Managing the Work of Support Staff

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Abstract
This article examines the contemporary nature of support staff
work in research libraries and issues in managing that work. Among
the issues discussed are: (1) perceived complexity of support staff
work; (2) level of autonomy accorded support staff; and (3) supervisory
responsibilities and types of supervision of support staff. The authors
examine interactions between the use of information technology and
issues of control: are workers who use new technologies more or
less specialized, more or less in control of work processes, and in
different supervisory relationships? They are concerned with the
apparent impact of technology on the work of support staff and
also on the social relationships which pervade the context in which
tasks are performed.

The Sociological Debate
Braverman's (1974) influential work, *Labor and Monopoly
Capital*, has framed some of the important recent work on labor
process theory. His basic premise—that managers seek to maintain
control over workers, employing technology as one means to do so—
derives largely from his appraisal of traditional Taylorist practices
in the workplace.

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Taylor's principles of scientific management called for requisitioning expert knowledge from the worker and consigning that accumulated expertise to the jurisdiction of management. The appropriated knowledge becomes the means by which management can rationalize and monitor workers' tasks. Braverman (1974) labels these components as: (1) the "disassociation of the labor process from the skills of the workers" (p. 38); (2) "the principle of the separation of conception from execution" (p. 39); and (3) "the use of this monopoly over knowledge to control each step of the labor process and its mode of execution" (p. 44). In his analysis of manufacturing, Braverman finds an ever-growing distinction between "mental" and "manual" labor in the work force, with many workers in jobs stripped of decision-making responsibilities.

This same process is not limited to factories but characterizes offices as well, in Braverman's (1974) view. Managerial activities produce a corresponding series of changes for the so-called "white collar" worker:

> Just as in manufacturing processes—in fact, even more easily than in manufacturing processes—the work of the office is analyzed and parcelled out among a great many detail workers, who now lose all comprehension of the process as a whole and the policies which underlie it. The special privilege of the clerk of old, that of being witness to the operation of the enterprise as a whole and gaining a view of its progress toward its ends and its condition at any given moment, disappears. Each of the activities requiring interpretation of policy or contact beyond the department or section becomes the province of a higher functionary. (p. 67)

A number of recent case studies (e.g., Glenn & Feldberg, 1977; Crompton & Jones, 1984) have supported the application of Braverman's theories to white collar work and suggest that computers and communication tools are new devices that, if used to routinize tasks and monitor work performance, can help managers to expedite the control process.

Other researchers, such as Attewell (1987), disagree, arguing that new computing and communications technologies reverse the trends identified by Braverman. One of the most influential of such proponents has been Shoshana Zuboff (1988) who draws her readers away from a strict skills/no skills dichotomy and looks instead at the dualities inherent in information technology. She contends that computer systems have the potential both to automate and informate. Automation is the simple substitution of the machine for human thought and activity and can lead to the types of de-skilling to which Braverman refers.

But, Zuboff (1988) argues, information technology has an equally powerful capacity to informate; that is,

> the same technology simultaneously generates information about the
> underlying productive and administrative processes through which an
> organization accomplishes its work. It provides a deeper level of
> transparency to activities that had been either partially or completely
> opaque. In this way information technology supersedes the traditional
> logic of automation. (p. 10)

In other words a technology that informates broadens one's scope
and understanding of transcendent goals and objectives, thrusting
an individual worker into a more complex relationship with the
overall workings of an enterprise. Ironically, this enlarged role
constitutes precisely what Braverman considers clerks to have lost
in the transition from Victorian to modern offices.

Zuboff (1988) also distinguishes between "action-centered skills,"
or skills that rely on the body's senses to accomplish a task, and
"intellective skills," defined as mental thought based in "abstraction,
explicit inference, and procedural reasoning" (p. 75). Fully exploiting
the informating dimension of information technology requires the
application of intellective skills to one's work. It is in this respect
that re-skilling can occur. Zuboff does acknowledge that managers
can downplay the intellective aspect of information technology and
restrict workers' efforts to more limited interaction with an office's
automated system.

This then leaves an uncertain theoretical framework for
understanding issues of complexity, autonomy, and supervision in
an increasingly automated environment. While de-skilling exists as
one possible consequence of information technology, re-skilling may
also occur. Moreover, the sometimes ambiguous relationship between
professional and support staff work in libraries confounds attempts
to understand the effects of new technologies on libraries.

PARAPROFESSIONAL TASKS

Mugnier (1980) writes that the recognition of the "library
associate" position in the mid-1960s resolved a task void between
clerical staff and professional librarians. Ample room existed for a
worker with technical skills to assume duties uniquely related to
librarianship that would supplement the overarching responsibilities
of librarians. In practice, tasks allocated to paraprofessionals overlap
professional duties rather than merely brushing up against them,
creating an uncertainty as to the exact nature of work performed
by each position. For instance, Mugnier (1980) found little substantial
difference between recent graduates from professional programs and
veteran library associates (p. 84). While policy statements have been
issued to delineate more clearly between nonprofessional and
professional functions, in the end staff shortages and budget
constraints often dictate that hiring be based on availability and not

strictly on qualifications. In the group interviews from the study reported in this article, staff offered frequent comments about blurred boundaries between professional and nonprofessional staff members.

The issue is a contentious one. Some professional librarians interpret trends in support staff work as an encroachment on their traditional jurisdiction and resent the implication that their jobs do not require advanced training and expert judgment. Others see it as freeing up limited time to devote to other activities which reinforce their professionalism. Support staff in turn decry the pay inequities and the lack of promotional opportunities. They also rankle at what they view as elitist attitudes embedded in the division of labor in many academic and research libraries.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN LIBRARIES

Information technology further complicates this issue of "who does what" in a library. Because computers and communications technologies "automate" certain tasks or allow them to be done by one person rather than many (as in shared cataloging), their use prompts a reorganization of the way in which work is carried out and responsibilities are allocated. While staff reductions can occur at the time of automation, remaining personnel often experience a reclassification upward in their positions. This is especially true in technical services (Bednar, 1988; Horny, 1987; Presley & Robison, 1986).

Do these findings suggest that the adoption of new information technologies contributes to greater task complexity for support staff in the sense that Zuboff describes? The effect appears to differ by function; that is, technical services become automated, while public services become informated.

The impact for paraprofessionals in their respective departments is complex. Cline and Sinnott (1983) note that copy catalogers tend to form work spheres separate from original catalogers and, consequently, do not fall under direct supervision of the latter. Yet while they escape managerial oversight, they continue to endure routine work (i.e., the technology serves as a new tool to perform the same type of tasks); moreover, the new technology comes equipped with built-in capabilities to monitor and quantify the amount of work performed. Upward shifts in reclassification do lead to speculations about the imminent demise of professional catalogers (Hafter, 1986), not because enlarged paraprofessional responsibilities threaten to engulf their professional duties, but rather because of the reorientation of work around paraprofessional levels to accommodate automated systems.

By contrast, online bibliographic searching in reference work offers an opportunity for developing intellective skills in its users.

Yet it usually falls within the realm of professional librarianship; paraprofessionals generally do not engage in this activity. Nielsen (1982) suggests that this division of labor serves as a means to safeguard professional identity as well as "to protect the performance of the 'core task' from being practiced by others—nonlibrarians" (p. 109). Moreover, the power derived from interacting with a client in an expert capacity operates as an additional motivating factor. Thus, in the public services sphere, the informating capabilities of information technology are usually denied to paraprofessionals.

The differential impact of information technology across departments offers a framework within which to study the nature of support work. This article examines the perceived degree of complexity characterizing paraprofessional duties, as well as the amount of control and autonomy that support staff have over their own work. While the data described herein are not longitudinal and, therefore, cannot provide definitive patterns of skill upgrading or degrading, it is hoped that a profile of paraprofessional work in academic libraries in the late 1980s will provide a foundation for future comparative investigations.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY

The findings reported are based on data collected in a larger study designed to examine the nature of work and authority in libraries as technology becomes more pervasive. Initially, some thirty Association of Research Libraries libraries received a letter requesting permission to administer a questionnaire to their staff members. Eleven libraries of varying sizes and at different stages of automation agreed to cooperate. During the 1988-89 academic year, Estabrook visited each institution to administer a questionnaire to all professional and support staff in each library. An overall response rate of 67 percent was achieved (the exact response rate has not been calculated since most of the eleven libraries were not able to determine precisely the number of employees eligible to participate in the study. Absences due to vacation or sick leave could not be calculated with the precision desired by the research team). Questionnaires were distributed in group meetings at which the purpose of the study was explained. In eight of the libraries, selected staff also participated in focus group interviews on the impact of technology on their work. A total of 1,371 library staff participated in the study.

PROFILE OF THE POPULATION

Of the total sample, 801 respondents indicated that they were support staff. The typical participant is white (87.6 percent) and female (80.6 percent). The median age of those responding is

thirty-eight and most report they work full-time (91.6 percent). The median income of the group is $16,000. About two-thirds (66.7 percent) have worked less than five years in their current job (median = 3 years).

Support staff in these academic libraries are highly educated. The median number of years of formal education is sixteen with 52.1 percent reporting they hold a baccalaureate degree. A majority (54.9 percent) use computers between one and four hours per day. Only 18.1 percent spend more than four hours per day using computer technology.

PERCEIVED COMPLEXITY

Staff were asked several questions regarding use of technology and their perceptions of the complexity of their work: (1) During a typical day, how much time do you spend using a video display terminal or a microcomputer? (2) Please list the kinds of things you use (this equipment) for. (3) How long did it take you to learn to use this hardware at an adequate level to do your job? (4) In your opinion, how much formal education does someone need to perform your job at an adequate level? (5) How much on-the-job-training does someone with adequate formal education need to perform your job at an adequate level?

The study also asked, "On a scale from 1 to 10, how much stress do you have in your life? and "What percent of the stress in your life is job related?"

Overall, support staff do not perceive the need for a high level of formal education or on-the-job-training to perform their job; they reported a mean of 13.5 years of formal education and 8.2 months of on-the-job-training are necessary. On average, staff indicated it took 1.3 months to learn to use a video display terminal or microcomputer at an adequate level to do their job.

As an alternative measure, the reported sources of job stress were examined. Only 7.1 percent of the staff reported job *difficulty* as a source of job stress, but 12.7 percent indicated that insufficient training is a source of job stress. Computer usage (measured by the average number of hours per day that a computer is used) is not significantly related to perceived educational needs or job stress.

On site interviews help to explain some of these findings and indicate some ways in which technology has affected perceived complexity of work. One person, speaking about the impact of technology on her work, said that, although she had more work than before computerization, the work is now more "clerical." "Instead of taking the challenge of cataloging," she said, "you have to spend more time in front of the computer. You have to make sure

this class code is right...(instead of) doing a more intellectually challenging task." In a discussion of reclassifications at one library someone said,

> we found with automation...that just because somebody does certain functions in an automated fashion doesn't mean they are at a different level...a lot of the functions that used to be done by people can be done by machines. So we drop out the lower levels.

At every site, staff complained about not receiving training needed or not having the training at the time they were using a system. In particular, some support staff state that professionals in their libraries are often sent to training and then become responsible for transmitting that information to support staff. Staff expressed frustration that they could not receive the training directly.

SUPERVISORY MONITORING

As noted earlier, computerization can provide new ways of monitoring work. In this study, professionals and support staff were asked, "What are the main ways your supervisor monitors your work performance (e.g., comes around and sees what you are doing or uses a computer system to keep track)?" Nine descriptors were identified for this question with up to three responses coded per questionnaire (see Table 1). Of the 771 support staff who responded to this question, 110 (14.3 percent) either submit their own reports to their supervisor or are not monitored by their supervisor.

Some significant variation in supervisory monitoring exists among public services, technical services, and clerical (not intrinsically library oriented) support staff. Monitoring through personal daily involvement (e.g., supervisor comes around to see what employee is doing, supervisor works near employee, and so on) is more common in public services positions than technical services or clerical positions, although this type of supervisory monitoring was most frequently mentioned by those in all three support staff groups. Clerical staff are more likely to be monitored qualitatively (e.g., accuracy checking of a report) than staff in public services or technical services positions. As would be expected due to the nature of the work, technical services staff are much more likely to be monitored through statistics kept on material processed or work completed. Supervisors more frequently hold evaluative meetings or conferences with public services staff than with technical services and clerical staff.

Little significant variation exists in type of supervisory monitoring among support staff grouped by level of information technology use. Respondents were divided into three groups based on their reported amount of computer use per day: low (less than

one hour per day), middle (between one and four hours), and high (greater than four hours). Significant variation exists for only one type of supervisory monitoring: supervisors are more likely to keep statistics on material processed by middle and high computer users than by low computer users. When respondents are grouped by functional areas, only technical services staff show any significant variation in supervisory monitoring by level of computer use. Supervisors more frequently keep statistics on material processed for those technical services staff with higher levels of computer use. At least one staff member interviewed reported the use of computer tools to develop monthly statistical reports to track work.

TABLE 1. TYPES OF SUPERVISION BY SUPPORT STAFF FUNCTIONAL AREAS

	All support staff	Public Services	Technical Services	Clerical	Level of Significance
Supervisor does not monitor work per-formance	59 (7.7%)	16 (8.9%)	20 (5.1%)	11 (10.9%)	.062
Respondent initiates review or submits regular reports	51 (6.6%)	11 (6.1%)	25 (6.4%)	6 (5.9%)	.985
Supervisor checks or reviews ouput qualitatively	131 (17.0%)	24 (13.3%)	69 (17.6%)	26 (25.7%)	.032
Supervisor receives comments/feedback from other employ-ees/patrons	88 (11.4%)	25 (13.9%)	43 (10.9%)	10 (9.9%)	.504
Supervisor keeps and evaluates statistics on material processed	156 (20.2%)	13 (7.2%)	133 (33.8%)	7 (6.9%)	.000
Supervisor keeps statistics on material processed with use of computer	24 (3.1%)	8 (4.4%)	15 (3.8%)	1 (1.0%)	.297
Supervisor holds regular meetings or conferences with respondent	90 (11.7%)	28 (15.6%)	44 (11.2%)	6 (5.9%)	.050
Personal daily involvement	425 (55.1%)	114 (63.3%)	206 (52.4%)	54 (53.5%)	.046
Yearly evaluations	35 (4.5%)	5 (2.8%)	21 (5.3%)	3 (3.0%)	.289
N	771	180	393	101	

The sum of percentages in each column is greater than 100 because up to three ways of monitoring work were coded for each respondent.

Significant variation also exists among technical services staff for monitoring through personal daily involvement, with middle computer users less likely to be monitored in this way than low and high computer users.

Expanding the comparison to support staff versus professionals reveals a greater amount of variation among types of supervisory monitoring. Variables for each of the nine descriptors are coded 1 if the respondent's answer mentioned that descriptor. Comparison of group means by professional status shows significant variation between professionals and support staff on all but two descriptors (see Table 2). Professionals are more likely than support staff to initiate their own performance review, to have regular meetings with their supervisor for evaluation, and to be evaluated yearly by their supervisor. Support staff are more likely than professionals to be evaluated on the basis of statistics kept on material processed or work completed or on the basis of "qualitative" checks of their output. Personal daily involvement, the most common form of supervisory monitoring for both professionals and support staff, is significantly more common for support staff.

For some of the staff interviewed, personal daily involvement is not providing the kind of communication between professional and support staff that is needed. "They don't understand what we're doing and they're blaming us and it's not our fault," said one of the members of a group interview.

TABLE 2. WAYS SUPERVISOR MONITORS WORK PERFORMANCE BY
PROFESSIONAL STATUS

	Professionals	Support Staff
Supervisor does not monitor work performance	.052	.077
Supervisor receives comments/feedback from other employees/patrons	.125	.114
Respondent initiates review or submits regular reports	.187***	.066***
Supervisor checks or reviews output qualitatively	.097***	.170***
Supervisor keeps and evaluates statistics on material processed	.134***	.202***
Supervisor keeps statistics on material processed with use of computer	.008***	.031***
Supervisor holds regular meetings or conferences with respondent	.362***	.117***
Personal daily involvement	.409***	.551***
Yearly evaluations	.138***	.045***

*p < .05 that difference between professional and support staff is not significant
***p < .001

CRITERIA IMPORTANT IN SUPERVISOR'S EVALUATION

Employee perception of criteria used by supervisors in employee evaluation is measured by respondents' answers to the following question: "Please rank how important *you think* each of the following is to your supervisor's evaluation of your work: The quality of what you do, the quantity of what you do, doing things on time, following established procedures, the amount of initiative or originality you show, and the ability to work without supervision. Respondents were asked to rank these criteria in order of importance. Significant variation among groups of support staff exists for only two criteria. Technical services staff, working in an area where output has traditionally been emphasized, rank "the quantity of what you do" higher than public services or clerical staff. Clerical staff, again due to the nature of the work, rank "doing things on time" as more important in their supervisor's evaluation than public or technical services staff.

This area is one of the few in which level of computer usage is significantly related to staff responses. Rankings on three of the perceived criteria important to the supervisor's evaluation vary significantly by level of computer use. High computer users rank "the quantity of what you do" more important to their supervisor's evaluation than do middle and low computer users. As one individual noted, "The goal (is) production."

Low computer users rank "following established procedures" higher than their support staff counterparts with middle or high levels of computer use. "Amount of initiative or originality you show" is ranked highest by those with the middle level of computer use and lower by high and low computer users.

These findings are remarkably consistent with findings from the group interviews in which repondents who work a great deal on the computer feel they are judged on output, but, at the same time, have a certain amount of discretion over their work. When copy catalogers are at the terminal, for example, they usually have the latitude to make decisions or interpret rules within the OCLC framework.

Comparison of professional and support staff responses to this question revealed no significant differences between the two job classifications for the two most highly ranked factors. Both professionals and support staff perceive the quality of their work as the most important criterion in their supervisor's evaluation and ability to work without supervision the second most important criterion (mean rankings with minimum = 0, maximum = 6 are shown in Table 3). For neither of these criteria is there a significant difference between professionals and support staff in the reported

ranking. Importance placed on quantity of work is ranked third by professionals and fourth highest by support staff. Support staff rate "doing things on time" and "following established procedures" significantly higher than professionals do. Professionals rate "amount of initiative or originality you show" significantly higher than support staff.

TABLE 3. PERCEIVED CRITERIA IMPORTANT TO SUPERVISOR'S EVALUATION BY PROFESSIONAL STATUS (MAXIMUM VALUE = 6)

	Professionals	Support Staff
The quality of what you do	5.14	5.09
Ability to work without supervision	3.59	3.66
The quantity of what you do	3.10	3.14
Doing things on time	3.00*	3.20*
Amount of initiative or originality you show	3.36***	2.48***
Following established procedures	2.22***	2.94***

*p < .05 that difference between professional and support staff is not significant
***p < .001

CONTROL AND DISCRETION IN THE WORK PROCESS

Control over aspects of the work process is measured by three variables: control over work activities, control over deadlines, and control over work methods. Work activity is computed as an index (1 = no control at all, 4 = a lot of control) based on four questions which measure the frequency of work activities decided by the supervisor, decided jointly by supervisor and employee, decided jointly by member of work teams, and decided by the employee. Deadlines and work methods are computed in a similar way. Discretion is calculated as an index (1 = very little discretion, 5 = a lot of discretion) based on four questions which measure the frequency of following set procedures, adapting existing procedures, and creating new procedures for tasks (see the Appendix for exact wording of questions 28 through 30).

Among groups of support staff, only discretion over deadlines varies significantly by department. Control over deadlines in the work process is significantly greater for clerical staff than for technical services staff. Level of computer use also explains little of the difference in levels of discretion for library staff. Staff who use computers at a moderate level report significantly greater discretion in applying procedures to tasks than do their counterparts who report low or high computer usage.

Major differences do emerge, however, when levels of discretion and control or professionals and support staff are compared. In each of the four areas (see Table 4), professionals show more control than support staff: more control over what they do (work activities), more control over when they do it (deadlines), more control over how they do it (work methods), and more discretion in applying procedures to tasks.

TABLE 4. CONTROL AND DISCRETION IN THE WORK PROCESS BY
PROFESSIONAL STATUS

	Professionals	Support Staff
Control over work activities	2.60***	2.42***
Control over deadlines	2.52***	2.34***
Control over work methods	2.63***	2.51***
Discretion in work processes	3.01***	2.59***

***$p < .001$ that difference between professional and support staff is not significant

Data from the focus group interviews suggest that these differences do not derive completely from the intrinsic nature of the work but may reflect "managed" behavior by both professionals and support staff. The following example shows how professional staff can limit the control of support staff.

> We turned in a couple of reports that raised some tension because we did challenge the policies and suggested some other policies. And so the committee was disbanded...and two months later...the decision was made that the people who were on that committee were really necessary...because they were the ones who understood circulation the best, as evidenced by the fact that most of the librarians who at this library don't know how to use the GEAC computer. So they put us back together, but they gave us a librarian to be the chair of the committee to make sure that we didn't overstep our bounds.

Support staff also reported ways in which they intentionally avoid using expertise or control. As one person noted, support staff become knowledgeable about the technology but "you don't want them to know you are a key person because if there are problems it could very easily eat up your whole work week."

Two other areas in which support staff often commented about lack of control were in: (1) input and choice of library systems—few had been appointed to decision-making committees; and (2) implementation of systems according to what they perceived to be arbitrary deadlines. "It seems like decisions were made at the higher level [and] brought down to us as "this is the way it's going to be," we were told.

Some of those interviewed feel computerization has provided new opportunities for support staff. Security and access levels for computers was cited by one individual as a major way of control and reward for support staff. Another commented that computerization means that: "Actually they're setting up meetings with us which is wonderful. We've never done this before."

JOB SATISFACTION

This leads to the final question of job satisfaction, measured in this study by the question, "All things considered, how satisfied are you with your present job?" Responses range from 1 (not very satisfied) to 4 (very satisfied). A second question asked, "If you had to decide all over again whether to take the job you now have, what would you decide?" Responses range from 1 (definitely not take the same job) to 4 (take the same job with no reservations). Among groups of support staff, little significant variation exists in job satisfaction. Public services, technical services, and clerical staff report similar levels of overall satisfaction and similar likelihood of taking the same job again. Likewise, low, middle, and high computer users do not vary significantly in terms of overall job satisfaction or likelihood of taking the same job again.

Professionals report significantly higher overall job satisfaction than support staff (see Table 5), but there is no significant difference between professionals and support staff on how likely employees would be to take their present job if they had the opportunity to make the decision again.

TABLE 5. MEASURES OF SATISFACTION BY PROFESSIONAL STATUS (MAXIMUM VALUE = 4)

	Professionals	Support Staff
Overall satisfaction	3.20***	2.98***
Likelihood of taking the same job again	3.16	3.21

***p < .001 that difference between professional and support staff is not significant

DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

This study began with the expectation that significant relationships would be found between the work of support staff and the amount of computer use they report. In particular, there was an attempt to determine whether differences in levels of computer use can be related to the ways in which work is supervised and

evaluated or in the amount of autonomy and discretion accorded workers. Analysis found few direct relationships between computer use and characteristics of the work process.

Much more is explained by looking at differences between professional and support staff. Support staff are less likely to initiate a review of their own work, to have face-to-face regular meetings with supervisors, or to have yearly evaluations of their work. They are more likely to have the quality of their work reviewed or to have statistics kept on their work.

Similarly, little difference was found in the amount of control and discretion in the work process reported by high, medium, and low computer users from the support staff. Significant differences between professional and support staff did emerge however. Support staff report less control over work activities, over deadlines, over work methods, and over work processes. And support staff are less satisfied overall than their professional counterparts.

Two important considerations emerge from these findings. First, although *amount of time spent on the computer* does not explain differences in support staff work, comments from the focus group interviews note a number of ways in which information technology is perceived to have changed the overall decision-making and work processes within libraries. Since this study was conducted at only one point in time and is not longitudinal, we cannot measure change. We do not have a measure of how things were done in each of these libraries before automation.

Before concluding that computer use has little or no effect on work, it seems important to ask these same questions in a year or so. This study was conducted in 1988 and 1989. By 1992, many libraries had started to go through processes of job analysis and job redesign, indications of significant changes in staffing levels and ways of doing library work. Some of these changes result from staff shortages and budget reductions, but others relate to changes brought about by computerization of some library operations. These same questions asked in 1994 may reveal signficantly different answers.

Second, although this study was not intended to evaluate job design, it does reveal ways in which support staff may need better supervision or improved job design. Dyer (1990) identifies a number of factors associated with effective job design including autonomy, feedback, responsibility, achievement, opportunities to learn and develop, optimal level of work (i.e., the pace that fits the worker), lack of role conflict (what priorities for what tasks), and role ambiguity (who does what), and variety. Since this study intentionally did not examine job design, the results cannot be related to all the areas mentioned by Dyer. Nevertheless, analysis suggests that support staff

in these eleven ARL libraries are not given the same level of feedback as professionals. It was also found that many support staff, with an average of 2.5 more years of education than the average estimated to be needed, felt that they were not being given the opportunity to use their talent optimally, particularly when they report the lack of training opportunities.

Some of these findings reflect legitimate distinctions between work performed by librarians and support staff. And those who worry that boundaries between these two groups are blurred may be encouraged by this study because it reveals significant differences between these two groups in their levels of autonomy and control. It must also be asked, however, whether some of these differences result from control mechanisms imposed by librarians on support staff in order to maintain and assert distinctions between these two groups.

SUGGESTED READING LIST

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Cline, H. F., & Sinnott, L. T. (1983). *The electronic library: The impact of automation on academic libraries.* Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
Kaufman, R. L.; Parcel, T. L.; Wallace, M; & Form, W. (1988). Looking forward: Responses to organizational and technological change in an ultra-high technology firm. In Simpson, R. L. & Simpson, I. H. (Eds.). *Research in the Sociology of Work* (vol. 4, pp. 31-67). Greenwich, CT: JAI.

APPENDIX

Wording of Questions 28 to 30 of Questionnaire

28. Now we're interested in finding out various things about your job
    assignments, supervision, and so on. Please answer EACH of the
    following questions. During a typical six month period, how frequently
    are your WORK ACTIVITIES:

	(1) Never	(2) Up to Several times a month	(3) Several times a week	(4) Every day
28a. specifically assigned by your immediate super-visor?	_____	_____	_____	_____
28b. decided jointly by your supervisor and you?	_____	_____	_____	_____
28c. decided jointly by members of work teams (e.g., committees with whom you work?	_____	_____	_____	_____
28d. decided by yourself alone?	_____	_____	_____	_____
28e. decided by the library user?	_____	_____	_____	_____
28f. a part of the work process and not assigned by anyone	_____	_____	_____	_____
28g. specifically assigned by someone other than your supervisor?	_____	_____	_____	_____

29. Please answer EACH of the following questions. During a typical six
    month period, how frequently are your DEADLINES:

	(1) Never	(2) Up to Several times a month	(3) Several times a week	(4) Every day
29a. specifically decided by your immediate super-visor?	_____	_____	_____	_____
29b. decided jointly by your supervisor and you?	_____	_____	_____	_____

APPENDIX *(Cont.)*

	(1) Never	(2) Up to Several times a month	(3) Several times a week	(4) Every day
29c. decided jointly by members of work teams (e.g., committees) with whom you work?	_____	_____	_____	_____
29d. decided by yourself alone?	_____	_____	_____	_____
29e. decided by the library user?	_____	_____	_____	_____
29f. a part of the work process and not assigned by anyone?	_____	_____	_____	_____
29g. specifically decided by someone other than your supervisor?	_____	_____	_____	_____

30. Now think about HOW you perform your work tasks (e.g., the order in which you do things, the way you get started, etc.). Please answer EACH of the following questions. During a typical six month period, how frequently is the METHOD of doing your work:

	(1) Never	(2) Up to Several times a month	(3) Several times a week	(4) Every day
30a. specifically decided by your immediate supervisor.	_____	_____	_____	_____
30b. decided jointly by your supervisor and you?	_____	_____	_____	_____
30c. decided jointly by members of work teams (e.g., committees) with whom you work?	_____	_____	_____	_____
30d. decided by yourself alone?	_____	_____	_____	_____
30e. decided by the library user?	_____	_____	_____	_____

APPENDIX *(Cont.)*

	(1) Never	(2) Up to Several times a month	(3) Several times a week	(4) Every day
30f. a part of the work process and not assigned by anyone?	_____	_____	_____	_____
30g. specifically decided by someone other than your supervisor?	_____	_____	_____	_____

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