

## *Introduction*

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BERNARD VAVREK

THE GOAL OF THIS issue was to identify the current and future trends facing reference librarians and reference librarianship. This task was long overdue since it was last attempted in January 1964. To indicate that librarianship has changed since then, of course, would be an immensely obvious thought. While the reader must judge the extent to which this particular publication has been successful in achieving its goal, I will immodestly state the view that it will come to be appreciated as a classic contribution to the library literature. My principal contribution in this circumstance, however, was knowing the authors whose intellectual products may be found in the following pages. My role has been one of a facilitator rather than of an editor.

A few years ago I commented that the golden age of reference librarianship was over. No new circumstances have changed this view. Moreover, concern must now be voiced about the future of librarianship itself as a viable function in a modern society. It is easy to be pessimistic about things these days. Change, technology and socioeconomic conditions provide tentative circumstances for a bright tomorrow.

By contrast to any pessimistic penchant, however, the essays in this issue are intellectually exciting and bullish about the future. It is true that reference librarianship will never be the same, but the individuals whose thoughts are reflected in this volume give us definite hope and incentive for the future.

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