of the history of American education would require that studies be done on such topics as family structure, English developments directly relevant to early American education (e.g., dissenting academies, missionary societies, charity schools), literacy, apprenticeship, cultural leaders, teachers, printers, etc. “Writings on the books and libraries of the colonial and Revolutionary periods abound,” Bailyn noted.

*But books and libraries are in themselves mute and unyielding sources for cultural history,* for though it is obviously important simply to know what is available and desired in print, the critical question is what the reading material meant to its possessors and readers, what was derived from it, whether and how it made a difference. . . . Only by using the materials available on books and libraries together with the personal records that indicate their reception can one hope to deal with such basic questions as the nature of American provincialism in the colonial period. (italics added)

Young historians of education, impressed by critiques such as Bailyn’s and also dismayed by present-day practices and conditions in American public schools, began to question the standard accounts of origin and development provided in the texts used in the teachers’ colleges. They embarked on new studies of schooling in America and found substantial
evidence to show that the old rose-colored tale of the rise of public school education was demonstrably false. Class and race biases, they maintained, had been woven into the basic structure of the public school system, had persisted for more than a century, and were proving impossible to eradicate. Moreover, modern public school systems had not, as their supporters proudly claimed, been separated from the political sphere in the higher interest of the common good; rather, one political group (professionals, businessmen, city managers, school superintendents) had taken over control from another (ward bosses, district school boards, immigrant groups).

Meanwhile, new general works on American reform movements suggested that the idealistic visions of the reformers—those visions expressed so handsomely in speeches and writing—might best be viewed as a set of reactions or responses to the incredibly rapid changes being wrought in nineteenth-century American society by industrialization, urbanization and mass immigration. The historian John Higham wrote in a 1969 essay:

Certainly the need for a stabler, more distinctly organized environment first arose in the cities. It was there that the shock of mass immigration in the 1840s and 1850s created intense alarm over the breakdown of ethnic homogeneity. It was in those chaotically growing centers of population also that the necessity for new public initiatives in sanitation, public health, education, and law enforcement was first felt. In the big cities, for example, uniformed professional police forces under a hierarchy of officers developed more or less simultaneously with the standardization and integration of public school systems under powerful superintendents.9

A similar theme for a later period was propounded by Robert H. Wiebe in *The Search for Order, 1877-1920*. The post-Civil War social challenges posed by industrialization, urbanization and immigration, he argued, were ultimately met by a new middle class comprising two groups: (1) urban professionals (in fields such as law, medicine, economics, administration, social work, architecture, and education); and (2) specialists in business, labor and agriculture. The members of the new class, Wiebe maintained, were characterized by a "consciousness of unique skills and functions, an awareness that came to mold much of their lives... They demonstrated it by a proud identification as lawyers or teachers, by a determination to improve the contents of medicine or the procedures of a particular business, and by an eagerness to join others
like themselves in a craft union, professional organization, trade association, or agricultural cooperative.10 This emerging urban middle class (to which librarians certainly belonged) developed a new set of values based on what Wiebe termed a "bureaucratic orientation." Its members sought solutions to social problems in systems, institutions, administration, scientific management, proper procedures, professional expertise, and sound professional training.

Members of the new middle class spoke a common language. . . . Moreover, they increasingly met each other in broad areas of mutual concern. Joining doctors in the public health campaigns, for example, were social workers, women's clubs, and teachers who specialized in the problems of youth; lawyers who drafted the highly technical bills; chambers of commerce that publicized and financed pilot projects; and new economists such as John B. Andrews, whose exposure of "phossy jaw" among the workers in phosphorus-match factories remains a classic in the history of public health.11

The older local, small-town American outlook eventually gave way before the energies and goals of the new urban middle class, a value shift reinforced by the development of professionalism, bureaucracy and industrial technology.

The history of elementary and high school education in the United States, when viewed within this context of "the search for order," becomes in large part the examination of the rationalization and systematization of schooling. Who pushed for school expansion and why? Who opposed such expansion and why? The big city school systems of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are spotlighted rather than the New England villages of an earlier period. The rhetoric of the reformers is viewed skeptically (for example, the claim that they were "above politics") — not so much with the notion that the reformers were insincere as that they were basically conservative, often incredibly culture-bound and narrow, and yet certain that they knew what was best for everyone else. The objects of their reform activity (primarily Catholics and immigrants), as well as their political opponents (primarily the ward bosses), are being looked at with interest. A much richer history of American education is the result. Recently-published studies on the history of American elementary and high school education are emphatically not about the progressive unfolding of the "sacred seeds" of the public school.

No comprehensive single history in the new style has appeared as
yet; however, three books taken together present a fairly good account of nineteenth-century developments. They are: *Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools: The Illusion of Educational Change in America*, by Michael B. Katz; *Origins of the Urban School: Public Education in Massachusetts, 1870-1915*, by Marvin Lazerson; and *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education*, by David B. Tyack.12 Katz is concerned primarily with the emergence of an educational bureaucracy in Boston between 1850 and 1884; Lazerson deals with the ways in which late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century schoolmen tried to integrate the schools into an environment profoundly changed by industrialism and urbanization; and Tyack concentrates on the consolidation of rural schools in the 1890s and 1900s, but also summarizes many of the other educational developments of the period.

Excellent source materials are contained in a fourth work, a massive 3-volume collection of documents on American children and youth.13 The editor, Robert H. Bremner, concentrates on the development of American public policies toward children. The documents he includes are organized under topics such as health, labor, juvenile delinquency, and the special problems of black, Indian and immigrant children. Large sections of each volume are devoted to education, and there is even a brief chapter on public libraries under one of the education sections.

A fifth study, by David J. Rothman,14 does not deal with ordinary schools at all, but contains a wealth of information on the ideas and activities of those reformers who promoted such nineteenth-century institutions as the penitentiary, the insane asylum, the almshouse, the orphan asylum, and the house of refuge or reformatory. As Carl Kaestle commented in a perceptive review of Rothman's book and its relation to the history of education, "schools, like asylums, were part of a general trend, the institutionalization and rationalization of reform efforts designed to solve social problems that, in an earlier and simpler society, had been handled in an ad hoc manner through personal contacts."15 Similar in many respects to an asylum, the urban elementary school of the ante-bellum period:

was a regimented organization designed to teach order, sobriety, frugality, and industry to children, especially the children of the poor and the immigrants, who were considered deviants from the native, middle-class culture. School promoters saw the non-school environment of the children in negative terms, and it was hoped that the school would be a model for the larger society.16
The chief mission of the common school, Horace Mann said repeatedly, was the formation of character. The perilous state of American society in the 1840s and 1850s, however, made the reformation of character a necessity as well. "The vicious sentiments and noxious habits into whose midst so many children are born, and which, therefore, they imbibe as inevitably as they do their mothers's milk; these," Mann wrote, "it is the sacred function of the Common School to extirpate and abolish."1 Or, as the Boston School Committee put it in 1858, the task involved "taking children at random from a great city, undisciplined, uninstructed, often with inveterate forwardness and obstinacy, and with the inherited stupidity of centuries of ignorant ancestors; forming them from animals into intellectual beings."18

Horace Mann and Henry Barnard, the two towering figures of nineteenth-century educational reform, promoted compulsory education and standardized tax-supported school systems as the only means for making certain that every child in the Republic received a proper moral and intellectual grounding in preparation for citizenship. Both admired the nationalized French and Prussian school systems; both saw opponents of similar proposals for the United States as obstructionist. On every side they saw the dangers of decentralization and division, parties and factions, the disintegration of the social order. The solution to a foundering society was to be found in the common school, which would catch every child when the seeds of good could still be planted, train decent American citizens, and thus unify the nation.

The struggle for "the one best system" of education, to use David Tyack's ironic phrase for public school bureaucracy and uniformity, went on throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. City school systems were rigidly organized along the lines of military or industrial models; certification and accreditation schemes were imposed; rural school districts were forced to consolidate; the educational bureaucracy flourished. In Cubberley's interpretation, these developments were clear signs of progress in the hard-fought battle against the forces of darkness. Those who were for the public schools, said Cubberley, were "Citizens of the Republic, Philanthropists and humanitarians, . . . Public Men of Large Vision, . . . the intelligent workingmen in the cities, . . . [and] 'New England men.'" Against the public school—Cubberley's enemies—were "the old aristocratic class, . . . politicians of small vision, . . . the ignorant, narrow-minded and penurious, . . . [and] the non-English-speaking classes."19

For Tyack, Katz and a new generation of historians, a dichotomy such as the one Cubberley drew is ridiculous and serves only to emphasize
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the prejudices and biases typical of the public school promoters. The diverse character of American society, they contend, was ill-served by the move to create a standardized and bureaucratized educational system.

Amid the pluralistic politics of interest groups, the cultural conflicts of Catholic and Protestant, immigrant and nativist, black and white, the position of schoolmen was an anomalous one. For the most part, they held a common set of WASP values, professed a common-core (that is, pan-Protestant) Christianity, were ethnocentric, and tended to glorify the sturdy virtues of a departed rural tradition. They took their values as self-evidently true — not subject to legitimate debate. ... they normally shared Horace Mann's dislike for partisan controversy in either politics or religion.

Mann could never comprehend, for example, why Jews objected to the opening of the school day with a reading from the King James Bible.

As city populations burgeoned and the numbers of foreign-born grew, school administrators became more convinced that increased supervision and tighter controls in the classroom were a necessity.

Operating from the twin assumptions that only rigid controls could manage the seething city masses and that only specific immutable programs of instruction, uniformly applied to every child in every classroom, could produce specific, immutable social results, urban administrators late in the 19th century articulated their model environment in such detail and with such obvious intentions of freezing a fluid society that at times they were able to create the horror of lock-step routine.

Before the Civil War, only Massachusetts had a compulsory attendance law. After the Civil War, state after state adopted such a law. Fear for the stability of the city — a fear engendered by the effects of industrialization, immigration and urbanization — fueled the drive for truancy statutes and truant officers. As Henry J. Perkinson noted: "The city child, especially the child of the newcomers, had generated both compassion and fear. ... He was in need of help. But he was also a threat... a threat to social customs, mores, and institutions, a threat to the future of American democracy."

The secretary of Connecticut's State Board of Education, for example, argued in 1872 that the great influx of the "foreign element" had so changed the state of society as to require the passage of a compulsory education law.
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The number of ignorant, vagrant and criminal youth has recently multiplied to an extent truly alarming in some of our cities. Their depravity is sometimes defiant and their resistance to moral suasion is obstinate. . . . let the law take them in hand, first to the public school, then to the Reform School.23

Elementary school enrollments increased dramatically as a result of the compulsory education laws — so did school personnel. To handle the large numbers of children as well as increased amounts of money, superintendents had to have clerks, assistant principals and principals. Classrooms were graded so that order might more easily be maintained; teachers began to specialize. By the turn of the century, the city schools were both systematized and, in the sense that teachers and administrators throughout the country shared ideals and followed similar practices, nationalized. It was in partial resistance to the new state uniformity that the Roman Catholics set up parochial school systems.

Common school and public library were firmly linked in the minds of those who supported the establishment of these institutions. As Sidney Ditzion has documented, innumerable reports and speeches contained the message that the public library would carry on where the public school left off.24 Joshua Bates, who gave $50,000 to Boston to buy books for the new public library, felt sure that library would “be carrying out the school system of Boston as it ought to be carried out.”25 The introduction to the massive 1876 U.S. Bureau of Education report on public libraries began: “For forty years the importance of public libraries as auxiliaries to public education has been recognized and dwelt upon by American educators wherever common schools have flourished.”26 In the first chapter of that report, Horace E. Scudder wrote: “The idea of a free public library could hardly find general acceptance until the idea of free public education had become familiar.”27 William I. Fletcher, author of chapter 18, stated flatly that “the public library should be viewed as an adjunct of the public school system.”28 Similarly, William F. Poole wrote in chapter 25: “It [the tax-supported public library] is the adjunct and supplement of the common school system. Both are established and maintained on the same principles — that general education is essential to the highest welfare of any people; and, considered simply as a question of political economy, it is better and cheaper, in the long run, to educate a community than to support prisons and reformatories.”29 Speaking at an ALA meeting in 1883, Poole restated his conviction in even stronger terms:
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Our Public Libraries and our Public Schools are supported by the same constituencies, by the same methods of taxation, and for the same purpose; and that purpose is the education of the people. For no other object would a general tax for the support of public libraries be justifiable. If public libraries shall, in my day, cease to be educational institutions, and serve only to amuse the people and help them to while away an idle hour, I shall favor their abolition.30

The failure of the early school district libraries (designed for use by adults in the district) only strengthened the public library movement. The demonstrated inability of school personnel to run libraries properly was an enormous boost to the early professionalization of librarians. The selection of good books for the elevation of taste and morals was not so easy, and the management of libraries required businesslike skills. The catalog of defects inherent in the establishment and administration of school district libraries was a lengthy one: inadequate funds, inadequate supervision, inadequate staff, operations restricted to short school terms, etc. School district libraries in Massachusetts, which owed their origin in 1837 to the campaigns of Horace Mann, were abandoned in 1850. In Michigan, where voters were empowered in 1837 to raise taxes for district libraries, the state superintendent reported in 1873 that the system had come into disfavor.

Public librarians saw themselves as a unique kind of educator, and they gradually worked out the ideology necessary to justify their institutions and their labors. They were the guardians of the "crowning glory of the public school system," the aiders and abettors of that crucial concept known as "self-education." What good was it to teach children to read unless they went on in life to read worthwhile things? The reading of good books could ensure a solid citizenry, a strong and stable Republic. Self-culture, self-education, self-help, library service for deserving adults — initially these were the key concepts for the promoters of public libraries, and such concepts rested on the foundation of common schools existing across the land.

In a period when the common school was devoted to the most rudimentary kind of rote instruction, when pupils attended for only a short period of time and then went out to work, when the emphasis was on the training of moral character rather than the stimulation of intellect, it was natural that public libraries were generally viewed as self-help institutions for adult education rather than as an integral part of elementary...
school instruction. Schoolteachers were preoccupied with the daily drill and with classroom law and order; public librarians initially believed that their work began where the common schools stopped. Most public libraries in the late nineteenth century did not permit children under the age of twelve or fourteen access. And most classrooms, needless to say, bore little resemblance to Mann's vision of luminosity, radiance and glory.

Whatever the high-minded philosophies that justified them, the schools of the 1890's were a depressing study in contrast. . . . Rural schools, built during the educational renaissance of the forties and fifties, had been allowed to fall into disrepair and disrepute. . . . In the cities problems of sky-rocketing enrollments were compounded by a host of other issues. In school buildings badly lighted, poorly heated, frequently unsanitary, and bursting at the seams, young immigrants from a dozen different countries swelled the tide of newly arriving farm children. Superintendents spoke hopefully of reducing class size to sixty per teacher.31

The number of children who went on to secondary schools (academies or public high schools) was extremely small, and the dropout rate extremely high. Children over the age of fourteen were, of course, not subject to compulsory education laws. Between 1890 and 1900, high school enrollments began to increase, but calculations based on census reports of the period indicate that only 8.4 percent of the fourteen- to seventeen-year-old group attended public high schools. Only a fraction of this small group stayed until graduation. If private school enrollments for the period are added, the total enrollment was still only 10.2 percent of the eligible age group.32 It was not at all unreasonable, then, for public librarians to think of their institutions as people's colleges—as places of opportunity for those pious, deserving, studious souls who wanted more education but had to work. Charles W. Eliot, president of Harvard, was known to have said that a 5-foot "shelf would hold books enough to afford a good substitute for a liberal education to anyone who would read them with devotion."33 The publication of The Harvard Classics in 1910 was grounded in Eliot's faith in the power of self-education.

All along there were those who urged that public schools and public libraries work directly together. The historian Charles Francis Adams, Jr., for example, told the teachers of Quincy, Massachusetts in 1876 that "though the school and the library stand on our main street side by side, there is . . . no bridge leading from the one to the other."34 Teachers, he
said, should use public library books as a supplement to class studies. William I. Fletcher asked that public libraries abolish their age restrictions so as to influence the young as early as possible. Samuel Swett Green of the Worcester Public Library worked out a series of techniques in the 1880s for promoting cooperation between his library and the public schools — techniques which attracted considerable attention and emulation. In 1896, at the request of Melvil Dewey, the National Education Association established a Library Section.

Gradually the belief caught on that public librarians, as educators, could not merely hope that adults might wander in, but would have to engage in direct educational activities for children. "Must we wait," Minerva Sanders of the Pawtucket (Rhode Island) Public Library asked in 1887, "until our children (for they are all ours as a community) are fourteen years of age or upwards before we begin to teach them the first principles of right living, of mental growth, of love to their neighbor?"

During the 1890s the practice of setting up special rooms or areas in public libraries for the use of children began and quickly spread. Library journals of the period report that such special areas were so quickly overrun by children that the great need for children's services could be appreciated by all. Perhaps the ultimate judgment on the new rooms was uttered by John Cotton Dana in evaluating the two-year-old service to children of his own Denver Public Library: "It looks to be a helpful institution. It is a manifest improvement on the city street corner."

Certainly, the new specialists who quickly emerged to take over the children's rooms were committed to the creed of direct education for children in the public library. Through story hours, reading clubs and the careful selection of the "best" literature, these children's librarians hoped to introduce their young charges to beauty and idealism, to wean them away from dime novels and similar "trash." A great deal of rhetoric was expended on these noble ideals — rhetoric which at points resembled the speeches and reports of Horace Mann, and at others was more akin to the romantic ideas about children which characterized the kindergarten movement.

This combination of two rather disparate conceptions, i.e., romanticism with regard to young children, and early childhood education as a type of urban social reform, marked both the kindergarten and children's library services movements. The child was seen as an innocent, playful creature who could reach perfection if given the right surroundings (the kindergarten, the public library children's room); at the same time, the child was a conduit for reaching the poor and improving their way of life.
“Through the child,” Marvin Lazerson has written, “the poor would be taught how to raise their children. They would be introduced to cleanliness and health standards, the English language, and proper behavior patterns. The kindergarten would thus assimilate parents and child, bringing social harmony to family life in the slum.”

Elizabeth Peabody, who began the kindergarten movement in the United States, emphasized the importance for the child of love and understanding. She sought to eliminate corporal punishment and rote learning; at the same time, she made clear that “socialization” was the overall goal of kindergarten training. Like most urban reformers, kindergarten advocates thought that the city was a poor environment for natural growth. The kindergarten was designed in part to bring rural virtues to city tots. Such devices as nature walks and small gardens, for example, were ardently promoted. The kindergarten, the editor of *Century Magazine* declared in 1903, was: “our earliest opportunity to catch the little Russian, the little Italian, the little German, Pole, Syrian, and the rest and begin to make good citizens of them. . . . The whole family comes under the influence of what I may call the kindergarten charm. . . . The social uplift is felt — first, by the child; second, by the family; and third, by the neighborhood.”

One can find plenty of evidence in the writings of children’s librarians both of the romantic conception of the child and the belief that everyday life could be elevated through literature. Anne Carroll Moore of the New York Public Library wrote passionately of the importance of the child’s heart and feelings. Poetry, fairy tales and myths, she felt, were the key elements in reaching and understanding the child, and she inveighed against the prosaic, fact-oriented outlook of so many parents and teachers: “Dreams, fancies, humor, are the natural heritage of childhood,” she wrote, “and are the foundation of what is beautiful and poetical in literature, art, and human experience.” Moore tried hard to recall her own childhood feelings so that she could utilize the memories in her work. One of her best-known books, in fact, begins with her recollection of riding with her father down a rural road in Maine. Moore’s conception of education was close to that of the kindergarten pioneers; her emphasis was on the beauty of stories and myths, never on prosaic instructional aids for the schoolroom (a schoolroom too oriented to facts in any case).

Linda A. Eastman, children’s librarian at the Cleveland Public Library for many years, wrote in 1898:
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It is a growing conviction in my own mind that the library, aside from its general mission, and aside from its co-operation with the schools in the work of education, has a special duty to perform for the city child. No one can observe city life closely without seeing something of the evil which comes to the children who are shut up within its walls; the larger the city the greater is the evil, the more effectually are the little ones deprived of the pure air, the sweet freedom of the fields and woods.

... For these the library must to some extent take the place of Mother Nature, for under present conditions it is through books alone that some of them can ever come to know her.\(^1\)

If the sentimentality of some of the early children's librarians seems in retrospect to be somewhat cloying, it is nonetheless appealing when compared with statements made by children's librarians who hit the urban reform trail more emphatically. Effie L. Power of the St. Louis Public Library, for example, stated in a 1914 pamphlet that "what children read depends very largely upon temperament and racial tendencies." When a Jewish child asked her why he could not get Horatio Alger stories in the library (the series was blacklisted), she interpreted his request as evidence of his "innate longing for success." It was a privilege, she said, "to find the books which will help turn it [i.e., his innate longing for success — obviously a Jewish trait in her mind] into right channels." German children, she continued, were "the most substantial and stable of foreigners; if not always the most picturesquely interesting," whereas Slavic children "seem stupefied and have no desire to better their condition."\(^2\)

Libraries inside of schools were few in the nineteenth century, and were in any case of little significance for schools characterized by mechanical drill and a literal "toeing of the mark." There were some exceptions, however. The legendary Francis W. Parker, for instance (at Quincy, Massachusetts in the 1870s and later at the Cook County Normal School in Illinois), stressed the child's individuality and the need for varied supplementary reading. On the whole, however, the picture was a dismal one. By the 1890s, it was clear to some observers that American public schools were a massive failure — prisons in which dreary exercises were carried out, factories running on rigid timetables. Beginning with Joseph Mayer Rice's scathing articles in *The Forum* in 1892, a series of reformers registered their pedagogical protests. It was the start of what the historian Lawrence A. Cremin termed "the transformation of the school."\(^3\) In two generations, he claimed, the character of the American school changed
from oppressive factory to progressive institution. Cremin's optimistic account has been subject to considerable criticism; still, it is undeniably the case that school libraries were incorporated into school programs—in theory, if not always in practice—because of the new educational philosophies. Educators and librarians applauded in turn the Gary Plan, the Dalton Plan, the Winnetka Plan, the Project Method, the problem lesson, the laboratory method, supervised study, and a host of other innovations which were supposed to take child growth and individuality into account in planning learning experiences.

Again, historians such as Tyack and Katz question whether what actually happened in classrooms in any way matched the glowing rhetoric. The progressive slogan “meeting the needs of the child,” for example, eventually became linked with intelligence testing and the resultant tracking in the classroom. The originally much-praised Gary platoon system turned out to be an application of business and factory money-saving practices to the elementary school. Nonetheless, the new educational philosophies engendered great interest both in expanding the use of books and libraries and in utilizing all kinds of instructional aids.

Thus, the famous third-grade study unit on boats, which was developed in the 1920s at the Lincoln School in New York City, involved building toy boats in industrial arts class; reading about the Vikings, Phoenicians and Egyptians for history; using pictures of boats along with charts, maps and globes for geography; visiting a museum to see early measuring devices used in boat-building for arithmetic; looking at pictures and models of boats for art; writing stories and poems about boats for literature; reading stories about boats and the sea for reading class; setting up flotation and balance experiments for science; writing and producing a play about Leif Ericson for drama; and singing boating songs for music. It is easy to imagine the films, filmstrips, phonograph records, tapes and other materials which would be added to such a curriculum today.

The Lincoln School (which was connected with Columbia University's Teachers College) was exceptional, of course. As Cremin points out, observers of American schools during the 1920s (such as the Lynds for Middletown and the German educator Erich Hylla for Die Schule der Demokratie) commented on the curious American amalgam of enthusiastic progressive rhetoric with traditional classroom practice and extensive school system bureaucratization. Yet, Cremin insists, progressivism did leave its "unmistakable imprint at a number of points," one of which was a change in the materials of instruction. "Textbooks became more colorful
and attractive, and supplementary devices like flash cards, workbooks, simulated newspapers, slides, filmstrips, and phonograph records were used in growing numbers.\(^{44}\)

In secondary education, progressivism played a part in bringing about the shift from academic preparatory schools for a small number to comprehensive institutions designed for all youths. There was an enormous expansion in the high schools of athletics programs, clubs, marching bands, and similar activities. New courses in trades, agriculture, home economics, physical education and the arts were added to the traditional curriculum. In his book on the development of American high schools, Edward A. Krug states that no one really knows what caused the increase in high school enrollments which began in the 1890s. Many factors have been cited; the most important of these are thought to have been the increase in urban populations, the growth in technology, and the strong drive toward economic advancement coupled with a belief that schooling was a way to get ahead. "Only rarely," Krug writes with gentle irony, "is the possibility suggested that more people thought schooling was a good thing in itself. This possibility is a remote one."\(^{45}\) Krug quotes with amusement a comment about Lady Jane Grey made by one Nellie Hattan Britan in a 1908 *Education* article entitled "What Physical Education Is Doing for Women." Lady Jane had been found reading Plato while her friends were hunting. When asked why she was not hunting, too, she replied that all sport was but a shadow to her pleasure in reading Plato. "If such a child were found today," Britan said approvingly, "I dare say she would be hurried off to a physician or a brain specialist." Krug says that "there was little room in the prevailing climate of American education after 1905 for those who preferred Plato to working on projects for improving the community."\(^{46}\)

On first consideration it seems curious that a turning away from classics and intellectual pursuits to more practical studies would be linked with an enormous expansion in instructional materials and an increased concern for how to house them. The fact is, however, that any widening of curriculum would necessarily be accompanied by new sets of instructional materials. Furthermore, as American high schools embraced an ever-greater segment of the population, more and more effort had to be expended on finding ways to attract and teach students who were not academically inclined. As early as 1920, when the Certain report on school library conditions done for the NEA was adopted by the ALA, high school libraries were urged to serve as centers and coordinating agencies for "all material used in the school for visual instruction, such as stereopticons,
portable motion picture machines, stereopticon slides, moving picture films, pictures, maps, globes, bulletin board material, museum loans, etc."47 Through the 1930s and 1940s, as technological developments in "audio-visual aids" continued, librarians discussed their uses and the role of the school library in housing and distributing them. By 1956 the American Association of School Librarians had thoroughly embraced the notion of the school library as an instructional materials center for films, recordings and "newer media," as well as for books.

It was the launching of Sputnik in 1957, however — with the resultant federal funds made available for the development and purchase of instructional materials — which officially sealed the change in the concept of the school library from culture-repository (primarily in the form of books) to active partner in curriculum and instruction (with a multi-media approach).48 What Ernest Roe has aptly termed "the demise of Betsy's library" took place conceptually in the schools. From the belief that their primary function was to encourage children to read books, school librarians moved to the view that their primary function was to back up the school curriculum with books and all other suitable materials. The factors contributing to the change, according to Roe, included "the reaction against the excesses of 'child-centered' education, reinforced by the impact of the first Sputnik, which accelerated the demand for more academic excellence, more attention to the rigorous disciplines (languages, mathematics, the physical sciences)." An instructional materials center geared with precision to the school curriculum, Roe went on to say, was "a special library, meeting the more and more highly specific needs of the institution it serves," and the public library, as a result, would have "to face the uncomfortable task of redefining its educational role."49

Throughout the literature on school libraries, there runs an undercurrent of disappointment. It is over the disparity between the idea of the school library (and the school librarian) as being at the hub of a creative instructional program, and the actuality — the school library has frequently had only a marginal role. The situation is not limited to the United States, either. Norman Beswick commented in discussing the effectiveness of English library resource centers in bringing about changes in curricular attitudes that:

One can look back at the history of the school library movement and wonder. At least in theory, secondary schools in England have had something called a school library since the end of the Second World War; in some authorities, notably what is now
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Inner London, these libraries have been staffed by full-time chartered librarians, and often well stocked. Yet all too often, the impact of such libraries on the teaching-learning mode of the school has been modest: a little project work here, a half-hour's random foraging there ("Find a book and sit down quietly and read it"), a valiant effort at the development of recreational interests, the pushing of major children's fiction authors, and a new subject on the timetable called "Library." This was usually no fault of the librarians, chartered or otherwise; if the organization of service is not seen by teachers to offer them immediate advantages, and reflect the way in which they want to teach, it will remain peripheral and recreational. Many visitors to the United States will have seen gleaming multi-media centres stuffed with equipment and every sort of printed and audio-visual resource, and yet remaining equally marginal to the school.50

On various occasions the blame for the failure to reach the ideal has been laid on teachers, administrators, school librarians, or students (or all of them combined), or has been attributed to more abstract causes, such as "cultural deprivation." Media specialists have berated librarians for being too partial to print and too hostile to other information formats. Some librarians who are enthusiastic about media have accused the teachers of being too traditional. Other librarians insist that they are theoretically pro-media, but that there is a dearth of good materials. The debate appears to be endless and rather futile, perhaps because so many unstated premises about education are assumed by all participants. In general, however, it seems to have passed into the library literature that school libraries are now or should be media centers; further, school librarians have on the whole ceased to question the wisdom of this progression.

For criticism of the entire educational structure in which the media centers have emerged, one must turn either to conservative "back-to-basics" advocates or to radical antibureaucracy critics. James Herndon, for example, in his autobiographical account of junior high school teaching, criticized the entire public school enterprise — from curriculum and instruction to the running of the movie projectors. He also commented disparagingly on a "resource center" which he and three other teachers set up as part of a specially funded project to work with eighty "non-achievers" in five classrooms.
We decided that two of the rooms would be called Resource Rooms. . . . We spent most of our three grand for resource-room materials—paints and clay and plaster and phonom and tape recorders and TVs and Bell telephone kits and games and puzzles—toys, so that while the kids were doing nothing they'd have something to do. Our main notion was that the kids didn't have to come to class unless they wanted to. . . . What we were doing was offering the kids an intolerable burden. . . . They knew they ought to go to Writing or Science or Social Studies when it was offered, because that was what you were supposed to do at school, not just goof around scattering the parts of the Bell telephone kit around the resource room while the teacher in charge pretended he thought it was a fine thing to do.51

The next year, Herndon continues, he and the other teachers rethought the entire situation. "We decided," he writes, "that we would teach reading because the kids couldn't read well." Reading, Herndon and his group felt, was not difficult to learn; it couldn't possibly be. "Once you can look at C-A-T and get the notion that it is a clue to a certain sound, and moreover that very sound which you already know means that particular animal, then you can read."52 The problem in the school, Herndon concluded, was that children had no chance to practice reading because they were always being taught "skills" which were not really reading and which never led to real reading. In Herndon's view, the whole modern school apparatus of reading readiness, reading methods, reading tests, etc., actually interfered with the process of reading. A good reading class, he insisted, was when children sat down and read. "Resist the urge... to watch the kids all happily working in the workbooks and programmed materials... resist every day all the apparatus of the school."53

The very idea of a school library or an instructional materials center—whether one is needed, what it should contain, how it should function—is inevitably linked to one's fundamental conceptions of education. A professor at New Jersey's Glassboro State College illustrated this nicely when he recently announced in a satirical article that Glassboro was not "a citadel of learning." Why? "We have... no Library," he wrote. "We have a learning resources center."54

It is ironic that the chorus of educational criticism should have become so intense (and frequently so devastating) just at the time when American education, "viewed from the standpoint of nineteenth-century school reformers... had entered the promised land."55 Beginning with
the New Deal, there were federal funds and programs for elementary and secondary education. Modest at first, federal programs expanded tremendously after the passage of the National Defense Education Act in 1958, the Library Services and Construction Act in 1964, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965. In addition, a string of court decisions on integration forced changes in the traditional racist practices of many schools and libraries.

In reviewing the 1933-73 period in American education, Robert H. Bremner pointed out that:

A larger proportion of children and youth attended school for longer periods of time. School administration and organization were centralized through district consolidations with gains in efficiency and versatility. The status of teachers was remarkably improved. . . . Earnest and successful efforts were made to derive the content of school instruction from the most advanced knowledge in the different disciplines. . . . Underlying all was the increase in federal support. Until counter pressures developed in the late 1960s, the money resources available for education at all levels steadily rose. The entry of the federal government into the field of regular, permanent support for schools during the Johnson administration was a landmark. In all these respects, the years after the early 1930s were a culmination of earlier movements for the establishment of a complete system of national public education.66

As the historians of education were demonstrating, however, the standpoint of nineteenth-century school reformers no longer provided an acceptable frame of reference for examining either the past or present state of U.S. educational institutions. The shameful treatment of minorities, the persistence of segregation, the nightmare of McCarthyism, the hypocrisy (or ignorance) of school personnel in singing praises to democracy while encouraging uniformity and a mindless patriotism, the downplaying of cultural and intellectual activities in favor of a "life adjustment" or "training for citizenship" philosophy of education— all these defects which had somehow gone unnoticed became painfully noticeable. The most conservative of the economists, Milton Friedman, advocated a tuition voucher program as a means of stimulating private competition for the public school system. The most radical of the school critics, Ivan Illich, called for a "de-schooling" altogether.

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Libraries, both public and school, have been intertwined with American elementary and high school education for more than a century. As noted earlier, educators such as Horace Mann sought to establish public libraries, and librarians such as William Poole clearly viewed public libraries as part of the educational enterprise. For library historians, one consequence of the recent work in the history of American education and of various American reform movements is that they can no longer start with the assumption that libraries are automatically to be praised. Is it the case, for instance, that the expansion of school libraries—from a few poorly stocked shelves to a multitude of modern resource centers—helped improve the quality of American education? That question was never asked so long as everyone assumed at the outset that “public school” and “school library” were “good things.”

A second consequence of the new work on history of education is that the complexity of that history—in contrast to the simple, straight-line stories of the earlier historians—must render one more sensitive to complexities in library history. Michael Harris has insisted that the new themes developed by the historians of education can be fastened wholesale onto the history of the American public library movement. Harris’s work has been exceedingly useful in pointing up the disparity between noble public statements and not-so-noble private beliefs, between idealized “house history” and often-squalid reality. His use of revisionist public-school history has been far too mechanically applied, however. The themes developed by Michael Katz, David Tyack and others work reasonably well for nineteenth-century development of the public library movement, but they are not satisfactory for understanding what has happened to public libraries in the twentieth century. The passage of the compulsory education laws created the essential difference between the two institutions. Public libraries, faced with the problem of enticing people into using their collections and services, moved away from nineteenth-century proclamations of what their goals were supposed to be. They came to resemble other organizations which sought clients on a voluntary basis rather than those institutions which dealt with a captive audience.

In a curious sense, the failure of public libraries to become the grandiose educational institutions envisioned by early supporters might be regarded today as having been in reality a positive outcome. Public libraries, struggling to maintain support and to become little islands of genteel “culture” in a rude industrial world, were hardly the repressive, juggernaut, “elitist” establishments which Harris makes them out to have been. They were not like the public schools, although their directors may
have wanted them to be. On the other hand, they were hardly "arsenals of a democratic culture." Their overall significance is still unknown, primarily because it is so much more difficult to assess the impact of books on individuals than it is to count the numbers of books on the shelves and to chronicle administrative growth.

Even some of the Progressives, in fact, were quite contemptuous of library work as a species of social reform. Herbert Croly spoke of "the credulity of the good American in proposing to evangelize the individual by the reading of books." The economist E.A. Ross commented impatiently in 1914:

One way to divert the people from fundamentals is to get them hurrahing for petty betterments. I sometimes suspect that trivial social service is employed to sidetrack people from economic reform ... those who start innocent charities get support and put them through; while those who promote movements that lessen somebody's profits or dividends or rentals get the cold shoulder and fail. So that the promoters of social service learn the lesson: "Ask for reading rooms, or fresh air, or teddy-bears; don't ask for less risk, or less hours, or for more pay, or more rights." Both Croly and Ross, by the way, associated reading rooms and timid reform gestures with the role of American women as do-gooders.

It is sobering for librarians to think of the provision of books and reading rooms as "trivial social service" and "petty betterment." They may take some comfort from the fact that all American reform movements have tended to be long on rhetoric and short in bringing about fundamental change. Why this should have been so is a question which some historians have attempted to answer. They wonder, for example, why all the passionate energy and rhetoric which poured into the Progressive movement resulted in so little genuine social achievement.

The United States remained far behind Europe in the field of social welfare. At the end of the progressive era, unskilled workers were still unorganized, poverty was still the lot of the majority of Americans, and, in spite of the income tax amendment, inequalities in the distribution of the national wealth remained essentially uncorrected.

The ideologies of librarians and educators have been intimately linked. Public and school librarians, like professional school people, were participants in "the search for order." Both groups worked diligently to
organize educational facilities and social services for an urban, industrial nation. One is forced, therefore, by the recent critical studies in the history of education, to reexamine and to produce new library history within a much broader frame of reference. Libraries, like schools, were not "above" political, class, religious, and cultural conflicts. Librarians, like school professionals, were altogether too wedded to an exaggerated notion of their own importance and goodness. Perhaps the most salutary effect of the new picture of American education is that it stimulates one to ask about the real significance of libraries in the educational process.

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29. Ibid., p. 477.


38. Lazerin, op. cit., p. 36.


43. Cremin, op. cit.

44. Ibid., p. 307.

45. Krug, op. cit., p. 171.

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48. Sputnik, plus the huge increase in the number of students after World War II, also stimulated an expansion in public library services for teenagers. For a summary of these developments, see Simpson, Elaine. "Student Use of Public Libraries." In Emma Cohn and Brita Olsson, eds. *Library Services to Young Adults*. Copenhagen, Bibliotekshcentralen, 1968.


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The Library and American Education: 
The Search for Theory in Academic Librarianship

LEWIS F. STIEG

The search for a theoretical structure to explain the phenomena of librarianship has its origin in Pierce Butler's *An Introduction to Library Science*, first published in 1933. He emphasized that such a search must be based on recognition of the library as a social institution and of its primary activities (the accumulation and transmission of recorded knowledge) as social processes: "librarianship takes its place... in any system of social science." He makes a case for the interdisciplinary character of librarianship in his discussion of its historical, sociological and psychological problems. He also predicts that as librarianship becomes scientific, "results will be borrowed from the other sciences and the findings in librarianship will be lent in return."

Butler could say in 1933 that "the librarian is strangely uninterested in the theoretical aspects of his profession," but the demand today seems to be not only for more research but also for the development of theory of a kind that is not possible in the social and behavioral sciences. Scriven argues that: "There is, and always will be, a real shortage of 'two-way' laws (that is, laws that both predict and explain). This has typically been treated by social scientists as a sign of the immaturity of their subject; but in fact it is simply a sign of its nature and is very like the situation in the 'messier' areas of the physical sciences." Ben-David makes much the same point: "There is an assumption that social science theory has to have a very high degree of generality, like, presumably, physics theory. Since to aspire to such generality is completely out of tune with the empirical in-

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quiries of social scientists, what actually happens is that social scientists present empirical approaches as if they were general theories.95

Another obstacle to theory at a high level of generality is that many phenomena in librarianship are not amenable to scientific observation, classification and measurement. Butler recognizes the limitations of science, but maintains that "it seems desirable that librarianship no less than education and medicine should profit by becoming scientific without losing anything of its humanistic qualities."6 Similarly, Kaplan insists on the necessity for a humanistic basis for librarianship, "provided that 'humanistic' is conceived in ways that do not prejudice it as belonging to one of two antithetical cultures."7 Ben-David's position is that "the social science researcher ought to regard himself as a re-constructor of social structures and processes, working on the borderline of science and literature, as the clinician or engineer works on the borderline of science and art."8

If librarianship's scientific manifestation is legitimately classified as a social science, it seems axiomatic that any search for the kind of theory that it may be able to achieve must at some point include analysis of its relationship to the social forces that brought it into being and continue to chart its course. The process is thus by definition interdisciplinary. Rawski has provided a thorough analysis of the interdisciplinary nature of librarianship and of its implications for research. He argues convincingly that the "reasons on which to base an expectation concerning the applicability of subject matter from another discipline" must grow out of the analysis of the problem as a problem in librarianship.9 Among the most complex problems in librarianship is the institutionalization of its knowledge base into a professional service.

The search in academic librarianship for theory at a realistic level of generalization would seem, therefore, to require a high priority for attention to the socioeconomic factors that are involved. Monat has made a very strong case for an interdisciplinary approach to the evaluation of public library services and impact. He establishes the relevance of the social and behavioral sciences to the process.10 Most of his conclusions and recommendations are equally valid for the academic library when due allowance is made for the differences in the systems of which they are a part.

The social forces that shaped American higher education in all its variant manifestations have obviously also affected the development of academic libraries. Some examples are self-evident. The rapid growth of research collections between 1876 and World War I, for example, was
possible only in an expanding economy. The even more spectacular expansion after World War II, when higher education became a growth industry, also required a strong economy and was assisted by federal support. During the first half of the nineteenth century, student literary societies developed a counter-curriculum and a library to support it because of institutional inertia in responding to changing social and intellectual patterns. In investigating phenomena of this kind, whether current or retrospective, academic librarianship can benefit by borrowing and adapting appropriate methods from the social and behavioral sciences.

For the most part, the influence of social forces on academic libraries is indirect, transmitted through the larger institutions of which they are a part. The search for the boundaries of a theoretical base for academic librarianship must therefore be directed both to the library's role in fulfilling the goals of its parent institution and to the goals and services it develops for that purpose.

The application of operations research to libraries has raised new questions about purpose and relationship. Churchman points out that, realistically, the operations researcher accepts the system as defined by its managers and has always included social values in his analysis. Idealistically, however, the search may be for solutions to the wrong problems, emphasizing slick and costly solutions rather than real improvement:

Libraries are not separate systems. They are, indeed, a part of the health-education-research system. . . . Libraries are a part of the educational system in the sense that the libraries of the future in a world of universal education will be totally unlike the libraries of today. The technology of such future libraries is to satisfy the universal need to know and not, as in the case of university libraries, to satisfy a specific clientele such as faculty or the qualified student.11

The National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) identifies its goal in similar terms: "To eventually provide every individual in the United States with equal opportunity of access to that part of the total information resource which will satisfy the individual's educational, working, cultural and leisure-time needs and interests, regardless of the individual's location, social or physical condition or level of intellectual achievement." One of its major program objectives to attain that goal is "to join together the library and information facilities in the country . . . to form a nationwide network."12

From the beginnings of the colonial college, it has generally been
accepted that the collection and programs of the college or university library must be consonant with the goals of the parent institution. As early as 1740, a Harvard professor made a case that the library's collection and its use supported the official position of the college on the then-paramount issue of religious orthodoxy. The standards adopted by the Association of College and Research Libraries in 1975 begin: "The college library shall develop an explicit statement of its objectives in accord with the goals and purposes of the college."

In his excellent and highly readable study of the development of the curriculum, Rudolph maintains that "the curriculum has been an arena in which the dimensions of American culture have been measured, an environment for certifying an elite at one time and for facilitating the mobility of an emerging middle class at another." He also points out that "the tools for fulfilling...[the colleges'] purposes were the liberal arts and sciences, that whole, inherited, vital body of learning that had a life and purpose of its own."

The record of that body of knowledge, for which the library is responsible, also has a life and purpose of its own. In time, librarianship also developed a life of its own that has had its influence on academic libraries. Any attempt at comprehensive theory for academic librarianship thus becomes tripartite, incorporating institutional goals, the character of the recorded knowledge necessary to attain them, and the state of the art in librarianship, all of which are constantly changing. All can be fully understood only in relation to the social forces that shape them. This triad correlates closely with Rawski's categories of recorded knowledge, librarianship and use. It is also compatible with Shera's diagram of librarianship as administration (knowing how to order means to ends), the boundaries of which are acquisition, organization and interpretation.

During the past fifty years, the literature of academic librarianship has grown substantially and provides the basis for at least a preliminary synthesis of what has been learned about the interrelationship of the academic library, higher education, and the social forces that created them. The series of bicentennial articles first published in College & Research Libraries and later collected under the title Libraries for Teaching, Libraries for Research constitutes in some ways a state-of-the-art report. The essays deal with America's second century, when the modern academic library began to develop, but many of them summarize developments before that date and emphasize current trends. To a greater or lesser degree, they attempt to establish the relationship of the library to the changing character of higher education. The introductory essay by
Edward G. Holley, for example, is a very thorough review of this relationship for the year 1876.20

The complexity of the interaction on the library of social forces, indirectly through the institution of which it is a part, and more directly through the constantly growing and changing record of knowledge and through the increasing professionalization of librarianship, defies precise documentary analysis. Jencks and Riesman came to the conclusion that: "American educators have seldom been able to give coherent explanations for what they were doing. Even when they did have a consistent theory, it often had little or no relationship to the actual results of their actions."21 Apparently Riesman sees little gain in coherence when today's problems are under study, judging by his observations on the current review of general education at Harvard.22

For their study of The Academic Revolution, Jencks and Riesman turned to what they term a kind of functional analysis, a method that assumes "that because a given arrangement had a given result, those who instituted the arrangement somehow intended that result."23 Much of the research on academic libraries seems to utilize the same approach, producing what Rawski apparently means by "after-the-fact adjustment" rather than scientific discourse, because of an inability "to state the fundamental entities and fundamental relations of our field."24 Among those fundamental relations one must include, as Ben-David establishes for the social sciences generally,25 the relevant social structures and processes in a given time and place.

Holley concluded in 1876 that: "librarians shared the general optimism of the age, and they expected libraries to become a vital part of the college experience. If they were often confused about the place of the library in the curriculum, their confusion was no more unnatural than that of their parent institutions which were often confused about their role and mission."26 The elimination of that confusion has been a continuing objective of academic librarianship ever since.

The results of what has been accomplished have been ably summarized for each of the major institutional types in higher education: for the university library first by Wilson and Tauber,27 and more recently by Rogers and Weber;28 for the college library by Lyle;29 and for the community college by Veit.30 The primary focus of each is administrative practice, but they make extensive use of existing research studies, some of which have gone beyond the pattern described by Jencks and Riesman as looking at what happened and then reasoning backward to find why it happened.31 Nevertheless, there is still a very limited factual base for
any comprehensive theoretical structure. The limitations and idiosyncrasies of the methodology in the description of particulars, which could provide such a base, frequently prevent the kind of synthesis that can lead to valid generalization. Lipetz, for example, reported in connection with his study of catalog use at Yale that "all of the older [catalog use] studies seemed to have flaws in their design which made their reported results suspect or unusable."32

Because of the diversity of the institutions that make up American higher education, Lyle is justifiably pessimistic about the possibility of any theory to explain the college library.33 Govan comes to the same conclusion: "The variety among academic libraries makes any broad discussion of them virtually impossible."34 Just as Rudolph found that any understanding of the curriculum must begin with the assumption that "maybe there is no such thing as the curriculum,"78 understanding of the academic library must begin with the assumption that perhaps there is no such thing as the academic library. The unique characteristics of the institutional setting as well as the inadequacy of data prevent generalization on any broad scale.

There are, however, similarities in purpose, materials and methods, and administrative structure. Investigations in these areas can provide the data for identification of general principles. The unifying theme may well be the socioeconomic implications of those principles. Although it may be self-defeating to search for theory in the strict interpretation of that term, those general principles can, as Ben-David maintains,36 be of help in understanding and explaining particulars.

Statements of purpose for the academic library vary greatly, not only by type of institution, but in detail and emphasis. They range from Brough's terse "it must preserve recorded knowledge, and it must make this knowledge available for use,"37 to the comprehensive statement by Wilson and Tauber that includes "integration of the library with community, state, regional, national, and international library resources."78 The latter seems to anticipate Churchman's insistence that the boundaries of the system which includes the academic library go beyond the institution of which it is a part.

All statements of purpose, however, exhibit some commonality and all state explicitly, or are based on the assumption that, the basic purpose of the academic library is support of any instructional, research or service functions to which the parent institution is committed. They are all concerned with appropriate collections of recorded information, the effective organization and housing of materials for use, and assistance in their use.
Most include some or all of a wide range of supplementary services, such as identification and location of needed materials not locally available, formal and informal instruction in the use of libraries and in the process of information retrieval, the provision of materials for recreational reading and for general information on subjects not necessarily covered by the curriculum.

Integration of library goals with institutional goals depends upon effective communication. The credibility of the librarian is a crucial factor in the process and in turn depends upon the expertise that comes only from that essential of professionalism, mastery of a constantly expanding body of theoretical knowledge. Rogers and Weber emphasize the librarian's responsibility to educate others in the university on library problems, maintaining, as does Lyle for the college library, that the university library's goals grow out of decision-making on those problems.

Lyle presents another aspect of the problem of integration of goals, reminiscent of Jencks and Riesman's observations on the relation between theory and action in higher education. He points out that general statements of purpose are not enough, that the particulars by which they are to be realized must also be identified. His position is reinforced by a recent survey of the opinions of college administrators, including librarians, about the rewards and frustrations of their positions. "A major frustration of librarians is lack of information concerning matters that vitally concern their work.... Librarians believe that to keep in touch with what is going on they should participate in the work of faculty curriculum committees and be on the 'administrative council'."

There has undoubtedly been progress in this respect during recent years, closely correlated with the improvement in status of academic librarians, but acceptance as part of the planning team is only the first step. The impact of the librarian's contribution to its work will depend not only on his or her skill in personal relations but also on the scope and character of the specialized knowledge brought to the task.

Rigorous program planning and review with particular attention to goals now constitute a sine qua non of administration in higher education. The general library survey by outside experts that flourished from 1938 to 1950 has for the most part been superseded by more limited studies of special problems usually described as operations research. The self-study, frequently an essential element in the accreditation process, provides the opportunity for a more general survey. Swarthmore's 1967 Critique of a College, for example, includes an unusually thorough analysis of the relation of the library's goals and programs to those of the institution.
During a period of uncertainty, created for the most part by forces outside the college or university, of the kind that higher education is currently experiencing and that has produced a major reaction within all its segments, the planning and review process becomes critically important. The library must examine in advance its potential role in proposed modifications, some of which can on occasion be introduced with startling rapidity. Breivik, for example, emphasizes the importance of rapid library planning for appropriate instruction on use of the library to meet the challenge of open admissions. She urges a much more aggressive approach by the library to participation in institutional planning and deplores the paucity of evaluative research on bibliographical instruction to support it.44

In all aspects of goal identification and integration and of the decision-making on strategies to attain them, general principles are of first importance. They assist in establishing probable outcomes of various courses of action, but are at best only indicators. Whether they are derived from basic research or grow out of research based on Ben-David's clinical-engineering model, they do not have the force of predictive laws.

During the past forty years, Shera has been the leader, in terms of his own contributions and of his influence, in the search for an understanding of the significance to all librarians of the social nature of recorded knowledge. With the overwhelming growth rate of knowledge and the development of new technology for its preservation and dissemination, the new interdisciplinary field of information science has come into existence and has produced a voluminous literature. Among its concerns, as Leimkuhler points out, is emphasis on the psychic and social consequences of technological change.45 Fussler has provided a comprehensive analysis of its implications for one type of academic library in his Research Libraries and Technology,46 but the impressive list of general principles that he identifies are applicable to other types as well.

The contributions of professional librarianship to academic librarianship are especially noteworthy in the organization of materials and in the development of tools and services to facilitate access to and use of them. Librarianship possesses a literature and the bibliographical apparatus to facilitate cumulative growth of its knowledge base at all levels, including research. The extensive bibliographies in the standard monographs on the administration of the four major types of academic libraries bear witness to the importance of this literature. Librarianship has also developed a cooperative approach to problem-solving, especially for the most complex and fundamental problems.
Tuttle has documented the importance of cooperative work on technical services, and McElderry does the same for readers' services. Weber summarizes successes and failures of planned cooperation in all areas of library activity as they affect academic libraries.

Perhaps the percentage of failures and partial successes for cooperative effort has been greatest in connection with collection development and resource-sharing. Weber provides various explanations for difficulties, most of which are related to conflict between institutional goals and goals of the cooperative project. Fussler, in the chapter on resource-sharing in his *Research Libraries and Technology* clearly establishes the nature of this relationship. He also gives a very thorough analysis of its economic implications, providing general principles for the guidance of all academic libraries. If academic libraries are to engage in cooperative projects in resource-sharing, they must be able to justify in economic terms commitment to a larger system of the kind that Churchman identifies and NCLIS supports. The problem is the development of a data base to support the general principle.

The preoccupation of librarians with theory can probably be traced to a problem common to the social sciences: “there is usually a gap, and often a very considerable gap, between the theoretical description of what is being done and what is actually being done, and there is widespread feeling that neither is very satisfactory.” There is also a semantic problem, the tendency to interpret “theory” in the rigid, restrictive terms of logical positivism, caused perhaps by the relatively low status usually assigned to the social sciences in the hierarchy of the sciences. The most realistic summary of the situation in librarianship is found in Goldhor’s chapter on theory in *An Introduction to Scientific Research in Librarianship*, especially his comments on the differences between theories of low and high informative value.

The claim cannot now be made, nor if Scriven is correct, will it ever be possible to achieve theory of high informative value for academic librarianship. There are, as Reynolds maintains for the social sciences generally, too many “problems inherent in the phenomena.” Churchman, for example, points to the probable impossibility of classifying users as a basis for evaluating information retrieval systems and for cost-benefit analysis. Examples of the conclusion that it is impossible to evaluate the quality of book collections by quantitative methods are legion. Randall refers to it in his 1932 study of college libraries; in 1967 the Swarthmore report states unequivocally that the book collection cannot be evaluated by any quantitative method, and in 1971 Rogers and Weber maintain...
that methods of judging a university library must be based on discriminating subjective evaluation. Rogers and Weber, however, recommend procedures that seem to follow Ben-David's "more or less empirically grounded and partly intuitive explanatory model."

The most promising source in academic librarianship for whatever theory may be attainable would seem to be Ben-David's clinical-engineering model of research. In seeking the explanation for a particular problem, the investigator:

must start with a more or less empirically grounded and partly intuitive explanatory model and then check it constantly both against empirical evidence and against his improving knowledge of the underlying processes and structural regularities. The social scientist investigating this kind of problem ought to proceed in an eclectic manner, using whatever theories serve him, irrespective of their disciplinary provenance.

Ben-David's emphasis on social structure in a given time and place may provide the matrix for whatever general principles and theories are appropriate for a particular problem. Whether they are drawn from the process of integrating library and institutional goals, from the nature of recorded knowledge or from the processes of librarianship, all are related to societal factors that also contribute to the particular form of an institution of higher learning. Theory then becomes a flexible concept, comprising for each problem a unique or nearly unique combination of general principles with their implications for social structure the unifying factor.

Shaughnessy insists that, although societal factors may be important, preoccupation with the institutional context of libraries diverts attention from the search for theories indigenous to the field. Rawski distinguishes between what he calls "basic research," the view from above whose purpose is knowing, and "ad hoc research," the view from below whose purpose is doing. Both, he says, are essential, for "both determine the purposeful continuum of librarianship and, hence, its interdisciplinary concerns." Rawski's position, with one important difference, is very close to that of Ben-David's; the difference comes in Rawski's dichotomy between the methods, purposes and results of the two types of research. Ben-David says that basic research must continue, but that the clinical-engineering model can contribute to it, that it is "appropriate regardless of whether the results are used for social engineering, or for mere enlightenment."
Library & Education: Search for Theory

In academic librarianship there are many examples of research concerned with doing, with social engineering in Ben-David's vocabulary, that have contributed significantly to the collection of general principles essential for the explanation of particulars. Fussler's Research Libraries and Technology has already been mentioned; his earlier Patterns in the Use of Books in Large Research Libraries is equally valuable as a source of general principles. Knapp's The Monteith College Library Experiment is a prolific and perhaps still the only source of general principles on bibliographical instruction. There are other studies on a variety of problems, but more examples of this kind of research are needed.

Finally, Ben-David suggests that the only kind of theorizing that is interesting or worthwhile grows out of systematic comparative research which alone can provide the necessary wealth and variety of observations. The outstanding example of this kind of study and the contribution it can make to theory in academic librarianship is Danton's Book Selection and Collections; A Comparison of German and American University Libraries. Such comparative research brings into sharp focus the necessity for an understanding of the social structure in a particular time and place, as Danton's companion monograph, The Dimensions of Comparative Librarianship, demonstrates very clearly.

It would, therefore, seem clear that the search for theory in academic librarianship must be eclectic and must include analysis of the relationship of library organization and processes to societal factors.

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Science, Scholarship and the Communication of Knowledge

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This paper explores the major channels by which research results are disseminated, with special reference to the role played in this communication process by libraries and other formal information centers, identifies some of the problems existing within these channels, points to some significant recent advances in the dissemination of research information, and suggests some possible future trends.

The most important channels by which the results of research and application activities are disseminated in science and other fields are depicted at the macrolevel in Figure 1. The box headed "User Community" includes two components: those individuals who are involved in (1) research and development and (2) the application of the results of research and development. The communication problem represented in this diagram is that of disseminating the results and experience of research, development and application activities rapidly and efficiently to those individuals who need and can profit by this information.

As the diagram shows, various members of the "user community" report the results of their research and development activities or of their experiences in some field of application. These reports can be written or oral. Much of this information is disseminated in a completely informal way. Information is exchanged by individuals through correspondence and by conversations, either face-to-face or by telephone. Some of this information when assimilated stimulates new research or applications.

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Figure 1. The Research Communications "Cycle"
These new projects generate their own reports which in turn are disseminated. The communication process represented in the diagram is thus a continuous and regenerative cycle. Science could not survive without an efficient communication cycle to support it.

The informal channels of communication are represented by the paths of one to nine and two to nine. The other paths, all leading eventually to the “assimilation” activity, represent the formal communication channels. In practice, however, the distinction between formal and informal communication is not as clear-cut as suggested in the diagram. Some channels combine both elements. An obvious example of this is the professional conference. Papers presented at such a conference, whether published or not, are formal communications, while the informal exchange through conversations in hotel lobbies, bars and restaurants is clearly informal. Moreover, formal communications may be disseminated through informal channels, as when a scientist mails a reprint of a periodical article to several of his professional colleagues.

As depicted in the diagram, many individuals and organizations play various roles in the distribution of information in written form. Writing does not in itself constitute communication. A message must be received before communication takes place. Publishers of primary and secondary literature fulfill a primary distribution function as well as a publication function. Some primary publications and a few secondary ones are distributed directly to the user community through purchase and subscription by individuals. Much of this literature, however, reaches its users through secondary distribution functions performed by libraries and other information centers. These institutions play extremely important roles in the cycle. They have the prime responsibility for acquiring the published literature, for storing it (thus creating a permanent archive of scientific achievement), for organizing and controlling it, and for its secondary distribution. The secondary distribution activities of libraries and information centers include all services provided: document delivery services, literature searching, and reference services of all types, including services provided from machine-readable data bases.

Another path in the communication cycle, and one that has assumed increasing importance in the last few years, is that by which information on ongoing research is disseminated through formal channels. Although some indexes to ongoing research are issued in printed form, the major source of this information in the United States is the Smithsonian Science Information Exchange, which provides services on demand from its ma-
chine-readable data base. This path is therefore considered primarily as one of secondary distribution.

The communication cycle has not always looked exactly as depicted in the diagram. While informal communication channels in some form are as old as science itself, other channels are much more recent in origin. For all intents and purposes, primary publication dates back only to the invention of the printing press, but the major primary publication of science, the periodical, emerged only in the latter half of the seventeenth century, and secondary publications in science began to appear only in the nineteenth century. Indexes to ongoing research are a twentieth-century development. The configuration of the cycle, then, has changed over the years and can be expected to change further in the future. New communication channels emerge, others decline in importance and eventually disappear. As one example, the distribution of secondary publications directly to the user community is now almost nonexistent and there is evidence to suggest that the primary distribution of the science journals directly to the user community is declining relative to their secondary distribution through libraries.

As long as science itself continues to grow, all of the communication activities of the cycle must also increase at approximately the same rate. Price has pointed out that every time the world population doubles, the world population of scientists doubles about three times.\(^1\) There is little evidence that the limits to growth of science have been reached, although there may now be some leveling-off in the rate of growth among the most developed nations. For example, King and others have estimated that the scientific and engineering labor force in the United States increased by 64 percent in the decade from 1960 to 1970, but by only 12 percent from 1970 to 1975. They project a further growth of 14 percent from 1975 to 1980.\(^2\) However, while the growth of science may be reaching a plateau in the developed countries, scientific activity is increasing at a very rapid rate in the developing world. As one example, Unesco statistics indicate that there were 156,000 scientists and engineers in Argentina in 1965 and 390,000 in 1974, which represents an increase of about 150 percent in nine years.\(^3\) According to Science Indicators, the number of scientists and engineers engaged in research and development activities per 10,000 population declined in the United States after 1969, but continued to increase in the other countries studied.\(^4\) In 1973 this figure was twenty-five in the United States, eighteen in West Germany, nineteen in Japan (1971 data) and thirty-seven in the USSR.
SCIENCE INFORMATION SOURCES

The literature of science is often divided into two types of publications: (1) primary, which report the results of research and application; and (2) secondary, which are compiled from primary sources and arranged according to some definite plan. Secondary publications provide access to the primary literature (e.g., bibliographies) and/or condense information from the primary literature (e.g., reference books).

The historical development of formal communication channels based on the distribution of primary and secondary publications cannot be considered apart from the development of science and the community of scientists, because for a long time scientists themselves were the major determinants of innovations in scientific communication. More recently, however, channels have evolved due to outside influences, particularly government and technology.

From the time of the invention of printing to the latter half of the seventeenth century, the only way new scientific ideas could be made public was through specially printed and published books. Science was a very different enterprise from that which is known today—research was almost entirely an amateur activity for a few well-educated or intellectually curious individuals with other means of support. As their numbers increased, savants (as scientists were called) formed academies to discuss research and perform experiments. One of the first such groups was the Royal Society of London, founded in 1662. These academies became centers for the communication of scientific knowledge and were responsible for a major innovation—the scientific journal, beginning with the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society and the Journal des Scavans of France's Académie Royale des Sciences. Initially these journals contained book reviews, scientific news and observations, and translations of letters from foreign scientists. In the eighteenth century journals were general in their coverage, but in the nineteenth century, with the growing number of scientists working in specialized areas, journals devoted to particular areas of science emerged.

The character of the scientist has changed dramatically in 300 years, from mainly amateurs in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to academic professionals beginning in the nineteenth century (the term scientist was coined in 1840) and the industrial research scientists of the twentieth century. Yet the science journal remains as the most important primary publication form. A recent development is the letters journal, made up of short communications for rapid dissemination of preliminary results of research, designed to overcome the time lag typical
of most journals. The emergence of letters journals indicates that the
journal as a communication medium is not without problems, more of
which will be addressed later.

As the primary literature of science grew, there was a need for an-
other communication innovation. The original purpose of journals was
not to publish new scientific papers so much as to monitor and digest the
learned publications and letters that were too much for one individual
to cope with in daily reading and correspondence. In turn, when the
number of journals grew too large for one person to monitor, the abstract
journal emerged in the 1820s under the sponsorship of individuals and
professional societies. Just as the early journals were general in their
coverage, early abstract journals were polymathic, with discipline-oriented
abstracting services emerging later. The abstract journal can serve both
functions of a secondary publication, since it includes citations to the
primary literature as well as condensations of article contents. As the vol-
ume of scientific literature grew, two other kinds of secondary publica-
tions were developed to perform these functions separately. The index,
beginning in the latter half of the nineteenth century, provided access to
primary literature by arranging citations in subject categories. The review
journal, which emerged in the twentieth century, provided evaluation and
synthesis of an increasingly fragmented literature.

All of the developments described so far can be viewed as "of sci-
ence" in the sense that the community of scientists had primary respon-
sibility for their initiation and support. These developments are the prede-
cessors of the discipline-oriented information systems sponsored by many
professional societies today, with their journals, abstracting services, mono-
graphic series on research topics of special interest, and reference books
such as data compilations.

The impact of government on scientific literature can be seen in the
mission-oriented information systems of the federal agencies which have
grown rapidly since World War II in such areas as defense, aeronautics
and atomic energy. The major type of publication handled by these is
the technical report describing research supported by grants and contracts
from the government. As government expenditures for research and de-
velopment have multiplied, so have the number of technical reports issued
and, not surprisingly, there are now a number of abstract journals with
the sole purpose of covering the technical report literature. Since technical
reports contain much information which will be reported in the journal
literature only at a later date (or never), they have emerged as an im-
portant primary source.
The publications described above, whether sponsored by professional societies or government agencies, do not differ radically in form from the early printed publications. The advent of the computer and machine-readable data bases has changed this, however, as can be seen from the following examples which may be thought of as the beginning of an "automated reference library":

1. bibliographic data bases — abstracting and indexing services in machine-readable form remove many of the search constraints of printed tools. Citations may be retrieved based on sophisticated search strategies including terms from the title and abstract as well as controlled vocabularies.

2. numerical data bases — the printed handbooks and tables of data are being replaced by numeric data base systems which allow not only retrieval of specific data items, but also their manipulation. The data are used directly in simulation models, statistical analyses, or to create graphic displays.10

3. directories — directories of very current information are feasible when the data are stored in machine-readable form. Two examples, one from the basic sciences and one from the applied, illustrate existing services:

Smithsonian Science Information Exchange (SSIE) — contains notices of more than 200,000 ongoing research projects from which selected project notices are retrieved in response to specific requests. Each item in the data base is a notice of a research project — who is conducting what research where, under whose support and when.12

Technotec — a service designed to bring together those who search the data base and originators of entries so that technology can be exchanged. Entries in the data base include notices of technology for sale in the form of know-how, products, licenses or specific services and notices of technology needed.12

While the computer has to date affected the way in which secondary publications are used, in time a transformation of primary publications may appear as well, with the development of "electronic journals," central data bases containing articles that can be accessed by individuals through remote terminals.

SCIENCE INFORMATION SERVICES

A discussion of the development of science information sources must be coupled with an identification of the services provided by institutions
involved in secondary distribution. For with the growth and increase in cost of the literature, personal collections can encompass only small portions of the available literature. While the scientific societies accumulated libraries from the seventeenth century onward and libraries have long been associated with academic institutions, these functioned primarily as storehouses. The concept of information services is most closely associated with special libraries. Although the term special library embraces special libraries and special collections of many types, the strength of the special library movement has come from the rise in number of libraries serving business, industry and government. The pattern of development of these libraries, beginning in the 1870s in chemical, pharmaceutical and engineering firms, was similar in both Britain and the United States. Their chronological development was characterized by:

1. gradual accumulation of books and journals by the research staff;
2. part-time supervision of the collection by members of the research staff;
3. introduction of a full-time librarian when the stock became unusable through size or disorganization; and
4. organization and dissemination of information by local indexing, routing of periodicals, compilation of bibliographies and abstract bulletins, production of translations, and completion of literature searches.

Libraries traditionally acquire, store, organize and index, and make materials available. As Kruzas observed, the early special libraries were distinguished for "simultaneously neglecting and extending the standard library practices of their time." Special librarians did so in pursuit of their particular goal: library service geared to the program of their parent organization and to the information needs of its personnel. They acquired more diverse types of materials than other libraries, supplementing the traditional books and periodicals with patents, blueprints, maps and company laboratory reports. They stored material only so long as it was useful and then discarded it. When they found standard methods of organizing material inadequate, they developed "homegrown" classification schemes which allowed organization of materials in relation to company interests and analysis of content in greater depth. All this was directed toward the goal of making information available efficiently. In summary, the special library "movement" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries can be characterized by: (1) use of all forms of recorded information as practical tools, (2) limitation in coverage of resources to material related to the work of the parent organization, and (3) expansion and extension
of reference services as a principal function of the library. This emphasis is captured in the motto “putting knowledge to work,” adopted by the Special Libraries Association soon after its founding in 1909.

The services offered today do not differ substantially in kind from those described by special librarians early in this century. Perhaps the major new development is an exploration of ways in which librarians can participate more actively in the teams which have become the mode of work for much science research and application. In medicine one now finds clinical medical librarians accompanying medical teams on rounds; a similar approach in industry would involve the librarian as the “information expert” on project teams. In both environments the objective is to exploit existing information resources better; the librarian gathers data relevant to specific questions that arise in the work environment.

Special libraries originally developed with an emphasis on service to business, industry and government. While government special libraries continue to be important, there are two other areas in which the federal government has contributed to the development of science information services: the national libraries and information analysis centers.

The National Library of Medicine (NLM) and the National Agricultural Library (NAL) were originally organized to serve specific federal agencies, but through government support they have grown into research libraries of international stature with a diversity of products and services used throughout the world. They have published catalogs, indexes, bibliographies and, more recently, machine-readable data bases. Each library is the pinnacle of a library-based network of document delivery services. NAL works with land-grant colleges and NLM works with designated regional and resource medical libraries to facilitate interlibrary loan.

The national libraries strive for comprehensive coverage in their designated areas of responsibility. Government-sponsored information analysis centers (IACs), on the other hand, are established with a view to supplying specific services tailored to the needs of an elite clientele involved in an advanced and often multidisciplinary area of research and development. While a few information analysis centers were established in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, their greatest increase occurred following World War II. Two examples are the Metals and Ceramics Information Analysis Center and the Nondestructive Testing Information Analysis Center, both associated with the U.S. Defense Logistics Agency. The intent of IACs is to transfer to the user timely, authoritative and evaluated information in a convenient form. They employ
subject specialists to prepare such products as state-of-the-art reports, critical analyses and current awareness bulletins, and to answer queries requiring extensive time and subject expertise.

Federally sponsored information services, whether provided by special libraries, national libraries or information analysis centers, thus include: (1) production of machine-readable data bases; (2) publication of abstracting, indexing and announcement services; (3) literature search services; (4) document supply services; (5) research in progress services; and (6) creation of numeric data bases. They are all a manifestation of the government policy with respect to scientific communication, recently reaffirmed in the National Science and Technology Policy, Organization and Priorities Act of 1976, which states that it is the responsibility of the federal government to promote prompt, effective, reliable and systematic transfer of scientific and technical information by appropriate methods.

Government funds, used both by government agencies and organizations in the private and nonprofit sectors, have been a major factor in speeding the application of technology to the extension of science information services. Three broad categories of technology have been applied: micrographics, computers and telecommunications. The use of microforms, particularly microfiche, has allowed the printed science record, especially technical reports, to be compacted, duplicated and distributed inexpensively. Computers allow manipulation of data in machine-readable form to produce outputs tailored to the needs of individual users. Selective dissemination of information, based on a profile of an individual's area of interest, can easily be done for a large number of users with the aid of computers. Finally, telecommunications eliminates the need for individuals to be physically located at the site of an information store. An individual working at a remote terminal can access many data bases in different locations via telecommunication links.

While the application of technology has certainly caused an acceleration of intellectual access to the information store (in that one can locate references to relevant literature much more easily), physical access has not kept pace, since the documents themselves are for the most part not distributed in electronic form, but on paper or microfilm. Documents not available locally must be purchased or obtained through interlibrary loan. One approach to reducing this access time is through the British Library Lending Division (formerly the National Lending Library for Science and Technology), a storage facility which can quickly respond to requests for many hard-to-locate materials. While technologies have certainly allowed the development of services which would not be feasible without
them, their role must be put in perspective. As Ziman observes, "For those who enjoy designing and selling mechanical gadgets, this is a fertile field, but the real effort is human: careful, thoughtful classification and indexing in the first place, and a little imagination and knowledge of science in searching for what one wants."\textsuperscript{23}

INFORMAL COMMUNICATION

While informal communication among those engaged in scientific activities is as old as science itself, it is only within the last twenty years that these communication processes have been subjected to close scrutiny. Price shows that the "invisible college" phenomenon can be traced back at least to the middle of the seventeenth century. The term appears first to have been applied to that group of scientists which began meeting informally as a club and which eventually formed itself into the Royal Society. Price also points out that the invisible college movement may have received its greatest impetus during World War II with the establishment of teams of scientists to tackle particular problems critical to national security. The invisible college networks of informal communication have been studied by a number of writers, including Crane, Griffith and Miller, Gaston, Mullins, Price and Beaver, and Crawford.\textsuperscript{24}

An invisible college is now recognized to be an informal communication network composed of a scientific elite in some specialized research area. The members communicate with each other via telephone, correspondence and professional meetings. They exchange preprints, reprints and drafts of proposals. Crawford points out that information spreads rapidly and efficiently through such a community and likens this spread of information to the spread of infection.

Informal channels of communication play a major role in the diffusion of information on new developments in a field (i.e., on innovation). A considerable amount of research has been conducted on the "diffusion of innovation," particularly in agriculture and medicine. Coleman et al., for example, have demonstrated the great value of a communication network among medical practitioners in the diffusion of drug information.\textsuperscript{25} Those doctors well integrated within such a network tend to adopt new drugs much earlier than those less well integrated. At the frontiers of a rapidly changing field, a scientist well integrated within some efficient informal communication network will be at a great advantage over his less integrated colleagues in receiving new information.

Another important and closely related phenomenon is that of the "information gatekeeper," also known as a "technological gatekeeper."
As described by Allen and others, the gatekeeper is an engineer or scientist in an industrial organization to whom others in the organization go when the need for information arises. These individuals make it their business to inform themselves of new developments of concern to the company, both by reading current literature in the field and by maintaining extensive contacts with individuals in other organizations. Although this may not be an officially designated function within the company, the information gatekeeper plays a key role in industrial progress by bringing information into the organization through both formal and informal channels. A similar phenomenon has been shown to exist at national levels. In some countries international technological gatekeepers have been identified. These are scientists or other professionals who stay current with new scientific or technological developments abroad through the literature and professional contacts. In a sense these individuals deal with the import and export of information. For obvious reasons, such individuals would play a particularly valuable role in importing into a developing country the technology of the more industrially advanced nations. The international gatekeeper has been discussed by Allen and others.

Although invisible colleges have been shown to be extremely effective networks for the transmission of information, they do tend to be exclusive rather than inclusive. It may take some years for a younger scientist to develop the necessary contacts to allow him to participate in such a network. Moreover, although there are no absolute political or linguistic barriers, it is much easier for scientists in some countries to participate than it is for others.

Government and technology have influenced, and are influencing, informal communication in much the same way that they have influenced formal communication. Between 1961 and 1967 the National Institutes of Health (NIH) supported a series of experiments in which an attempt was made to "formalize" the informal channels of communication and to extend their influence. The Information Exchange Group experiments established seven information exchange groups in various specialized areas of the biomedical sciences. A leading scientist in the area was appointed as chairman of each group. It was the responsibility of this chairman to see that all scientists in this area of specialization, including scientists outside the United States, were included in the group. NIH provided administrative and secretarial support to facilitate interchange within the group. All communications, however informal or tentative, that a member wished to share with his colleagues were submitted to the group office, duplicated
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in multiple copies, and distributed to all members of the group. Exchange increased through a “snowball” effect because one communication would stimulate responses from other members. The NIH Information Exchange Groups made a deliberate attempt to widen the invisible college network, bringing in the younger scientists as well as scientists from countries less well developed than those in the West. Although these experiments were controversial (and were bitterly attacked by the editors of some leading science journals), there are many who consider this work the most significant yet to be conducted in the field of scientific communication. Cooper, Heenan and Weeks, and Bever have prepared separate analyses of the benefits of these experiments, and Green presents the very positive views of one of the chairmen. The Information Exchange Groups were shown to have had a very positive effect on research in the fields covered. In many documented cases, the reduced communication lag was shown to have prevented unnecessary duplication of research.

Technology has exerted a profound influence on informal communication, as it has on most other areas of human activity. The most obvious example is the telephone, which can be considered to have had much the same promotional effect on informal communication that the printing press had on formal communication. Technology still has great influence in this sphere. A rather mundane contemporary example is the current CB radio craze. At a more serious level, computer conferencing is beginning to emerge as a major force in communication at a number of levels. As described by Price, for example, computer conferencing has the potential for replacing many types of face-to-face meetings, for substituting for telephone discussions, and even for assuming a major role in the handling of business and other professional “correspondence.” “Electronic mail” systems are beginning to appear in U.S. industry, at least on an experimental basis, and great progress with these systems can be expected in the near future.

THE FINDINGS OF USER STUDIES

A considerable number of studies of the information seeking behavior of scientists have been undertaken. Useful bibliographies or reviews of this literature have been prepared by Carter et al., Brittain, Faibisoff and Ely, Faibisoff et al., Barnes, Bates, Davis and Bailey, Ford, Slater, Weinstock et al., and Wood. In addition, this topic is regularly treated in the Annual Review of Information Science and Technology. Wide variations in methodology and in populations studied make it difficult to compare and contrast the findings of the many surveys already

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conducted. Nevertheless, some findings have occurred with sufficient frequency to allow conclusions to be drawn on information seeking behavior in general. Perhaps the single most important finding is that accessibility (physical, intellectual and psychological) seems to exceed "perceived value" as a factor determining which source will be chosen when the need for information arises. This conclusion is supported by the work of Allen, Gerstberger and Allen, Rosenberg, and Soper, among others. The influence of accessibility on the use of information sources is an obvious manifestation of Zipf's principle of least effort.

Many professionals report an "information overload." They are not looking for more information, but for more efficient ways of receiving and processing information. They stress the need for greater selectivity in information services and for more evaluation, review and synthesis. Annual reviews are highly rated; so are the selection, evaluation and synthesis activities of information analysis centers. Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) services provide selectivity in output to the user but may lack adequate selection/evaluation in the formation of the data base from which the service is provided.

The need for more rapid access to research results and, more particularly, to information on ongoing research projects is one reason why informal channels of communication are frequently judged more effective than formal channels. The appreciation of the need to make available information on current research (as opposed to research of the recent past) is also manifest in the increasing awareness, on a worldwide scale, of the potential importance of indexes to ongoing research. This is evidenced, for example, by the recent Unesco symposium on this subject.

In many communities the first source consulted when the need for information arises tends to be the personal file of the individual seeking the information. When these files fail, it is quite likely that some informal channel will be turned to. It is only after these sources are exhausted that the scientist or other professional is likely to consider approaching a library or other information center. It is a depressing fact that "going to the library" or "asking the librarian" are actions that are frequently ranked rather low when professionals are asked to list information sources used in a sequence of perceived convenience or perceived value.

SOME PROBLEMS OF THE PRESENT COMMUNICATION CYCLE

There are many problems associated with the dissemination of information through the formal channels depicted in Figure 1, and at least some of these problems are tending to worsen with the passage of time.
One problem is simply that of growth. As science and technology grow, so does the amount of research written, published, distributed, indexed, abstracted, acquired by libraries, and so on. In fact, all of the activities depicted in the cycle must grow at approximately the same rate as science and technology itself. The efficient distribution of results of research and development can be considered as a special form of packaging problem. The number, size and diversity of the packages are constantly increasing. Scientific and technical periodicals are now estimated to number about 50,000 worldwide and the number appears to be increasing at close to a 4 percent compound rate annually. The size of individual periodicals also increases. As one example, Sandoval et al. have pointed out that *Biochimica et Biophysica Acta* has grown at an approximately logarithmic rate since its foundation in 1947. It is now doubling in size approximately every 4.6 years. Growth is not a problem exclusive to the periodical literature. Scientific and technical literature is also increasing rapidly in the form of books, technical reports, patents, standards and other printed forms, and other information is distributed on film, videotape and magnetic tape. Tens of thousands of new technical reports are now released each year in the United States alone.

The secondary literature is forced to grow at approximately the same rate as the primary literature. Again, there is growth in the number of indexing and abstracting services as well as growth in the sizes of these services. Ashworth has demonstrated the latter phenomenon dramatically in terms of the number of years taken by *Chemical Abstracts* to publish successive millions of abstracts: first million — 32 years (1907-1938); second million — 18 years; third million — 8 years; fourth million — 4.75 years; and fifth million — 3.3 years. Clearly this service must soon produce a million abstracts a year to maintain any pretense of keeping up with the growth of the primary literature of potential interest to chemistry and allied fields.

One obvious consequence of this growth is that the literature in any particular subject area tends to become increasingly dispersed and fragmented. This growing scatter increases the problems of special librarians in trying to identify and collect the literature in some subject field; it increases the problems of the secondary services, and above all, it makes it increasingly difficult for the scientist and other professionals to "keep up to date." As Bernal pointed out rather clearly some years ago, the scientist's problem is simply that the literature in his field may be doubling every few years but the time he or she has for reading or scanning this literature remains approximately the same.
The fragmentation of the literature is due to more than growth alone. It is a consequence of increasing specialization in science itself. The splitting up of science disciplines into subdisciplines and these, in turn, into further subdivisions has been referred to as "twigging." While this increasing specialization might be thought of as simplifying the task of keeping current in a field, the situation is not that simple. Scientists may be focusing on smaller and smaller areas of science. At the same time, however, science is becoming more interdisciplinary as groups of investigators deal with problem-oriented research. A scientist may now need to seek information from literature far beyond his field of specialization or academic training.

Because the printing and publishing industry is still largely labor-intensive, the cost of publications has increased and is still increasing at a rate greatly in excess of the rate of inflation in the economy as a whole. The subscription price to some secondary publications, including Psychological Abstracts and the Bibliography of Agriculture, increased 850 percent in a decade. In 1940 Chemical Abstracts could be subscribed to for $12 a year. The 1978 cost is $3500 a year. When the cost of scientific publications increases at a rate much faster than the general rate of inflation in the economy, the effect is to reduce the accessibility of these publications. Many secondary publications have already priced themselves beyond the pocket of the individual and are now found only in libraries. Some are also pricing themselves beyond the resources of the smaller institutions. General accessibility declines as a result.

There is already evidence that the same fate awaits the primary literature of science. Rapidly escalating subscription costs for science journals is causing a gradual but inexorable decline in the proportion of individual to institutional subscribers. De Gennaro has given examples of some of the startling price increases (e.g., Inorganica Chimica Acta raised its price to libraries from $26 in 1970 to $235 in 1975) and has pointed out that some science journals have no personal subscribers; they are sold only to institutions.

Dissatisfaction with the science journal as a means of disseminating the results of science research has grown steadily in the last thirty years. It has been suggested that the science journal serves the author well but the reader rather badly. It is an inefficient way of packaging and distributing research results, since the majority of articles published by any one journal a year are unlikely to be of interest to any one subscriber. The present publication and distribution system does not package articles in a way that is most convenient for the scientist as reader. Herschman has
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suggested that the science journal attempts to fulfill social ("publish or perish"), archival and dissemination roles; it satisfies the first two roles fairly well but is not an adequate dissemination device.40

Although the journal literature is growing rapidly, it is not growing fast enough to absorb the increase in research in science itself and in the amount written for publication. In an effort to keep size and price increases within bounds, some publishers are forced to reject manuscripts for reasons of space rather than lack of scientific merit. Authors find themselves competing for publishing space that is growing increasingly scarce and expensive. The submission of a paper to several journals, before eventual acceptance, is becoming more and more common. This increases the average delay between completion of research and the publication of the research results. The science journal must now be considered primarily archival. It certainly does not reflect current scientific research, since it reports work concluded perhaps two years before publication and begun perhaps two years before that. The lag in science publishing is one of the factors that forces increased reliance on informal channels as current awareness sources.

The growth of science and technology in the developing nations creates another problem: a proliferation in the number of languages in which significant research results are published. It seems reasonable to expect that Chinese will eventually emerge as a major language in many fields of science. It also seems likely that other languages, insignificant in science communication in the past, will assume much greater importance. To take one example, Portuguese may become a major language of publication as more Brazilian scientists begin to publish in their own national journals rather than in those of other countries. The languages of the developing countries are likely to be particularly important in a small number of research areas such as tropical medicine and tropical agriculture.

One final problem is worth mentioning. Science communication is no longer concerned exclusively with transfer of information from scientist to scientist. The transfer of results of scientific research to the practitioner (e.g., in industry and agriculture) is assuming greater significance. So is the matter of "vulgarization"—informing the "man in the street" of science progress and accounting for that part of the tax dollar which is consumed by scientific research. A related problem is that of the need to transfer to the developing countries the benefits of research conducted in the developed nations. These are all very special communication problems requiring "repackaging" of research results, translation from scien-
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tific to more popular terminology, special-purpose journals, alternative communication media, and various types of "extension agent" to carry the benefits of science into the fields, the factories, the hospitals, and other application environments.

THE FUTURE

Having dwelt rather heavily on the problems of the present communication cycle, it should also be clear that considerable progress has been made in various aspects of science communication in the last decade. The most notable causes of this progress have been the application of computers to the publication of secondary services, the resulting proliferation of machine-readable data bases, and the rapid growth of on-line systems to make these data bases accessible. It seems almost certain that future achievements must also result from further application of automation throughout the communication cycle.

Lancaster has suggested that society is in the process of evolving away from formal communication patterns which for centuries have been based almost exclusively on print on paper to a communication system which will be largely paperless (i.e., electronic). He suggests that currently an interim stage in this evolutionary process exists, a stage in which the computer is used to produce print-on-paper publications. The distribution of information is still achieved through traditional methods. Machine-readable data bases exist side by side with data bases in printed form but have not yet replaced them. It is likely that the replacement phase will begin very soon. In step with similar developments in other segments of society, where electronic processing will largely substitute for the shuffling of paper, machine-readable data bases can be expected to replace many institutions that have been taken for granted as existing forever in print-on-paper form. Undoubtedly the secondary publications will be the first to go. Somewhat later the science journals will probably be replaced by the on-line composition, distribution and exploitation of reports of science research. Many types of reference books will also give way to electronic data banks. In fact, it seems only a matter of time before the entire communication cycle operates in a largely electronic mode. What will be the role of research libraries in the electronic society? Will they serve only as archival repositories of the literature of the past? Or will they still have important functions to perform as publicly accessible entries into a universe of electronic resources? And what of librarians? What role will they play in this society? What skills will they need? Will the proliferation of on-line terminals, and the information resources that
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can be accessed through these devices, render librarians redundant? Or will the librarian emerge as an indispensable and respected exploiter of a vast electronic “library without walls”?

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Trends in Modern American Book Publishing

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Modern American publishing, like modern librarianship, came of age in the United States in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Until about 1950, the general conservatism of both librarianship and publishing allowed for development and change only within well-established and recognized parameters. Since that date both publishing and librarianship have been in a state of flux. Publishing in particular has experienced more significant changes in the past few years than in any comparable period since the advent of printing from movable metal type. And with the changes in publishing, librarians have sought to impede, influence, or accommodate the transformation of an industry so vital to the profession.

Both librarians and publishers are keenly aware of the changes that have affected them in varying degrees. On one hand, publishers have found new approaches to profit in expanding fields and in the exploitation of new formats: the paperback book and the microform. More recently, mergers, diversification and "going public" have offered publishers the security and capital necessary for expansion. On the other hand, while librarians (and their patrons) have enjoyed the riches of the publishing boom, they have also had to contend with the problems inherent in the new formats and an unfortunate lack of adequate bibliographic control. Both publishers and librarians have been adversely affected by the rising costs of materials and labor, by the profound shifts in governmental

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and private support, by demographic changes, and (librarians more than publishers) by the new information-gathering habits of their public. If the 1960s was a period of unprecedented growth for American libraries, the 1970s represents an era of harsh retrenchment. Librarians are purchasing fewer new publications, are exploring the advantages of networks and consortia, and are more resistant to publishers’ persuasions. Old frictions and new controversies are developing between the two groups—copyright and fair use, to name but two.

It is the purpose of this essay to examine the relationship between publishers and librarians within the context of a survey of modern American publishing. It is perhaps inevitable that the focus should be on the turbulent present and the uncertain future. The recent past, however, cannot be neglected, since in both publishing and librarianship past practices are the key to many present problems.

Modern American book publishing divides itself into two major eras. The first period, the age of conservatism, occurred between the end of the Civil War and the end of World War II. In the second period, the age of innovation (now about a quarter-century old), a progression of minirevolutions has taken place that even today shows no signs of abating.

**PERIOD OF CONSERVATISM**

For publishing to grow, readership and purchasing power must also rise, and there are close correlations in the late nineteenth century among the expansion of publishing, the growth of literacy and the rise of the middle class. A limited audience was sufficient to support the book-publishing industry, which in some cases relied for large sales on pirated editions of popular British authors.

Problems of distribution, however, constrained the growth of book publishing. Few bookstores existed, and direct ordering from publishers was not very satisfactory. Subscription book publishing, supported by armies of traveling agents, grew more rapidly because it circumvented the problems of distribution. However, there was an even larger audience available for which the newspaper and the periodical were almost ideal forms of publication. This ready market and better channels of distribution assured their initial dominance over the book.

The ascendency of the newspaper is one of the important themes in this nation's cultural, social and political history, with the nineteenth century witnessing its greatest expansion. The newspaper has had a dramatic influence on American history, and its impact is most readily
seen in its growth. By 1870, one-third of the world's newspapers were being published in the United States. A variety of factors contributed to this impressive record, including the westward expansion and a growing population as well as increased literacy. The key element, however, was a new technology that enabled the rapid and inexpensive mass production of the "news." The telephone and telegraph made possible the quick and reliable assembling of information, and the emerging profession of journalism allowed an effective analysis and presentation. Power presses, stereo- and electrotyping, mechanical typecasting and typesetting, machine-made cellulose paper, and other innovations helped create a printing process that was almost completely mechanized.

Similar conditions gave rise to the periodical, which in the years following the Civil War became a truly popular medium. Its hallmark was an appealing text that was lavishly illustrated and competently printed. Century (1870-1930) and Scribner's Magazine (1887-1939) are representative of this tradition; their long lives attest to the success of the genre.

The 1890s saw the advent of the inexpensive general monthly which complemented rather than competed with its more elegant cousins. At ten cents a copy, such magazines as Cosmopolitan (1886-1925) and Munsey's Magazine (1889-1929) offered a bargain. Employing cheaper halftone illustrations, these lively magazines were immensely successful, attaining perhaps one-half million subscriptions each. High sales of periodicals (and even higher circulation figures for newspapers) attracted a new source of revenue, the advertising industry — itself only recently evolved. With the income from advertising, the more successful newspapers and periodicals were able to sell their products at less than the cost of production. Advertising has been an important force in newspaper and periodical publishing ever since.

For fifty years following the end of the Civil War, the book-publishing industry of the United States maintained the conservatism that had characterized it since the early nineteenth century. Most American publishing houses were family-owned, and this orientation was only slowly replaced with a more impersonal corporate structure. The old-line book publishers, such as Henry Holt, Frank H. Dodd, Harper and Brothers, E.S. Mead, and A.W. Wagnalls, truly believed in their roles as book publishers to a democracy. They were often scorned by other businessmen for the gentlemanly (some would have said casual) manner in which they conducted business.

Continuity in the publishing business was remarkable, especially
among the houses specializing in religious, juvenile and educational publications. Among religious publishers, for example, the Methodist Book Concern, established in the late eighteenth century, was a prospering business over 100 years later when it reported sales of 10 million dollars, and it is still active today.

Changes did take place, however. With the emergence of corporations, general publishing gradually replaced the specialties around which the old family-dominated firms had been built. Boston and Philadelphia were each superseded by New York City as the center of book publishing. The number of publishing houses increased. In 1859 there were just over 400; by 1900 they totaled 1000, and by 1915 more than 1500 publishers were active in the United States.

Within the publishing industry itself, the notable expansion of general publishing was counterbalanced by the increasing numbers of new special publishers. Specialty houses for the production of law books, textbooks and medical books had existed from early in the century. Subscription, religious and children’s publishing continued to grow as well. Abuses in subscription bookselling, however, tended to give it a bad reputation, leading to the formation of the Subscription Books Committee by the American Library Association (ALA). With limited success, the committee reviewed proposed subscription publications in an attempt to monitor the sometimes questionable practices of subscription book publishers. After the Civil War, children’s book publishing was stimulated through the spread of Sunday school libraries, and by the 1880s the children’s market was inundated. In both content and form, the best children’s books were significantly better than those of any earlier time.

An important new category of specialized publishing was the university press. The needs of university students and faculty for a medium in which to publish the results of advanced research were met in the late nineteenth century by the formation of university presses whose productions went beyond the occasional course catalog or laboratory pamphlet. Although previous attempts had been made to establish university presses, most notably at Cornell University in 1869, the oldest in continuous operation is Johns Hopkins University Press, established in 1878. Its motive — the diffusion of knowledge “far and wide” — was generally adopted by others that appeared in the following decades. By 1946 the university press movement had formally come of age with the establishment of the American Association of University Presses, and even though the output of university presses continues to be a relatively small percentage of the total number of titles published annually in the United States, the nature
of the publications, scholarly by definition, is generally of the very highest caliber.

In both general and special publishing, price-cutting and the net price principle dominated the scene in the early twentieth century. Fortunately, this vexing problem was resolved and the industry entered a period of slow and steady growth, with only occasional reverses brought on by general economic depression. Statistics reported in Publishers Weekly reflect the pattern of growth of American book publishing: in 1880 it reported a total of 2076 titles; in 1910 the total was 13,470.6

After the doldrums of the war years with their accompanying shortages and restrictions, publishing came alive during the 1920s under the influence of the brilliant personalities and energetic new firms that were to continue dominating the scene for many years thereafter. A number of new houses appeared, including Liveright, Albert and Charles Boni, Harcourt, Simon & Schuster, Norton, and Random House. But the quintessence of the new look in publishing was Alfred A. Knopf, established in 1915, whose Borzoi books became synonymous with literary distinction, attractive book-making, and the “unusual and individual.”7 Knopf’s success gave encouragement to the Design in Industry movement that eventually revolutionized the appearance of the trade book in this country.

Knopf’s publishing program was audacious. He gambled by promoting continental European authors on the American book market; he experimented with college textbooks; he produced a juvenile list; he published a literary magazine, the popular American Mercury; and during the depressed 1930s, he issued an inexpensive reprint line of his fine backlist. Other publishers were quick to imitate Knopf’s use of high-quality yet moderately priced reprints as a hedge against the depression. Bennett Cerf’s Modern Library Giants, for example, sold more than 10 million copies between 1931 and 1941. Knopf’s accomplishments, however, were exceptional. The 1920s represented a period more of confirmation than of innovation.

The 1920s did carry the seeds of the post-World War I publishing revolution. For example, in 1926 the Book-of-the-Month Club was formed, to be followed a year later by the Literary Guild. The nearly instant success of these mail-order ventures surprised the publishing industry and alarmed the vested interests. The “book dividend” offered by the Book-of-the-Month Club caused some anxiety. Public libraries feared a decline in circulation, the bookshops spoke of unfair competition; but publishers eventually came to appreciate and even count on the rewards in residual rights. Public libraries have not gone out of business as a re-
The generally benevolent effects of book clubs on publishing and reading in this country in the pre-World War II years cannot be denied. The clubs made available a generous selection of good literature to a substantially larger audience than could have been reached by conventional book outlets. Moreover, the Limited Editions Club, established during the depression, did much pioneer work in developing popular taste for good commercial book-making.

Two other trends in the publishing scene since 1950 also had their beginnings before the war: the microform and the paperback. In the late 1930s, Eugene B. Powers of University Microfilms initiated the first commercial program of microfilm publication of original hardcover books. Unfortunately, the war curtailed development of this medium for the publishing industry. During this same period, the paperback book reemerged.

Until the 1950s, the development of the paperback book in the United States was sporadic. Associated with cheap format and indifferent content, paperback houses were shunned by the regular trade. Paperback titles were generally excluded from the bibliographies of the trade as well. Paperback publishers of the mid-nineteenth century took advantage of the availability of cheap paper, mechanized printing processes particularly well suited to large runs, the lack of copyright protection for foreign titles, and favorable postal rates to create a thriving market. There were in fact too many paperbacks, as witnessed by the growing number of books returned to publishers by wholesalers. Cutthroat competition, soaring costs, dwindling supplies of new authors and titles, declining popularity of fiction, and the constraining effects of the copyright law of 1891 all combined to destroy the paperback market. Ironically, even the technology that had made the phenomenon possible conspired against it. In the mid-1890s, the development of cheap buckram binding cloth revived the hardcover reprint market. By 1900 the paperback had almost vanished.

Nearly four decades passed before the paperback's reappearance on a large scale when Allen Lane's Penguin Books, established in England in 1935, provided the model for paperback publishers to emulate: attractively packaged reprints of works of popular appeal. Lane perceived the need for new markets and innovative methods of distribution. It was in large part the willingness of Woolworth's chief buyer to stock his books
that insured Lane's initial success. In 1939 Lane opened a Penguin office in New York City; that same year, his first American competition appeared in Pocket Books. Among the latter's early publications was an edition of Shakespeare's *Five Tragedies* that eventually sold over 3 million copies. Like its English counterpart, Pocket Books was decidedly democratic and its products could be found in dime stores, drugstores and department stores, as well as in bookshops. With the securing of these and additional channels of distribution, the mass market paperback was launched.

Statistics indicate that there is nothing like a war to stimulate reading and book buying. The paperback was remarkably popular during the Civil War. Had the United States been engaged longer in the First World War, it seems possible that a government-sponsored paperback program might have been developed. Within a year of this country's entry into World War II, the Council of Books in Wartime was established. By the end of the war, 1,324 titles representing 123,535,305 paperbacks had been distributed in the Armed Services Editions.\(^8\) The popularity of wartime paperbacks prepared the way for the period of expansion that was to follow.

Librarians observed and reacted more than they actively participated in the events outlined above. Orion H. Cheney's report *Economic Survey of the Book Industry, 1930-1931*\(^9\) established for the first time the dimensions of the library market which were greater than some publishers had supposed. Also, by this time publishers had abandoned their notion that libraries, by their very existence, reduced the number of books that were sold. Both parties shared common interests and dealt with the same commodity. But the profit motive of the publisher and the idealism of the librarian must have seemed totally incompatible to both. Librarians demanded preferential treatment in the form of discounts. Their billing practices were frequently maddening to publishers — but they were an agency for promotion through the display and circulation of books, through the numerous and generally favorable reviews which they provided in various library journals, and through their advocacy of freedom of the press. Librarians and publishers disagreed mostly on monetary issues, but the problems were not sufficiently serious to cause a permanent rift.

PERIOD OF INNOVATION

In both publishing and libraries, change has been the dominant trend in the years following 1950. In publishing, a major theme has been expansion, particularly in textbook and reference works, in children's and
young adult books, in reprinting, and until recently, in subscription books. Trade book publishing has also accelerated from about 11,000 titles in 1950, to 15,000 in 1960, to 36,000 in 1970. The annual number of titles has declined somewhat since 1974, when a record of 40,000 titles was set.  

Growth in publishing can be explained in large measure by the general industrial growth after World War II and by such additional factors as an increase in the birthrate, income and leisure time; the rising educational levels; the importance of higher education (stimulated by the GI Bill); the financing of education, including libraries and media centers, by the federal government; and by developments in information technology.  

From the librarian’s perspective the new formats in publishing have overshadowed other developments. Additional topics of importance include hardcover reprints, mergers in publishing, emergence of alternative presses, and the working relationship between librarians and publishers.  

PAPERBACKS  

The “paperback revolution” has been accurately described by Arthur A. Cohen as “a mild technological innovation united in questionable embrace with a transformation of the techniques of consumer distribution.” Advances in offset printing enabled the rapid simultaneous production of text and illustrations at relatively low costs. The development of perfect binding eliminated the expense inherent in conventional case bindings. The Cameron belt press made possible the rapid conversion of a reel of paper into a complete book in an uninterrupted sequence of operations. The new techniques referred to by Cohen were those shared in general by postwar merchandising—the supermarket, the chain store, the shopping center, and the discount store. In 1964, the year of its twenty-fifth anniversary, Pocket Books was able to boast of having sold 1 billion paperbacks. In the paperback market of today, this achievement is not unique.  

Although perhaps not in itself revolutionary, the paperback explosion was a response to truly revolutionary changes in American education inaugurated by the GI Bill and continued by both the postwar baby boom and the infusion of federal funds into the educational systems. These activities resulted in more students, more faculty, more schools, more libraries, and expanded and innovative curricula. The profound effects of these events on the book needs of students were first felt in higher education, but they gradually filtered down into secondary and elementary schools as well. One important innovation occurred when primary source
material was substituted for or added to the predigested textbook anthologies, particularly in the humanities.

The mass market paperback industry could not meet the needs of American education after the war. Another kind of book, the quality paperback reprint, sometimes referred to as the "egghead" book, was devised by publishers for this purpose. Dover, Meridian, Vintage, and Anchor were among the early lines. The university presses, with their impressive backlists, entered the field somewhat belatedly.

By the late 1950s and early 1960s the mass paperback and the quality paperback reprint markets were independent enterprises. Each also moved independently into the publishing of paperback originals. Fiction predominated among the mass market originals, an early and successful example being the works in Fawcett's Gold Medal Books series. College textbooks were among the first original publications to appear in the quality paperback line. Van Nostrand entered this field early with its Anvil, Insight and Searchlight series, but many more specialized lines appeared eventually. Like hardcover textbooks, these publications were assured an appreciable audience, and the size, diversity and durability of the market for quality original paperbacks has surprised nearly everyone, including the experts. The higher prices now required for their production and sale have proved no real problem. Relative to hardcover prices, the paperback remains a decided bargain.

The continued and significant growth of the paperback industry has been recorded since 1955 in Paperbound Books in Print. That year 4500 titles and editions were listed. By 1960 that figure had more than doubled to 9800; it tripled in the next five years (30,700 titles), and nearly tripled again by 1970 (88,000 titles). The total number of titles in print in 1977 was 142,000. Perhaps the most significant year in the development of the paperback market was 1962, when for the first time reportedly as many adult books were sold in paperback as in cloth, and the paperback industry sold more adult trade books than were circulated by all the libraries in the United States. A recent and equally interesting development is the Quality Paperback Book Club, a subsidiary of the Book-of-the-Month Club.

The advent of the paperback book has resulted in significant changes in the reading and book-buying habits of millions of Americans. There are no reliable studies available, however, of the degree to which paperbacks have been utilized by librarians, who as a group were slow to abandon their traditional aversion to this format. The great opportunities offered by the paperback market could not be ignored for long, particularly
since with proper binding, paperbacks can be integrated into a library's permanent collection.

There has been a significant increase in the number of titles published simultaneously in cloth and paper. When confronted with such a choice, even though publisher's discounts are greater for hardcover books, librarians hard pressed for adequate funds may increasingly opt for the paperback.

MICROPUBLISHING

The paperback has long since ceased to be revolutionary. Another innovative format is microform, and the end of its revolutionary phase is not in sight. More than any other type of publishing, micropublishing has not only had a significant effect on the industry generally, but also has had an even greater impact on those libraries that have had to accommodate this format to any degree.

Of the several formats produced by micropublishers (roll film, micro-opaques or microcards, aperture cards, microfiche, and ultrafiche), microfilm and microfiche appear to be the two most important today. The production of micro-images was made possible by the advent and development of photography in the nineteenth century. Not until the 1930s, however, were its techniques applied to the publishing industry. Until recently micropublishing was simply reprinting on a photographically reduced scale. Computer output microform (COM) is another, newer development in which the material to be published is generated directly from computerized data rather than by the photographic reduction of original documents. COM gives evidence that publishers are only now realizing that micro-formatted material does not have to appear as reduced printing. Libraries that have installed COM catalogs must now contend with eccentric title entries and mechanical omissions, however.

Initially micropublishers concentrated on publishing entire collections or large groups of materials for which a bibliography was the basis, such as Charles Evans's American Bibliography. Later, publishers began to create their own collections on broad subjects and specific themes. Since bibliographies were not always available for these ventures, access to their contents has always been unsatisfactory. Some publishers have now become aware of the necessity for bibliographic control, and are producing their own indexes and bibliographies. In 1958 ALA established the Micropublishing Projects Subcommittee to serve as a coordinating agency concerned with microform materials for both publishers and librarians. The committee advises on the desirability of proposed micropublishing projects.
that will serve the needs of the scholarly community and takes appropriate action to ensure a desirable quality of reproduction and adequate bibliographic control. Another committee evaluates the adequacy of access to microforms and advises on needed improvements.

An aim of micropublishing is to preserve the contents of materials originally printed on nonpermanent paper, and still another purpose is to copy important and sometimes unique material in case of the destruction of the originals. The use of microforms, especially microfilm, as a vehicle for the preservation of library materials has always been highly touted. As library users are discovering, however, reality seldom lives up to the ideal. There is nothing inherent in film that makes it any less impervious to gradual destruction than conventional book paper. Combine these weaknesses with the inevitable damage that results from even moderate use of the film, and the ideal becomes even further compromised. The recent use of new types of film has further lessened the archival purpose of micropublishing. Vesicular and diazo films are well suited for duplicating, since they do not require the use of a darkroom or of wet chemicals. However, both are less permanent than the more expensive silver-based film.

Micropublishing can also provide on-demand copies of materials not sufficiently needed to warrant conventional publication. Programs such as University Microfilm's provision of doctoral dissertations "on demand" have been quite successful. Another such program may be the "2-stream" approach endorsed by the National Enquiry into Scholarly Communication. Here the best scholarly works would continue to appear in hardcover, while "competent" work would be available on demand in microformat through a national bibliographic center.13

Publishers who also produce printed books are often reluctant to publish the same materials in microform, thus allowing the entire book to be duplicated for ten or fifteen cents. Other publishers take pride in their programs of simultaneous publishing of the same material in both hard copy and microform, such as Pergamon Press and its Simultaneous Microfiche Subscription. The University of Chicago Press's Chicago Visual Library is a text/fiche program that combines the printed text with illustrations produced on microfiche.

Even though printed books will undoubtedly remain at the heart of scholarly research in several disciplines, micropublishers will probably supply at an increasing rate materials to supplement — and in some cases replace — traditional library materials. The major impediment may well continue to be the lack of adequate standards for reading equipment.
As Allen Veaner has observed: "It has been the lack of comprehension — one could almost say obtuseness — on the part of manufacturers of user equipment of the overriding importance of the man-machine interface that, more than any other single factor, has thwarted the realization of the long-sought powerful potential inherent in microforms."14

HARDCOVER REPRINTS

Reprint publishing was ideally suited to the needs of the expanding scholarly and educational fields in the 1960s. New libraries were being created, and existing libraries were seeking greater breadth and depth. Both paperback and microform publishers have been heavily involved in the reprint market. A third element is the hardcover reprint publisher.

Hardcover reprinting is as old as printing itself, a statement easily verified in bibliographies of incunabula. Publishers have always been involved in the reprinting of their own and other publishers' works. However, until the emergence in this century of reprinting as a distinct branch of the industry, publishers were primarily involved in the original publication of works for which a large sale was anticipated.

Modern hardcover reprint publishing is characterized by the reproduction, usually in an offset photographic form and in small edition sizes (the average press run being between 500 and 750 copies), of material available elsewhere at some earlier date. In the United States, the reprint publishers Peter Smith and F.S. Crofts Company were already at work in the 1920s. In the next decade, ALA established a modest program of surveying libraries to identify out-of-print titles worthy of reprinting. Whether from little need for reprints or from an aversion to the reprint format, librarians declined to provide much support for the reprint business, and the market did not grow. Nor did it until after World War II when, in the radically different milieu of the 1950s and 1960s, the reprint industry enjoyed its own explosion. Both the established trade and several entrepreneurs were quick to exploit the need for hardcover reprints. Not only were individual titles published in this manner, but also, as with micropublishing, large blocks of specialized material were created in fashionable subjects and disciplines that librarians and educators either needed or were persuaded to think they needed.

The degree of success of the reprint publishers in measuring the market is apparent in the expansion of the industry. Carol Nemeyer's definitive study of scholarly reprinting provides statistical evidence of growth: in 1966 there were 69 firms and 12,000 titles. Four years later,
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253 firms and 38,000 titles were listed. In 1976 the figures were 328 firms and 66,000 titles.

The reprint industry has its problems, and these are passed on to its chief client, the librarian. Since the number of copies of a typical reprint edition is small, as is the number of potential customers, library support is essential if the reprint industry is to survive. Reprint publishing, however, has been called a jungle market. No other sector of the publishing trade is so lacking in organization and accountability. There is still no association of reprint publishers. Publishers' names and addresses change with alarming frequency, and even though most reprint publishers are reputable, there have been cases of fraudulent business practices. Poaching among reprint publishers is commonplace and duplication not uncommon, with striking differences in the prices charged for the same publication. Bibliographic control is sporadic, and many bibliographic ghosts haunt the pages of those reprint bibliographies that do exist. As long as desirable reprint titles are in the public domain, participation in the business by the unqualified and even the unscrupulous will continue.

MERGERS, CONGLOMERATES AND BIGNESS

An important topic about which librarians have said very little, perhaps because they feel both unqualified and unaffected, is concentration in the publishing industry. Publishers are certainly aware of this trend; indeed, it is increasingly difficult for them not to be directly involved in a situation that is reflected in almost every issue of Publishers Weekly and other trade journals. Some authors and industry critics have become increasingly concerned, as have the U.S. Department of Justice and the Fair Trade Commission, over possible restraint of trade.

Two recent events, particularly visible because they were both "firsts," may indicate a turning point. Farrar, Straus & Giroux has withdrawn from the Association of American Publishers in protest against that organization's endorsement in early 1978 of concentration within the book-publishing industry. Farrar, Straus & Giroux's president noted that his firm had decided to discontinue paying dues for a point of view that it believes to be inimical to publishing interests, to the cause of literature, and to authors. In April 1978 about one-half of Houghton Mifflin's authors announced their intention of reexamining their relationship with the publishing firm if it should be taken over by Western Pacific Industries, a New York-based conglomerate which owns manufacturing companies as well as Western Pacific Railroad, but which has had no previous involvement in the business of publishing.
What has brought some publishers, authors and the U.S. government to this state of anxiety? Earlier in this essay, the point was made that publishing existed outside the mainstream of American capitalism during the nineteenth century and for much of this century. Before World War II, mergers were not common and those between larger firms almost unknown, the major exception being the acquisition of the Century Company by Appleton to form Appleton-Century-Crofts.

Since the 1950s, publishing has come into closer conformity with the prevailing patterns of industry and business. The 1960s, which saw a remarkable expansion in the book-publishing industry, also witnessed the need of publishers for more working capital. New capital was obtainable in several ways. A firm could "go public" and offer shares of its stock to investors. Bobbs-Merrill, Crowell-Collier and Henry Holt were leaders in this technique. A second possibility is the horizontal merger between existing publishing companies. A recent example of this now-common method was the purchase by Harper & Row of J.B. Lippincott. An even more interesting example united Doubleday & Company and Dell Publishing Company, respective leaders in hardcover and paperback publishing. This merger offers interesting possibilities for the in-house transfer of reprint rights of their authors, which might become popular among publishers. Finally, the acquisitions made by a conglomerate will combine companies with dissimilar interests and provide the potential for strength through the diversity of its holdings in more than one segment of industry. The electronics-communication industry, which falls into this category, has been particularly interested in the purchase of publishing houses. The Columbia Broadcasting System now owns Fawcett, Popular Library, Saunders, Praeger, and Holt, Rinehart and Winston, as well as twenty-five magazines. The Radio Corporation of America controls Random House, Knopf, Pantheon, and Ballantine. Other media giants active in this line are Time-Life, Warner Communications and Filmways. American publishing houses have also begun to attract the ultimate in mergers, the international conglomerate.

The concern that mergers, conglomerates and bigness will somehow reduce the options for authors' manuscripts and for divergent points of view, and at the same time exert pressure for the promotion of some best-seller formula suitable for multimedia exploitation, may be valid. One can only guess what the lasting effects of this trend will be. Presently, however, publishing represents one of the less-concentrated industries in light of the fact that "it takes the fifty largest firms to produce 50 percent of the book titles published in this country." It is equally important
to know which firms have been merged and the effects of merger on the quality and integrity of their subsequent publications. If this trend should reduce the number or quality of trade books, concern is warranted, for the trade book is the cornerstone of many library collections.

THE SMALL PRESS MOVEMENT, SELF-PUBLISHING, FINE PRINTING

If the merger is a significant trend in contemporary publishing, the emergence of the small press and of self-publishing, both of which exist primarily outside of the major publishing centers, represents an interesting contrast. The current small press movement is one of the phenomena of the new culture in this country. Its model is undoubtedly Alan Swallow, who produced from his Denver office an impressive belletristic line until his death in 1966. Violating most of the old saws about publishing, he flourished for more than two decades. His enterprise and determination have become the hallmarks of his successors, who work in seemingly improbable circumstances to produce a body of publications which have attained a popularity and significance that have intrigued the publishing establishment and that cannot be ignored by librarians. Indeed, some librarians have become promoters of this genre, while the big publishers have paid it the ultimate compliment: imitation.

Although wary of their big brothers, the small press publishers are gradually becoming absorbed into the bibliographic network of the establishment, much to the relief of librarians. Increasingly, small press books are cited in the trade bibliographies, and incorporated into the Cataloging-in-Publication and ISBN programs. A sure sign of the movement's coming of age is the appearance of specialized reference works about small presses and small press publications. Most of these are published by Dustbooks, located in Paradise, California. The serious problem of distribution has been alleviated somewhat by the establishment of dealers specializing in this line. In Berkeley, California, for example, the firm Bookpeople now represents more than 500 small presses and self-publishers. There is even a Small Press Book Club which provides its subscribers with a sampling of recent publications.

The small press movement is a refreshing tonic to the prevailing conformity of the general publishing scene. And in meeting the needs of its more limited audience, one that the regular publishers have tended to ignore, it has enriched the quality of publishing in this country. Eventually it may provide a small but permanent adjunct to the regular trade book market.

The fine press movement which forms part of this invigorating
scene is also a reaction against the mass product syndrome. Recovering slowly from the effects of the depression and war years, it has exhibited great strength and momentum during the past decade or so. One can only hope that its generally high standards of design and production might have some effect on trade book publishing. Fine presses have been accused of producing too many of the chestnuts of literature. This is changing with the appearance of original and sometimes important texts.

The fine press movement has not yet been tied into the national and trade bibliographies of this country, nor is there a comprehensive bibliography of fine press publications. Given the deliberate isolationism of many fine printers, it seems unlikely that this problem will be easily resolved.

Another response to the limitations of conventional publishing is in the establishment of the library-oriented press. While R.R. Bowker, H.W. Wilson and other houses meet many of the bibliographical needs of librarians, these new firms, some of which were established by librarians, have their use. Firms such as Scarecrow Press, Shoe String Press, Greenwood Press and Libraries Unlimited, Inc. complement the publication programs of the professional societies including, in particular, the American Library Association.

PUBLISHERS AND LIBRARIANS

In its reaction to the challenges of the past twenty-five years, the American book-publishing industry has proven to be a viable capitalistic enterprise, exhibiting overall a business acumen totally uncharacteristic of its early history. New formats have been devised to meet new needs and exploit new markets. Abandoning the "occupational elegance" of the trade, the publishers of mass market books have secured a breakthrough for the industry by adopting modern merchandising systems to secure their impressively large audiences. The hardcover line has also enjoyed a healthy expansion. The annual listings of new, in-print and reprint titles grow, with no demonstrable decline in quality. Paperbacks remain reasonably priced, and thus far most hardcover books have been less affected than serials by inflation. The adult trade book may be adversely affected by industry concentration. Meanwhile, the quality paperback and the small press books serve as useful adjuncts.

Bibliographic control has improved as a result of most publishers' cooperation in such programs as Cataloging-in-Publication and ISBN. Even the newer formats have their specialized bibliographies, e.g., Guide to Reprints and Books on Demand.
Complaints are heard from within the industry of overproduction and underpricing, with the large remainder market viewed as symptomatic of both problems. For most books, distribution remains imperfect. Book outlets are too few and often inadequate. The percentage of returns is high and therefore costly to the publishers. The statement of one doyen of the industry that his inventory was “gone today, here tomorrow” was probably not entirely facetious. Too many books are poorly constructed and badly designed. The problem of paper deterioration which is now so critical for nineteenth- and early twentieth-century books has yet to be solved. But the industry has done its job reasonably well during the past quarter-century, including meeting the demands of American libraries during a period of their unprecedented growth. It seems fair to say that the book-publishing industry appears to be capable of coping in the foreseeable future with conventional problems. But what the industry may need is more imagination.

During the halcyon 1960s, when publishers’ profits were high and librarians’ budgets generous, both parties fell into the mistaken assumption that their interests were identical and that a natural alliance existed. There was general public accord, while specific problems and frictions were resolved through workshops, conferences and liaison committees. This process began in the 1950s when librarians and publishers found common ground in their battle against the censorship controversies of the McCarthy era. The Westchester Conference, organized in 1953 by ALA and the American Book Publishers Council, produced an effective statement on the freedom to read which received general endorsement. In the mid-1950s these two organizations formed the National Book Committee, and in 1958 launched National Library Week. During this decade the two groups also began joint lobbying efforts in Washington, D.C. that have facilitated the passage of mutually beneficial legislation.

The budgetary constraints of the 1970s have reminded librarians and publishers of their differences. Accord has been replaced by confrontation. Librarians were angered and shocked when the book industry withdrew its support from the National Book Committee in 1974, pleading financial reverses. On the other hand, publishers have expressed surprise and disappointment at what they regard as the callous attitude of librarians toward the effects of the new copyright laws on publishers. “We saw clear evidence,” said Curtis Benjamin, “of the librarians’ overriding concern for their own convenience and for the facility of service to their patrons.” Many librarians would regard as appropriate these priorities which have so offended the book industry.
The growth of library networks and resource-sharing has created another point of friction. The inability of a given library to attain self-sufficiency has made cooperation among libraries almost inevitable. Library networks are designed to distribute or exchange library materials or services over various transportation and communication links. The dual trend of reduced or static library budgets, combined with the escalating costs of virtually all published materials, has no doubt hastened the advent and development of library cooperation. For example, in 1974 the research libraries of the New York Public Library, and Columbia, Harvard and Yale universities incorporated as the Research Libraries Group (RLG). Through its Bibliographic Center created at Yale, member libraries have access to over 26 million printed volumes as well as maps, manuscripts and similar research materials. The apparent effectiveness of this cooperation is indicated by the annual report for 1976-77 submitted by Yale University's librarian, Rutherford Rogers. He notes that because the library could use seventy-five “expensive items” through the Bibliographic Center, Yale saved $70,000. The observation that because of increased cooperation, libraries today are collectively purchasing fewer copies of individual titles is probably correct. However, the contention of publishers that by discouraging library cooperation (for example, through the new copyright laws which restrict photocopying and interlibrary loan) they will force librarians to meet the needs of their users by purchasing additional copies of journals and books, is not necessarily supportable. In most cases the money for these purchases will not be there. In reality, it is because of the existence of RLG that Yale saved $70,000 that could, in theory at least, be used for further acquisitions. Publishers should realize that the real causes of journal cancellations and shrinking book orders from libraries are inflation, changing market conditions and declining library budgets — not library networks and consortia. For, as one observer has seen it, “all too frequently, cooperation is merely a pooling of poverty.”

The only perceivable alleviation to the financial constraints confronting both publishers and librarians is mutual understanding and continued cooperation. Publishers cannot expect librarians to spend money they no longer have. But librarians cannot continue to pool resources, lend to each other and enable patrons to copy, so that one book performs the work formerly done by many, without serious consideration of the effects of this policy on publishers.
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Libraries, Society and Technological Change

JOSEPH BECKER

During the past decade this country has reexamined and revised most of its respected social institutions. Some have been rejected. Cultural and social norms are questioned almost daily in the printed and electronic media. In short, this is an era of stressful change brought on by convulsive waves of shifting values on every front.

Change is not new to libraries, of course, but what is new is the collapsed time-scale of change. In the past change was faced as it happened, but lately social and technological alternatives have occurred at so great a rate that change must be dealt with continuously. The order of change is entirely different from anything which came before. Whether one calls this change revolutionary or evolutionary hardly matters; what counts is the degree to which such change will affect the library's role in society. As one librarian put it recently, "the trouble with our times is that the future is not what it used to be."

The social institution called the "library" is in the middle of an onslaught. Tax revolts and rising costs are eroding a traditionally secure financial base. The new media — audiovisuals, television, microfilm and computer-based communications — are in competition with the book. Information is being generated faster than libraries are able to organize and store it. Commercial companies are getting into the information business. Data bases are replacing card catalogs. Communications chan-

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nels are distributing information infinitely more widely. In fact, the pace of technological change brought on by developments in computers and communications has increased so rapidly that it is difficult to comprehend, much less measure, the potential impact of such change on library services and operations. One thing is clear, however; the rate of change in libraries is greater today than in most past periods. This means that the institution as it is today will undoubtedly be altered during the coming decade in fundamental ways. While it is not possible to predict exactly what the library of the future may be like, the principal forces of change can be examined and from this an attempt made to discern some trends.

ECONOMIC PRESSURES

One force of change is economics. Libraries are in an inflationary spiral. The rate of increase in library costs generally exceeds the rate of inflation. How long this will continue no one knows. But libraries are being forced to reduce costs, to examine rather closely what they do, and to determine how they can increase their productivity. Raising productivity through automation has, therefore, become an internal library objective. The application of new technology to business and industry has made many librarians feel confident that automation will work in libraries too. In fact, many librarians view automation as the only sensible way to reduce traditionally high labor costs without sacrificing library service.

Savings in library staff and time, through automation, have already been demonstrated. The use of shared computer facilities and the procurement of small, standardized, special-purpose minicomputer systems for well-defined library operations, such as book circulation and the control of serial records, are examples of areas in which this has happened.

The economic pinch is also felt in the area of acquisitions. At one time libraries sought to acquire large independent collections. Today this objective is regarded as financially impractical. The reason is that the so-called "information explosion" has not abated. Information continues to abound in films, microforms, computer tapes, analog tapes and video tapes as well as in books, journals and technical reports. By 1985 some information scientists predict a four- to sevenfold increase in the world's output of information.¹

The long-standing notion that a library can grow to be self-sufficient is no longer held to be valid. In its place is the idea of "networks," wherein libraries form external cooperatives and rely on the new communications technology to help them share resources. Networks imply increased use of the specialized collections of other libraries. Networks also imply a sense
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of responsibility on the part of each member library to serve more than its own constituency.

One of the greatest benefits which the new communications technology brings to libraries is the ability to interconnect them functionally in a more immediate way than ever before. Electronics can do this. In the past, libraries were doorways to internal collections, but communications technology has the power to convert them into windows on the world's knowledge.

As a result, the trend toward a nationwide network of libraries in the United States has never been stronger. Even without a detailed national blueprint to follow, academic, public and special libraries are taking the initiative to link up and interconnect. The concept of a nationwide network of libraries does not mean substituting technology for people; rather, the network would provide, through communications, the directions and facilities for obtaining backup materials and information needed locally which is in other libraries. It would cause libraries to stand not as independent units but as interdependent partners. Implied in this change is the transformation of America's libraries into a single national knowledge resource accessible to all citizens.

TECHNOLOGY — AN AGENT OF CHANGE

The second significant factor that is causing libraries to change is the force of technology itself. In the last twenty years, for example, the spectacular spread of television, electronic computers and communication satellites has revolutionized the communications system in the United States. Man's appetite for new means of communication seems insatiable. And no matter how many new technologies are developed, there is reluctance to let go of the old.

The computer has already made an impact on American libraries. Computers are being used to keep track of book loans, distribute catalog data to remote computer terminals, check in periodicals, order publications, produce book and microfilm catalogs by electronic photocomposition, and even pay bills to library suppliers. Other library applications include provision of automatic bibliographies, spotting and claiming missing issues of serials, and maintenance of directories of data bases in other libraries. There was a time when librarians looked forward to having the library's own computer on the premises, but the computer industry recently made it possible to communicate with a computer from a distance, and this has become the general pattern. Many libraries own or rent computer terminals which are connected to commercial data base services by
telephone lines and these terminals are routinely used to obtain answers to information questions. Small computers, called minicomputers, also enable libraries to own their own computer for a particular library function such as circulation or acquisitions.

In addition to the use of computers, libraries have begun to utilize telecommunications technology. A great variety of telecommunications methods have been used for library-to-library communications and for library-to-home communications. These range from the simplest use of the telephone, to teletype, radio, and cable television, and even to experiments with microwave and satellite telefacsimile transmission. Although the advantages of telecommunications have been known to libraries for many years, utilization has been retarded by problems of cost and systems planning. In the past few years, however, when it became possible to send and receive library computer data over standard telephone lines, interest in telecommunications in general has grown.

Until recently, the idea of tying libraries together through a telecommunications network was considered a costly objective. However, new developments in communications technology, such as fiber optics, packet switching and direct broadcast satellite transmission, portend lower communications costs, certain to stimulate greater use of communications by the nation's libraries. As these new arteries of communication connect more and more libraries and information centers, the prospect of creating a national network of information resources becomes a tangible telecommunications reality. Studies show that the future telecommunications capacity planned by AT&T and other specialized carriers will be more than adequate to accommodate the traffic projected for interlibrary communications.4

Technological developments in the computer and communications industries are certain to continue. There seems to be no limit. Computer manufacturers are already building "intelligent terminals" with greater stand-alone power and memory than their antecedents had. This means, for example, that a computer terminal will be able to accept instructions from a user, perform an information search at a designated time, use limited judgment in contacting other sources or revising the strategy of the search as circumstances dictate, and it is hoped, learn from its past mistakes. In time individuals may have a small information terminal, much like a pocket electronic calculator, which will bring individual information messages on command.

Continuing advances in computer and communications technology therefore are creating a quiet revolution in libraries. It is quiet because
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the signs of change are subtle and not always evident. It is a revolution because the new technology will most surely affect all libraries.

The National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) is the arm of the federal government principally concerned with institutional and technological change in libraries. In its report to the president and the Congress in 1975, NCLIS took notice of technological change and the trend toward development of library networks regionally and nationally. It recommended that the federal government help join the library and information facilities of the country by developing uniform computer standards, providing low-cost communications services, and coordinating state and regional network programs.

A decision in favor of network development, utilizing computers and communications, requires a national plan. National planning is essential for several reasons. First, technology is costly, and a long-range federal commitment is required from the outset to ensure the stability of the program. Second, technology is complex and technical direction at the national level is mandatory if all relevant agencies are to coordinate their activities and orient their programs in a common direction. NCLIS believes that the nation’s capability to handle information effectively in the future will, to an important degree, depend on how well and how rapidly coordination and integration of new technological methods and devices into the mainstream of the country’s information activities can be made.

To NCLIS, a nationwide network of libraries would encompass state networks, interstate networks and specialized networks in the public and private sectors. The federal government would force no library or information service to join the network, but it would provide inducements, incentives and technical know-how to state governments and to the private sector in order to strengthen the ability of all libraries and information centers to affiliate. NCLIS puts it this way:

If our nation is to achieve the most effective use of national information resources and the largest return for funds invested in them, common goals, objectives, methods and standards are needed now for the coordinated development of information facilities. Unless a coordinated program is established on a nation-wide level, expenditures, facilities, and efforts will be unnecessarily duplicated, and interconnection will become increasingly difficult as local, state and multi-state systems develop without benefit of a common purpose and a common approach.
THE NEW INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT

While the spectacular growth of computer technology and communications technology in the last twenty years has been notable, what is even more striking is the way these technologies are merging and converging with related technologies such as printing and photography. When all these elements are fully integrated, the resultant capability for information transfer and exchange in society will be dramatically different from anything that has gone before. Indeed, some theorists believe that the merging of computers and communications with other technologies will lead to a totally new information environment in the United States that will vitally influence the nation's social, political and economic growth.*

Since libraries are the backbone of the country's information environment today, the more farsighted library commentators expect technological change to usher in a whole new era of library development and service. How information is handled in this country, they say, will determine to a large extent the quality of decisions people make and the character of the lives they lead. Hence, these commentators conclude, librarians have a special responsibility to ensure that technological change is woven into the fabric of society in ways which enable libraries to: (1) broaden and also personalize their information services to the public, (2) strengthen their ability to communicate with other libraries and with users, and (3) increase their internal productivity.

NCLIS believes that the information in libraries and information centers is a national resource intended for the benefit of all citizens. In viewing the future, libraries are seen as the principal information nodes in a national network. This perception attributes more social responsibility to the library than it now has. This means that the library of the future will be more than a place to house physical manifestations of the printed word; it will become the public's main access link to a network of knowledge containing all types of information in all types of formats. This broadened responsibility does not in any way diminish the value of the printed word, but rather recognizes that today's information comes in many new forms, all of which are the library's responsibility. For example, educational organizations are producing films, slides and filmstrips on every conceivable subject; earth-orbiting satellites are delivering staggering quantities of information about activities on the earth's surface; the broadcast media are generating audio and video cassettes of tens of thousands of television programs for playback; and indexing and
abstracting firms are developing huge computer data bases in the humanities, sciences and social sciences. There are many more examples.

What has become clear to NCLIS in its work is that the library is only one organizational component among many which make up the total information environment of the United States, and that the mutual interests of all of these participants are intersecting and growing more interdependent every day. These stake-holders consist of the authors and researchers who create information, the publishers who disseminate it, the librarians who guarantee access to it, the documentalists who index it, the microphotographers who compact it, and the archivists who preserve it.

But that is not all. There are also information brokers who repackage information for sale, computer specialists who digitize data bases, and communicators who transmit or broadcast information in all media. There are the network specialists who connect information files, centers and systems to prospective users, and the information scientists who design information systems and perform research to extend the frontiers of knowledge in the field.

Thirty or forty years ago America's information environment was manageable. The volume of information was moderate and restricted largely to print, the number of organizations engaged in the process was small, and computer, communications and micrographic technologies had not yet made their debut. Today the opposite is true. The U.S. information environment is cluttered and fragmented. It serves specific constituencies, not the public as a whole. It is heavily dependent on computers. If information is indeed to be considered a national resource, then the time has come for libraries and their information counterparts to work together toward a national program that will use technology and other means to make the total knowledge resources of the country equally accessible to all people. How to begin this new movement, and the delineation of state and federal responsibilities in it, is the underlying aim of the forthcoming White House Conference on Libraries and Information Science.

The conclusion to this essay can be briefly summarized. It is inevitable that libraries will continue to be affected by technological change and that in the process, they will develop into a broader-based information institution than they are today. Although the precise shape of the future is obscure there are several bases for at least rough and partial prediction. The first is that economic pressures, technology and the new information environment will not only persist but will also grow. While some tradi-
tional local library practices and customs may survive these pressures, this will not stop libraries from affiliating with networks, striving toward national interconnection, and accepting broader information responsibilities. The second is that more libraries will automate their operations. The library profession now has a decade or more of automation experience behind it, and the trend toward national bibliographic control and associated computer operations is unmistakable. The third basis is that libraries will become principal access points for information and learning in the nation. As yet the United States has not formulated a national information policy. As the government sharpens its focus on the new information environment, however, it is likely that libraries will be designated to play a more active informational and educational role.

While there is great cause for optimism, the painful problems that lie ahead cannot be ignored. Technology alone cannot do the job; it will also require expert social engineering. This is a pluralistic society. Most libraries and information centers in the United States serve local jurisdictions. It will take leadership, imagination and public support for these decentralized units to unite in the national interest. This is the challenge facing the White House conference in November 1979. It is here that the crucial first steps will be taken.

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6. Ibid., p. ix.
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ALA — American Library Association
AT&T — American Telephone & Telegraph
CB — Citizen’s Band
CIA — Central Intelligence Agency
CLOUT — Concerned Librarians Opposing Unprofessional Trends
COM — Computer Output Microform
FCC — Federal Communications Commission
GI — Government Issue
IAC — Information Analysis Center
ISBN — International Standard Book Number
MBO — Management by Objectives
MLS — Masters degree of Library Science
NAL — National Agricultural Library
NCLIS — National Commission on Libraries and Information Science
NEA — National Education Association
NIH — National Institute of Health
NLM — National Library of Medicine
PPBS — Planning-Programming-Budgeting System
RLG — Research Libraries Group
SDI — Selective Dissemination of Information
SSIE — Smithsonian Science Information Exchange
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† Also available in clothbound edition.
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Forthcoming numbers are as follows:

Spring 1979, *The Study and Collecting of Historical Children's Books in the United States*. Editor: Selma K. Richardson, Associate Professor, Graduate School of Library Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Summer 1979, *Economics of Academic Libraries*. Editor: Allen Kent, Director, Office of Communications Programs, University of Pittsburgh.

Fall 1979, *Emerging Patterns of Community Services*. Editor: Margaret E. Monroe, Professor of Library Science, University of Wisconsin–Madison.