LIBRARY LECTURES

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Numbers Thirty-one, Thirty-two, and Thirty-three
1979-81



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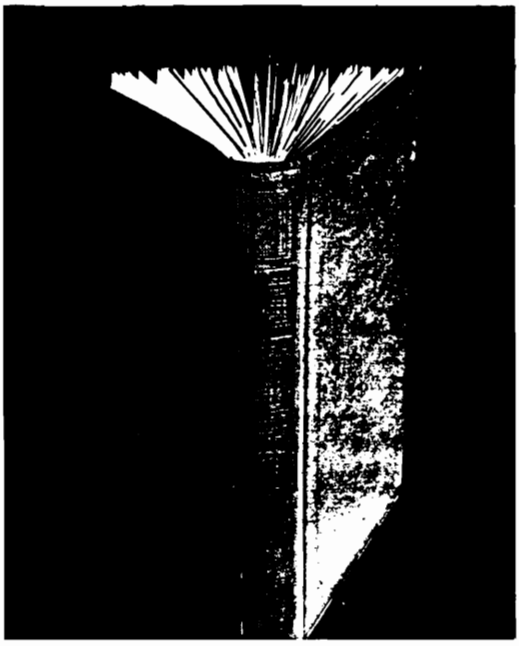

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Foreword

The three University of Tennessee Library Lectures presented in this volume continue a long tradition. Established by William H. Jesse, Director of Libraries from 1943 to 1970, the lecture series was designed to bring to campus a distinguished librarian or scholar who would promote discussion on topics of interest to librarians and members of the University community. The first lecture was given in 1949 by Maurice F. Tauber, then Professor of Library Science at Columbia University. His paper, "Book Classification in University Libraries," served as the catalyst for a reclassification effort in the Library's collections. Each subsequent lecturer has contributed of his or her own expertise to the enlightenment of those attending.

The thirty-first lecture, delivered by Michael Gorman, joint editor of the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules*, Second Edition, discussed the impact of the revised rules. Gorman predicted the new rules would, by restoring standardization of bibliographic control and acting as a catalyst in the process of change, inaugurate a new era of library cooperation.

Richard De Gennaro, in the thirty-second lecture, addressed the chronic fiscal crisis in libraries. He predicted that librarians will need to deal with the imbalance between commitments and resources by facing economic realities. Library goals must be shifted from building large local collections to developing physical and electronic access to a wide range of materials from a variety of sources.

Frances Neel Cheney reminded her audience that writers are generally also readers, and thus many of them have made use of academic and public libraries. Many writers have written of their experiences in libraries, and in the thirty-third lecture she shares with us these experiences, "some happy, some unhappy," of writers and their reading.

Sandra Leach
July, 1981

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Library Lecture Number Thirty-One
University of Tennessee Library, April 19, 1979



by Michael Gorman

Director of Technical Services
University of Illinois at Urbana

On January 2, 1981, the second edition of the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules* (AACR) became the standard for descriptive cataloguing in libraries throughout the English-speaking world. Michael Gorman had been appointed to the Library Association/British Library Committee on the Revision of the AACR in 1974, in recognition of his expert qualifications and years of productive service on various committees charged with drafting standards and rules. The revised AACR was published in 1978 under the joint editorship of Gorman and Paul W. Winkler. He was editor of the Concise Edition of AACR, published in 1981.

Professor Gorman was born in Oxfordshire, England, and attended the Library Association course at the Ealing School of Librarianship from 1964-1966. He won the Cawthorne Prize for the best results nationwide when he took the intermediate examination. From 1966 to 1972 he worked for the British National Bibliography, first as a research assistant, then as author cataloguing reviser, and later as head of cataloguing. He served the British Library Planning Secretariat as bibliographic consultant from 1972 to 1974. Head of the Bibliographic Standards Office of the British Library from 1974 to 1977, Gorman spent the first year, 1974-75, as visiting lecturer at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Graduate School of Library Science. Since 1977, he has been professor and director of technical services for the University Library.

In addition to committee assignments related to AACR, Professor Gorman has served on numerous committees of the British Library, the British Standards Institution, and the Library Association. He has presented papers at library conferences in Britain, Denmark, Hungary, Switzerland, and the United States.

Through a regular column in *American Libraries*, Michael Gorman has educated and entertained readers since 1978 with his witty yet germane analysis of bibliographic issues. He has published over forty articles in various international library journals and has served as editor of the British Library Bibliographic Services Division *Newsletter* and of *Catalogue and Index*. In addition he has written *A Study of the Rules for Entry and Heading in the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules* (1967) and *Format for Machine Readable Cataloging of Motion Pictures* (1973). In 1978 he was elected Fellow of the Library Association.

The Impact of the Second Edition of the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules* on the Catalogues of the Future

The purpose of this lecture is not to explain or describe the second edition of the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules* (AACR 2),[1] not least because such descriptions and explanations have appeared at a number of library conferences,[2] and in a number of library periodicals including papers by the present author.[1] My purpose is to set those rules in their present context and to estimate the impact of the use of AACR 2.

THE END OF SUPERIMPOSITION

AACR 2 becomes the standard for descriptive cataloguing in the English speaking world on January 2, 1981. At that time (a date postponed by one year for practical and psychological reasons)[4] the national libraries of the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia will use AACR 2 for all their cataloguing.[5] As these national libraries are also their country's national cataloguing agencies, this adoption will mean that, in our bibliographically interdependent age, all libraries in those countries will adopt AACR 2.

A change in cataloguing rules is always a momentous event. As libraries have become more and more dependent on centralized cataloguing and, simultaneously, bigger and bigger with larger and more inflexible catalogues, the importance of each change in rules has increased and the opposition to each change has become more vociferous, vehement, and irrational. AACR 2 has been attacked more than AACR 1,[6] which was attacked more than ALA 1949.[7] Change is difficult but offers hope. Stasis is easy but offers nothing. I intend here to explore the promise of change represented by AACR 2 and the hope that it represents for the libraries of the future.

When the first edition of AACR was published in 1968, the Library of Congress, under considerable pressure from reactionary elements, decided to adopt the new rules only for new cataloguing and continue with already established headings (resulting from the application of the 1949 ALA rules and earlier rules). This policy, dignified by the respectable-sounding name of "superimposition,"[8] represents, in my view, the single greatest mistake in modern American librarianship.

I hold this view for a number of reasons. First, the years beginning with 1968 saw the emergence of the MARC program[9] as an actuality. This major undertaking has led to the establishment of a nationally available data base containing millions of machine readable records. Slightly later in time, but with the same success, the remarkable OCLC network began to build its on-line union catalogue, which at this time contains more than six million records. Superimposition has meant that each of these overlapping data bases, both tremendous national resources, has been polluted from the beginning. Because of what was then perceived as an imperative of the LC card catalogue, the real best hope of the future – the resource represented by our machine-readable bibliographic records – has been made inconsistent, flawed, and inhospitable to rational use.

Second, superimposition was a force in sabotaging the steady progress towards cooperative cataloguing. By cooperative cataloguing, I mean the system, foreshadowed by the Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC)[10] program, in which all the cataloguing agencies and libraries in a country contribute to, and draw from, the steadily growing national data base. Superimposition increased the dependence of American libraries on the cataloguing services of the Library of Congress (LC). This is not, on the face of it, a bad thing. However, for financial and other reasons, LC cannot catalogue everything for American libraries. In an era of economic hardship, it is important that wasteful duplication be avoided. The only way in which this can be achieved in cataloguing is for all libraries to have an understood and agreed cataloguing standard. In a way, *any* standard is better than no standard for this purpose. Superimposition – the negation of standards – was, therefore, the worst solution at the worst time. Rather more subtly, superimposition was the cause of psychological harm to the emerging era of cooperation. In theory, cooperative cataloguing was widely accepted. In actuality the will towards cooperative cataloguing was vitiated by an era of the abandonment of the very basis for cooperation – standards.

For the above reasons and more, the end of superimposition is an event to be welcomed. When the Library of Congress adopts AACR 2 it will close its card catalogue, will have a single cataloguing standard for the first time in more than a dozen years, will end the fatal flawing of the MARC data base, and will be in a position to cooperate meaningfully at the national, continental, and world-wide level. International cooperation is important not just because it is A Good Thing[11] and in accordance with the principles of UBC but because it has certain economic and practical value.

Among other moves towards "internationalism," AACR 2 has embraced the descriptive cataloguing concept of the International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD)[12] program and has incorporated many of the suggestions made by Mme. Eva Verona in her pioneering work for the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) on the theory and application of corporate responsibility.[13]

These concrete moves towards international cooperation have led to important agreements between the national libraries of the ABACUS[14] (Australia, Britain, Canada, U.S.) group on AACR 2 and its application and to the prospect of further agreements between members of the international MARC network. In the near future, LC will be able to receive many thousands of MARC records for publications issued and catalogued abroad and, without time-consuming human editing, make those records available to the U.S. library community.

NEW FORMS OF CATALOGUE

The next major impact of AACR 2 lies in the nature of the future catalogue, which AACR 2 will help to make possible. Put briefly, those catalogues, in contradistinction to our present card catalogues, will be reader-oriented, integrated, and automated. The new catalogues will be reader-oriented for a variety of reasons. First, they will be consistent. Our present catalogues lack consistency both within themselves and between each other. They lack internal consistency because they embody successive strata of cataloguing rules. They are inconsistent one to another because local interpretations of various standards had led to a situation in which even if one could learn the intricacies and inconsistencies of one catalogue, one would have to go through another learning process in order to derive benefit from another. Consistent catalogues based on AACR 2 will make bibliographic instruction in catalogue use feasible again.

Second, AACR 2 catalogues will be more reader-oriented because of some of the provisions of the rules themselves. I will cite here four examples of such reader-oriented provisions. First, as the rules for description of library materials (AACR 2, Part 1) are based on a common framework (the ISBD(G)),[15] the resulting catalogue entries will have two important attributes. They will follow a consistent pattern of punctuation and expression and they will give equal treatment to all library materials, book and "non-book" alike. Consistency is important because the catalogue user is presented with a format which he or she can learn and apply. Equality of treatment grows in importance as the use of non-traditional material increases. Second, AACR 2 has pursued the tendency seen in previous cataloguing codes of prescribing the use of the commonly-known form of personal and corporate names rather than the "correct" or "scholarly" forms. Such headings as *Augustine, Saint* (rather than *Augustinus Aurelius, Saint, Bp. of Hippo*); *Eliot, T.S.* (rather than *Eliot, Thomas Stearns*); *Graham, Billy* (rather than *Graham, William*

Franklin); and *University of California, Santa Barbara* (rather than *California. University, Santa Barbara*) match the normal expectations of the catalogue user and increase the accessibility of the records they head. Third, the restriction of the notion of corporate authorship to that of corporate responsibility[16] not only makes the determination of corporate main entry easier for the cataloguer but also leads to a simpler form of entry for many works issued by corporate bodies. Provision of a title[17] or personal name main entry is more acceptable than a corporate entry to many catalogue users. This is especially marked in dealing with serials. Under the stipulations of AACR 2 most serials will be entered under title. This will simplify shelf arrangement of serials and the arrangement of serial catalogues and other serial lists. Fourth and last of these examples of reader orientation, AACR 2 accepts a long established bibliographic reality – the single individual with multiple bibliographic identities. For many years, persons have chosen to write different kinds of books under different names. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, the logician and mathematician, created stories and photographs as Lewis Carroll; the "serious" novelists Howard Fast and J.I.M. Stewart write detective stories as (respectively) E.V. Cunningham and Michael Innes; the detective writer Agatha Christie wrote romantic novels as Mary Westmacott; and, the thriller writer John Creasey wrote thrillers in different genres under at least eight different names. These and innumerable other instances of multiple bibliographic identity have each, under the provisions of preceding cataloguing rules, been lumped together under one of their names, usually the "real" name. This rule has been based on an interpretation of Cutter's *Objects*,[18] which identified "an author" with a single human personality. AACR 2 implicitly states that a single person may be two or more "authors." This approach is not only theoretically sound but has beneficial results in catalogues and on shelf arrangement. Catalogue entries will be found in the place where they are sought and books (especially novels) will be shelved in a place that corresponds to the names of the authors on their spines.

I stated earlier that future catalogues will be "integrated." By this I mean that those catalogues will contain, in a single sequence or in a single data base, records for all the materials collected by the library. AACR 2 covers all materials currently being collected by libraries (with holograms the single and quantitatively minor exception) and treats all of these materials equally and consistently. In the AACR 2 era one will also find consistency as between catalogues. The impetus towards standardization provided by AACR 2 and the consistent treatment of all materials will help this movement. More importantly, AACR 2 is the first set of English-language cataloguing rules which is not addressed primarily to the concerns of large research libraries. In the words of the General Introduction to AACR 2[19] the ". . .rules are designed for use in the construction of catalogues and other lists in *general libraries of all sizes*" (my emphasis). Such provisions as those on levels of description[20] are indicative of the hospitality of AACR 2

to all sizes and types of library. Many catalogue users use two or more libraries, or move from the use of one kind of library to another. These persons will be helped by rules which provide a standard approach irrespective of the kind of library in which a catalogue is found.

The third essential attribute of future catalogues is that they be automated. It is evident that paper based catalogues (book and card) have become increasingly expensive and increasingly inefficient. The cost to efficiency ratio has been declining spectacularly for years and has long passed the point at which such catalogues can be considered to be viable indefinitely. The only alternatives are the microform catalogue and the "on-line" catalogue. The microform catalogue, though it possesses some advantages in expense and potential currency, will come to be seen as, at best, an interim solution in the period between paper-based and on-line catalogues.

The on-line catalogue, on the other hand, offers a truly new alternative. The ability to interrogate the catalogue at a variety of locations, the ability to search by more than one characteristic at a time, and the ability to create a simple and responsive system which is ideally adapted to cooperation and resource sharing – all these make the on-line catalogue *the* prospect of the future.

AACR 2 has direct and indirect effects on progress to the on-line catalogue. Directly, AACR 2 summarizes the progressive aspects of the Anglo-American cataloguing tradition as it has existed since the early nineteenth century to the present. In order to progress, it is necessary to understand the past and present. In that sense, AACR 2 might be looked upon as the last (and best) of the pre-machine era cataloguing codes.

This is not to say that AACR 2 ignores automation, it is to say that since the machine era is only in its infancy, no definitive cataloguing rules for that era can yet be written. Two features of AACR 2 can be seen as major positive developments for machine cataloguing. These are the generalizing of the descriptive framework based on the ISBD(G) and the de-emphasis of the main entry concept.[21] The descriptive advance is important because the descriptive elements occupy the bulk of machine records and, therefore, a comprehensive standardizing of the order, content, and presentation of those elements is of great assistance in the compilation of general machine formats.[22] The de-emphasis of the main entry concept is a positive move because that concept belongs to earlier technologies and needs to be replaced in the machine catalogues of the future.[23]

The indirect effects of AACR 2 on progress towards on-line catalogues lie in the fact that AACR 2 has become the catalyst in a process of broader change. The card catalogue is moribund and would be so even if AACR 2 did not exist. The move towards machine catalogues and the consequent emphasis on authority control exist at the same time as, but not because of, AACR 2. There is considerable evidence that LC would not have created its major machine readable authority file[24] and that OCLC would

not have revised its cataloguing practices and its enormous data base[25] had it not been for the publication and coming implementation of AACR 2.

AACR 2 exists at a nexus in bibliographic history. It is the most talked about feature of this period – a period of changes in cataloguing rules, changes in form of catalogues, changes in classification[26] and verbal subject schemes,[27] and changes in concepts of authority control[28] – but it is not the exclusive agent of change. AACR 2 may be the lever which will move the bibliographic world, but it should not be tagged as the only agent or cause of that change.

A NEW ERA IN COOPERATION

The last major impact of AACR 2 lies in its role in the emerging era of interlibrary cooperation. In good economic times, cooperation is an ideal to which all subscribe but few act on. In hard economic times, such as our present and foreseeable future, cooperation is a necessity for survival. AACR 2, as an internationally accepted standard, will be an essential component in the cooperative creation of the national bibliographic data base and in the creation of state and regional electronic union catalogues. In order to cooperate, to share our library resources, we need easily accessible standard information.

Historically, in this country and abroad, standard bibliographic information has been created by a single national agency. Given the publication explosion of the last two decades and the present adverse economic climate, it has become increasingly apparent that that burden has to be shared. This idea has reached its most developed expression in the National Level Bibliographic Record (NLBR) Program jointly sponsored by LC and the Association of Research Libraries (ARL).[29] The ultimate aim of this program, which is in its very early stages, is that cataloguing agencies in this country which subscribe to nationally agreed standards (principally AACR 2, the MARC format, and the LC Subject Heading List) will be able to create nationally acceptable bibliographic records.[30] These records, once created, will be made available through the LC MARC distribution service and OCLC and the other bibliographic networks. In a sense, once the NLBR Program is achieved, the national cataloguing agency of this country will be the libraries of this country, and a major step towards the ideals of Universal Bibliographic Control will have been accomplished. A program such as NLBR needs two major components: agreed standards and universal access to a common authority file. AACR 2 is one of the major standards involved in NLBR, and, as has been indicated earlier, is one of the major forces in the haste to achieve electronic authority files.

AACR 2 will play an equally important part in the move towards comprehensive statewide or regional bibliographic systems. These systems – which I have called elsewhere electronic libraries – will be the environment for a new era of resource sharing, cooperative acquisition programs, and cooperative maintenance of electronic union catalogues. This

is not the place to go into the details of such systems, but it is evident that agreed bibliographic standards will be an essential part of them. AACR 2 is the chief such standard.

AACR 2, as with all cataloguing codes, contains a number of options intended to give necessary flexibility in the application of the standard. Quite properly, LC has reviewed each of these options and made a decision on a standard implementation of AACR 2. Such an endeavor is necessary and few libraries will have problems with most of the LC decisions. (Had the decisions been arrived at in consultation with the entire cataloguing community, the agreement would have been complete.)

Less acceptable, however, is another facet of LC's AACR 2 policy. Given the importance of AACR 2, it is regrettable, though not fatal, that LC has chosen to attempt to cushion the impact of change for the fearful by adopting a small scale version of superimposition.[31] Many of these divergencies from the rules are petty and unimportant, intended only to jimmy the numbers to indicate a lower percentage of change caused by AACR 2. Some few, unfortunately, have a larger impact. I would mention as an example of these the almost ludicrous decision to retain the "full" form of name for persons who are neither American nor "famous."[32] This decision is important because it strikes at the heart of cooperative cataloguing. Given an author or other person new to the catalogue, how is a cataloguer in a library other than LC to decide on that person's Americanism or fame? Interpretations of cataloguing rules which depend on a single library's practice are inimical to true cooperative cataloguing. I believe that LC, once AACR 2 is established in full use, will quietly drop these aberrations and restore integrity to the national use of the national descriptive cataloguing standard.

CARPE DIEM

AACR 2, then, will be a major part of the ending of superimposition, the achievement of new forms of catalogue, and the inauguration of a new era of library cooperation. Actively, in restoring standardization, and passively, in being a catalyst in a comprehensive process of change, the new rules are of great significance. It is instructive to note that AACR 2, which started as a relatively modest endeavor, an attempt to clean up the errors and omissions of AACR 1, has become a powerful and controversial force at an almost unprecedented confluence of changes in bibliographic control structures. In cataloguing, we are at an historic time. AACR 2 will help us to seize this momentous day if we have the courage to accept necessary change, the ingenuity to devise new structures, and a creative belief in progress in bibliographic control as a positive and civilizing force.

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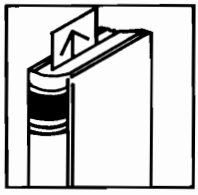

by Richard De Gennaro

Director of Libraries
University of Pennsylvania

Noted writer and lecturer Richard De Gennaro, director of the University of Pennsylvania Libraries since 1970, is a recognized expert on financial planning for libraries. He began his professional library career in the Reference Department at the New York Public Library. De Gennaro joined the Harvard University Library in 1958, where for the next twelve years he held various positions, becoming senior associate librarian in 1969. At Harvard he began a series of contributions to machine-based library operations by establishing the Data Processing Division and directing the automated Widener Library Shelflist Conversion and Publication Program. His planning skills were applied to a number of Harvard Library buildings, including Radcliffe's Hilles Library.

De Gennaro received an A.B. in government (1951) and an M.A. in history (1955) from Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, and the M.S.L.S. from Columbia (1956). He was also educated at the Universities of Poitier, Paris, Barcelona, Madrid, and Perugia, and at the Harvard Business School.

His active service on the committees, councils and advisory boards of professional organizations reflects his interest and expertise in automated library operations. In 1970 De Gennaro was president of the American Library Association Information Science and Automation Division and chairman of the Special Interest Group on Library Automation and Networks of the American Society for Information Science. He was a member of the Planning Conference Committee, coordinating ALA activities related to the White House Conference on Library and Information Services. In 1975 he was president of the Association of Research Libraries. He is presently a member of the board of governors of the Research Libraries Group, Inc.

A prolific writer and lecturer on library and information science, automated library operations, and management and innovation in research libraries, De Gennaro also served for several years on the editorial board of the *Journal of Library Automation*. A significant contribution is his plan to build a national bibliographic data base in machine-readable form. In 1979 he delivered the R.R. Bowker Memorial Lecture entitled "Research Libraries Enter the Information Age."

Matching Commitments to Needs and Resources: Reflections on Managing the Academic Library in Hard Times*

There is a chronic fiscal crisis in libraries which comes from a growing imbalance between the commitments that librarians make and the resources they have to fulfill those commitments. Even during the affluent 1960s – the golden age of education and libraries – librarians never really overcame their traditional poverty. This was because the demands made on them by users and the commitments they willingly and eagerly accepted always exceeded their budgets. That chronic imbalance between commitments and resources threatens to become a vast gulf with the soaring inflation and declining budgetary support that will likely characterize the 1980s. The reach of librarians far exceeds their grasp. The promises they make to their users for collections and services far exceed their ability to deliver and this leads to failure and frustration. If librarians are to succeed in coping with the changes that are coming in the years ahead, they will have to face hard economic realities and reduce their commitments to match their declining resources.

This is not a message that librarians or library users want to hear nor is it one that I enjoy delivering. I said in 1975,[1] and subsequent developments have confirmed and reinforced my view, that support for libraries is not keeping pace with the inflation in book and journal prices, increases in staff salaries and benefits, increases in building operation and maintenance costs. Moreover, these trends will persist through the 1980s when student enrollments, upon which most financial support is ultimately based, will decline significantly. I am urging librarians to face squarely this growing imbalance between commitments and resources, to reexamine their conventional wisdom and develop new and appropriate responses to a rapidly and profoundly changing environment.

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*De Gennaro, Richard, "Matching Commitments to Needs and Resources," *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 7(1) (March, 1981), 9-13.

I have been accused by some of my colleagues of being pessimistic and negative for harping on these unpleasant views of the future. I readily admit to being pessimistic and negative about the ability of libraries to carry on business as usual with late 19th and early 20th century concepts and technology, but I am optimistic and positive about our ability to develop and implement new concepts, new technologies, and new ways of serving the needs of our users in the future despite declining support and growth rates.

I have also been accused of advocating austerity. I would rather be rich than poor. I neither advocate nor enjoy austerity or declining support; it is simply a fact of life for me and many other library administrators, and we have to cope with it. Our world is changing, and we have no choice but to change with it.

PROMISES AND REALITY

Much of the current rhetoric that the library profession is getting from many of its leaders on goals and directions for the future is incredibly naive and keeps librarians from accepting and dealing with reality. I will cite two examples.

In 1975 when the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) published its program and goals for action, it set as its main goal and ideal –

> 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 interest, regardless of the individual's location, social or physical condition or level of intellectual achievement.[2]

The authors of the document do not tell us where the money will come from to fulfill that simplistic and extravagant promise, but it is obvious that they see it as the responsibility of the federal government to assure the equal opportunity of access to information that they advocate.

Not to be outdone by NCLIS, an ALA presidential committee came forward in 1978 with a proposal not only to equalize opportunity of access to information but to equalize access itself. The following proposition was offered in a document entitled "Toward a Conceptual Foundation of a National Information Policy."

> The information needs and aspirations of this nation can be fulfilled only through the attainment of five separate but related universals. All information must be available to all people in all formats purveyed through all communication channels and delivered at all levels of comprehension. If any of these five qualities is compromised, the whole is enervated, and the national enterprise as a consequence suffers.[3]

The unmistakable implication of this proposed policy is that all information must be conveyed to all users at no cost to them – and one is tempted to add – whether they want it or not.

Those are samples of the many unrealistic promises that well-meaning library leaders are making.[4] Now what is the reality? The reality is that libraries are nearly everywhere in decline. The reality is that Proposition 13 and other tax cut movements are decimating libraries in California and are spreading to other parts of the country. The reality is that our great urban public libraries are reducing purchases and services and closing their doors to users. We used to joke about the small town libraries that were open only a few hours on alternate days. Well, now it is the great New York Public Library on 5th Avenue and 42nd Street that is on short hours.

When I worked there in the late 1950s, we proudly boasted that the Reference Department was open every day of the year from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. – a total of 91 hours a week. It is now open 49 hours a week and never on Sunday, Thursday,or holidays.

That decline is not limited to public libraries. Large numbers of academic libraries – both public and private – are suffering devastating losses in book funds and personnel from inflation and declining support. Many have lost a substantial portion of the purchasing power of their book and journal budgets in the last several years and are spending an ever-increasing percentage of their shrinking funds maintaining subscriptions to a decreasing number of journals at the expense of monographs.

It should be clear to all of us by now that what we are experiencing is not just a temporary or cyclical decline in support levels, but a serious long-term reduction in our ability to maintain the kind of research collections, services, and facilities that scholars have traditionally demanded and that librarians have tried to provide. The financial pressures we are facing come largely from inexorable economic, social, and demographic trends over which university administrators and librarians have no control. And they will undoubtedly get worse in the decade ahead. Some privately supported university libraries, particularly in the wealthy sun belt states, continue to receive generous support. But few, if any, large research libraries will be able for long to maintain their traditional exponential growth rates or remain immune to the economic inflation and depression in higher education that is upon us.

This new reality is forcing librarians and scholars alike to re-examine the conventional view of the nature and extent of the collections and services that libraries need and can afford to provide to support the instructional and research needs of their users.

UPDATING COLLECTING POLICIES

We need to refresh and refocus our thinking about libraries and how they should function in the last two decades of the 20th century – a time of rapidly accelerating technological and social change. A good place to

begin is with the basic assumptions about building research collections that we inherited from the library leaders of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Take the New York Public Library as an example. It had a collecting policy that was well suited to the environment and needs of the first half of this century but is no longer valid today. In an outstanding paper about the Lydenberg era at New York Public Library, Phyllis Dain writes this about its acquisitions policy:

> It was then an unquestioned assumption that an institution like the New York Public Library should try to acquire everything of possible research value in the fields for which it took responsibility, irrespective of actual or potential frequency of use and irrespective of time, language, ideology, or place of publication. It was a maxim that every individual's use, for whatever purpose and of whatever obscure publication, was to be respected and that in obtaining such a wide variety of materials the library was creating and preserving a cumulative record of human behavior. Problems of size and funding, though serious, were not yet so overwhelming as to challenge these assumptions.[5]

Harry M. Lydenberg, the architect of this ambitious and comprehensive policy which made the NYPL the premier research library of his time, retired as director in 1940, a decade or two before "problems of size and funding" became overwhelming and forced the library into a period of decline.

By 1980, his successors were struggling desperately to bring the library's policies and commitments into line with its available resources. In a well-reasoned and hard-hitting report to the Board of Trustees, a planning and resources committee concluded "that the Research Libraries can no longer attempt to be all things to all people; desirable as it may be to collect all materials which our diverse readership might require, we are no longer able to do so, and. . . choices must be made. . . ."[6]

Obviously, no single library – not even the Library of Congress – can continue to try to be all things to all people and apply such extravagant collecting policies to the current output of the world's presses. Lydenberg's goal is still valid today, but it can only be achieved by the collective efforts and resources of all our libraries organized into a nationwide network based on advanced electronic technologies.

The conventional view of collection building in research libraries evolved over the last century in response to an environment that no longer exists. This view calls for acquiring and storing locally as large a portion of the available universe of potentially usable research materials as a library can afford. It fails to take into full account such new factors and trends as the explosive growth in publishing throughout the world; the great post-war expansion of research; the rapid increase in the number and cost of books, journals and information services; the rapid rise in labor costs and benefits in a labor-intensive environment; the increasing need for and cost of library space to house research collections which tend on the average to double in

size every 20-30 years; a book and journal paper deterioration problem that has already reached crisis proportions; and a theft and mutilation problem which has become epidemic. This formidable array of problems comes at a time when research library budgets are being stabilized or reduced by inflation.

Obviously no single library or institution can hope to solve these problems by itself. The problems are national and even international in scope and the solutions must come from new attitudes, new concepts, new organizations, and new technologies. The conventional wisdom and responses of a passing era will not suffice to see us through this transition.

New organizations and capabilities are being developed to permit and encourage libraries to band together to try to fashion cooperative solutions to their common problems of building and maintaining collections and serving the needs of their users. Among these are OCLC, Inc., the Research Libraries Group, Inc., with its Research Libraries Information Network (RLG/RLIN), the Washington Library Network (WLN), the Center for Research Libraries, and the British Library Lending Division. The development of rapid and relatively inexpensive means of communication and air travel make it possible and desirable for scholars to travel to the libraries that have special collections of needed research materials. Improvements in telecommunications, micrographic, and computer technologies are beginning to provide alternatives to amassing comprehensive local research collections in all fields of interest in each university.

In sum, librarians and the publics they serve need to develop a new consensus about the nature, scope, and cost of library collections and services that is more in tune with the social, fiscal, and technological realities of our time. Library administrators and their staffs are beginning to come to terms with these economic and technological realities. Library users are also going to have to become more flexible and tolerant of change in libraries in the coming years as we move to implement computer-based alternatives to card catalogs and new ways of building and sharing library collections.

MANAGING THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY IN TRANSITION

Many librarians look to new technology, resource sharing, and new and improved management techniques and systems for solutions to our current fiscal problems. But we know now that most computer systems in libraries have improved services more than they have reduced costs. The use of network systems provided by OCLC, RLG/RLIN, WLN, and UTLAS in Canada promise to be much more effective in producing long term savings, not only in cataloging and processing operations, but also in acquisitions and resource sharing. However, it seems likely that in the next few years those savings as well as the minor savings that come from improved management will be more than offset by double-digit inflation, and declining support, and our fiscal problems will still be with us.

Minor one-time cutbacks can be met by minor trimming and retrench-

ment, but what do we do for an encore after the obvious and easy slack has been cut from the library? What do we do if reduced support becomes a way of life?

When faced with a substantial and long-term decline in budgetary support, the only way library administrators can save significant sums of money is to eliminate positions, because from two-thirds to three-quarters of all the money spent in libraries goes for salaries and benefits. To reduce staff in an orderly manner in technical services requires a reduction in the intake of new materials into the library. To reduce staff in public services usually means reducing reference services.

The best way to eliminate positions is through attrition and the worst way is through lay offs. Lay offs, or even the threat of lay offs, can demoralize a staff and undermine the operation and effectiveness of the library. Job security takes precedence over all other issues in the eyes of employees. Even the forced transfer of staff members from less essential to more critical positions can create serious morale problems, but this is difficult to avoid if a no-lay off policy based on attrition is to be followed. By resisting the library administration's efforts to reduce and reorganize the work and eliminate positions, library staff members can delay and undermine the process and even cause management to fail. However, when management fails, the staff suffers. The library staff has as large a stake in a well-managed library as the senior administrators. It is in everyone's long-term best interests to support reasonable and necessary efforts to reduce commitments and increase productivity. But in the end, administrators must earn the support and cooperation of their staff by dealing fairly and effectively with them.

Those of us who are responsible for managing and staffing libraries during this crucial transition decade must avoid defeatism and despair and carry on as professionals. Many of us have already been put through the wringer of retrenchment and have not only managed to survive it but even to turn it into advantage on occasion.

It is nearly impossible, for political and practical reasons, for a library administration to reduce its budget and cut back its commitments and services unless all other parts of the institution are also retrenching and there is a general recognition on campus – and particularly among the faculty – that a real budgetary crisis exists. Once the fact of a crisis is accepted by the library's various constituents, including its staff, it is possible to make changes and cutbacks that would have been inconceivable in more affluent times. Periodical subscription lists can be trimmed, marginal positions can be eliminated, and less essential services can be reduced. Indeed, if the situation is serious enough, an aggressive library director with a strong political base may even be able to merge certain departmental libraries or absorb them into the main library. However, on those rare occasions when departmental libraries are merged, it is usually because the department wants to use the space that its library is occupying for other more important purposes rather than in response to library budget

pressures.

When faced with budget cuts, some directors may try to get them rescinded by using such obvious but dangerous (and dishonest) tactics as drastically reducing library hours or declaring that the library will become a fourth-rate operation totally incapable of adequately serving the needs of its users. Since most academic libraries are staffed largely by students during evening and weekend hours, no significant cost savings can be made by reducing these hours. Moreover, the institution has a substantial investment in the library buildings and book collections and the librarians should give the highest priority to maximizing their use. Keeping the libraries open on a normal schedule is always a "best buy" and it is also good politics.

For a librarian to declare publicly that his or her library will be forever doomed to mediocrity or worse if the budget is not increased by some amount is a risky scare tactic. If the crisis is real, it will not work, and then it may take a long time for the librarian and the staff to repair the damage to the library's image on campus. Faculty will remember that the director himself said the library was inadequate. I think it is nearly always preferable for librarians to be stressing the library's quality rather than its deficiencies. If the financial crisis is real and severe, it is better for the library administration – and the staff – to accept this new reality and deal with it in an honest and professional manner.

During the affluent 1960s when book and journal budgets were being increased, librarians were quick – and right – to point out that it was not enough to increase the book budget but that it was also necessary to increase the technical processing staff required to acquire and catalog the additional materials that would be purchased. And those were the days when only a third of the materials budget was being spent on serials. Now during the not-so-affluent 1980s, when the book and journal budgets are growing less rapidly and inflation is seriously eroding their purchasing power, librarians should be conceding that it may be desirable and possible to reduce the size of their technical processing staffs to compensate for the reduction in acquisitions that is occurring. With two-thirds of the materials budget now going for a decreasing number of serials and with OCLC, RLG/RLIN, and other forms of computer assistance, there should be a significant diminution in current technical services work loads and more opportunity for reducing staff.

During the period of rapid growth in the 1960s, colleges and universities expanded and added a variety of new programs which were necessary and appropriate at the time, and libraries expanded to support them. Many of these academic programs and the library support for them continue to exist long after the actual need for them has greatly diminished or even ceased. For example, the tremendous need we had for school teachers and Ph.D.-trained professors has passed, yet many universities and libraries continue to support those programs as though nothing had changed. But needs have changed. A New York State Department of Education report cited in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* that:

> In the 1980s, all the academic jobs for Ph.D.'s in English, including jobs in two-year colleges, could be filled by doctorate-holders from the 15 biggest graduate schools. In Philosophy, the jobs could be filled by Ph.D.'s from the 10 biggest schools, and in history, by the Ph.D.'s from the six biggest schools.
>
> During the same period, five of every six new doctorates in the humanities from "elite" graduate schools would not get academic jobs. From the less prestigious graduate programs, nine of ten new doctorate holders would not find academic jobs.[7]

AUSTERITY AND CHANGE

It will be more difficult to make changes and innovations during this period of austerity that we have entered than it was during the time of relative affluence that we experienced during the 1960s and early 1970s. To do something new then one simply got new money. To do something new now will require deemphasizing or discontinuing something old and reallocating the existing resources. Inevitably, the something old will be someone's vested interest to be protected.

In those libraries which still have some budgetary flexibility, the most feasible way of getting together a large enough sum of discretionary money to launch a new program or project is to carefully review each vacancy that occurs and to reassess the need for the position. The money from one or two positions or their transfer can be enough to permit a library to change a direction or embark on a significant new program. However, many budget systems have become so rigid that it is extremely difficult or even illegal to transfer positions or funds from one department or budget category to another. The unfortunate consequence of this growing budget inflexibility is that it turns the director into a bureaucrat rather than permitting him or her to be a manager, and even, on occasion, an entrepreneur.

The amount of discretionary money in a library budget, the money that can be allocated for new or different purposes among or within different categories, is exceedingly limited. Well over half the book budget is committed to subscriptions and continuations, and much of the remainder is committed formally or by tradition to specific departments. The personnel budget is even more rigid with line by line allocations to each specific position, and all positions are assigned specific functions in the various units. In many institutions, money from unfilled positions reverts to the university comptroller. At best it is difficult to transfer, eliminate, or change the duties of positions that are not vacant.

And when vacancies occur, the elaborate, costly, and time-consuming procedures dictated by the federal government's affirmative action regulations must be followed. In libraries with civil service or unionized staffs, the situation can be particularly inflexible. Nevertheless, since more than two-thirds of the budget is devoted to personnel, this is the only category that can be tapped if management wishes to reallocate significant sums of money to new or different functions.

As library jobs are made more secure by a rapidly expanding body of

rules and regulations, including federal ones, and as personnel policies and grievance procedures are spelled out in increasing detail, this continuous reallocation of resources will become more difficult, and the library's capacity to respond to changing times and needs will diminish. In time, the larger publicly supported libraries may become as rigid and conservative as units in other mature bureaucracies such as government agencies, postal services, and public school systems. It seems that as we try to remove the administrator's authority to act arbitrarily or unwisely, we gradually remove his ability to act at all. Indeed, the long term effects of new forms of governance on the library are difficult to assess. We commonly assume that greater staff participation in administration and policy-making will increase the effectiveness of the library, but this has not been proven. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the staff may use its increased share of authority – particularly in difficult times – to protect its own short-term interests and to inhibit change rather than to foster it.

Despite these ominous signs, I remain optimistic about our ability to guide our libraries through the difficult times ahead. Just as periods of expansion and affluence bring their special opportunities for embarking on new and exciting initiatives, so periods of austerity and even severe retrenchment can also create opportunities for beneficial changes and innovations.

It is commonplace that a little austerity after a long period of affluence can be good for an organization. It creates a climate where minor cost cutting of frills and nonessentials can be carried out. While this kind of minor budget pressure helps trim bits of fat, the organization tries to carry on all existing functions and commitments at slightly reduced levels.

It is equally true, but less generally recognized, that a more severe retrenchment may also, on occasion, be beneficial for an organization. It frequently happens during these times of extreme financial crisis that leaders are enabled, or even forced, to be courageous and strong enough to propose and implement the bold changes or programs that really make a difference in the long run. It took a climate of crisis for the Research Libraries of NYPL to totally revamp its collecting policies and try to regain control of its future. It will take a similar crisis for some of our university library systems to close out or consolidate a number of their marginally effective departmental libraries and services. These extraordinary actions, which can contribute greatly to the long-term health of a library system, are politically feasible only under extreme conditions and not in response to minor austerities. People expect to weather minor difficulties by making minor adjustments, but it is generally accepted that major problems call for bold and unusual solutions.

The point I am making is that library administrators and staffs need not despair of improving their libraries during a period of retrenchment. Being creative and innovative will be more difficult during austerity, but the opportunities are still there and we should not use tight budgets as an excuse for standing pat.

In the final analysis, however, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the long-term solution to our chronic budget problems in libraries does not lie in trimming and fine-tuning the existing systems but in a thoroughgoing change in the basic objectives and orientation of research libraries.

CONCLUSION

Two decades of unprecedented affluence and growth in research libraries have come to an end. Most librarians now in or coming into positions of authority and leadership have spent their entire professional lives in that period, and it may be difficult for them to accept and adjust to a new environment. This is also true of the scholars and university administrators that we serve. We need to unburden ourselves of many of the ideas and expectations we have about the growth of library collections, staffs, and budgets, and learn to cope with the new reality of austerity, of diminishing growth, or no growth, and other profound changes in the decade ahead.

During the period of affluence that we have just passed through, a library director typically achieved success in a rather authoritarian style by getting as large a budget as he or she could from a generally supportive administration and spending it to expand the collections, staff, and services of the library. The more money the better, and the bigger the library the greater the success. Now we have entered a new era in which library directors, with the participation and support of their staffs, will achieve success by accepting their austerity budgets, learning to cut and trim, and developing new and less expensive ways of providing for the essential needs of scholars and students. This will require a reordering of library goals from amassing vast local collections to developing effective means of physical and electronic access to an increasingly wide range of materials from a variety of sources. Some of these sources, such as our growing computer-based resource sharing networks, have promising beginnings but need to be further developed. Others, such as the Center for Research Libraries and the British Library Lending Division, need to be expanded and used more effectively, and still others, like the National Periodical Center or System, need to be developed. In any event, the period of austerity that we are facing will doubtless bring as much challenge and change as the period of affluence that we have just experienced.

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[3]David Kaser, Chairperson, "*Toward a Conceptual Foundation for a National Information Policy*," prepared by the ad hoc Alternative National Policy Drafting Committee of the American Library Association, distributed at the ALA midwinter meeting, January 1978.

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by Frances Neel Cheney

Professor Emerita
Peabody Library School

Frances Neel Cheney, professor emerita of library science and former associate director of the Peabody Library School, is widely admired for both her wit and her wisdom. During her long and distinguished career in librarianship, she has performed great service and received much recognition.

Professor Cheney received a B.A. from Vanderbilt University in 1928, a B.S. in library science from Peabody Library School in 1934, and an M.S. from Columbia University in 1940. She began her professional career as chemistry librarian at Vanderbilt University. She worked in several positions with the Joint University Libraries before going to the Library of Congress, where she became assistant to the chair of poetry in 1943, and bibliographer in the General Reference Division in 1944. In 1945 she returned to Joint University Libraries as head of reference. She had been an occasional part-time instructor in the Peabody Library School since 1941; in 1946 she was appointed assistant professor of library science. In 1951 the State Department sent her to Keio University in Tokyo, where she was visiting professor in the Japan Library School. She returned to the United States in 1952 and dedicated herself to teaching and to writing until her retirement in 1975.

An expert in the fields of bibliography and reference sources, Professor Cheney has written and lectured extensively on these topics. She is much admired for her standard textbook, *Fundamental Reference Sources* (1971, 1980). She has published numerous articles in the *Southeastern Librarian*, *Catholic Library World*, *RQ*, *Journal of Education for Librarianship*, *Reference Services Review*, and *American Reference Books Annual*. She also served as editor of *Tennessee Librarian*, 1949-1951 and 1953-1956. For thirty years her "Current Reference Books" column in *Wilson Library Bulletin* kept librarians across the nation informed on new sources. Distinguished colleagues saluted her in that publication upon her retirement from the column as "the nation's number one reference reviewer."

Throughout her career Professor Cheney has contributed substantially to the work of professional associations. She served as president of the Tennessee Library Association, the Southeastern Library Association, the Association of American Library Schools, and Beta Phi Mu. Within the American Library Association she was president of the Reference Services Division and of the Library Education Division. She was a member of the Executive Board and the Council, and served as chairman of the University and College Libraries Section and the Subscription Books Committee.

Many important awards have been bestowed upon Professor Cheney in recognition of her contributions. In 1959 she became the first recipient of the Beta

Phi Mu Good Teaching Award. She was given the Isadore Gilbert Mudge Citation for Distinguished Contributions to Reference Librarianship in 1962. Marquette University awarded her the doctor of literature degree in 1966. In 1970 she was selected to receive the Southeastern Library Association Outstanding Reference Librarian Award and in 1976 she was made an honorary life member of that association. George Peabody College for Teachers bestowed upon her the Henry H. Hill Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1971. She won the Constance Lindsay Skinner Award from the Women's National Book Association in 1976, and in 1978 she was made an honorary member of the American Library Association. In 1980 Professor Cheney was presented the Mary Utopia Rothrock Award "for exceptional contributions to library development in the Southeast."

Writers as Readers

It is not surprising that writers should be readers, not only of their own works but of those of other writers. And while many writers have had substantial private libraries, most of them have also made use of academic and public libraries, some more than others. And being writers, some of them have written of their experiences, some happy, some unhappy, in libraries other than their own. But since there is no Library of Congress subject heading for *Writers as readers*, this paper has been assembled with the help of friends, most of them librarians.

I hope to refesh your memory of what a few writers, chiefly American and British, have had to say about their reading. Most of them are either novelists or short story writers, with one poet, a physician, a statesman, a critic, a biographer, and a journalist included. All of them have had a real zest for reading, and nearly all of them began to read when they were very young.

Certainly this was the case with Eudora Welty, one of our finest contemporary short story writers, whose volume, *Collected Stories*, recently published, has received such wide acclaim. Her stories, usually set in a small Southern town, are based on her keen observation of both characters and settings which she knows so well, having lived most of her life in Jackson, Mississippi.

Writing in 1957 of her early childhood in Jackson, she tells of her introduction to the public library.

> My mother took me to the Public Library and introduced me: "Let her have any book she wants, except *Elsie Dinsmore*." I looked for the book I couldn't have and it was a row. That was how I learned about the Series Books. *The Five Little Peppers* belonged, so did *The Wizard of Oz*, so did *The Little Colonel*, so did *The Green Fairy Book*. There were many of everything, generations of everybody, instead of one. I wasn't coming to the end of reading, after all—I was saved.
>
> Our library in those days was a big rotunda lined with shelves. . . All that

summer I used to put on a second petticoat (our librarian wouldn't let you past the front door if she could see through you), ride my bicycle up the hill and "through the Capitol" (short cut) to the library with my two read books in the basket (two was the limit you could take out at one time when you were a child and also as long as you lived), and tiptoe in ("Silence") and exchange them for two more in two minutes. Selection was no object. I coasted the two new books home, jumped out of my petticoat, read. . . , then in all hope put my petticoat back on and rode those two books back to the library to get my next two.

The librarian was a lady in town who wanted to be it. She called me by my full name and said, "Does your mother know where you are? You know good and well the fixed rule of this library: *Nobody is going to come running back here with any book on the same day they took it out.* Get both those things out of here and don't come back till tomorrow. And I can practically see through you."[1]

Fortunately, not all of us have had such an experience. I well remember, when I was about the same age as Eudora Welty and growing up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the children's librarians of the Carnegie Public Library would let us take out as many books as we could carry. The muscular strength that it gave to my arms has lasted the rest of my life. But Eudora didn't really suffer and her literary tastes improved greatly, especially after she went to college and learned about William Faulkner. Faulkner would have approved of her early reading habits for his advice to writers was to "read, read, read. Read everything—trash, classics, good and bad, and see how they do it. Just like a carpenter who works as an apprentice and studies his master. Read! You'll absorb it. Then write. If it is good, you'll find out. If it's not, throw it out the window."[2]

Clifton Fadiman also began to read at an early age. This popular moderator of the "Information Please!" radio program, stout supporter of the Great Books program, compiler of many anthologies, and author of the *Lifetime Reading Plan* (100 books he has been reading on and off for most of his life), was reading when he was four. His first book was *The Overall Boys*. Until he was ten, he read moderately but ranged widely in subject matter, from an adventure story about the Belgian Congo—which made him an anti-imperialist when he was eight—and all of Maupassant, to an unreadable set of historical novels by Mühlbach, and a volume of Ibsen, which he found impenetrable. Of course, he read some trash—Horatio Alger, the Rover Boys, and wild west stories, which he considers superior to the trash of today.

But it was between the ages of ten and seventeen that he read the most.

I have never read as many books per year since, nor do I expect to in the future. They were the splendid years and it is my notion that they are the splendid years of most devoted readers. After seventeen (in some cases a year or two later) the books choose you, not you the book. You read within limits. Reading becomes a program. You read as part of your college curriculum, or to gain knowledge in a specific field, or to be able to bore your neighbor at dinner-table conversation.[3]

He lists a few authors which he read during that period,

> Mainly to indicate the kind of writer that, as I recall, influenced the more bookish boys and girls of my generation. Shaw, Galsworthy, Bennett, Conrad, Merrick, Barrie, Moore, Dunsany, Yeats, Synge, Swinnerton, Chesterton, Meredith, Wilde, Hewlett, Gissing, Zangwill, and above all, H.G. Wells—these to confine the list to Englishmen only, are a few of the authors I remember devouring from my tenth to my seventeenth year, miscomprehending many, overprizing some, but getting from all an exultant sense of discovery, a peak-in-Darien thrill rarely enjoyed since.[4]

Fadiman lived about two miles from the nearest library when he was fourteen, and he had the choice of riding his bicycle there, borrowing his books and cycling back in a short time. But since that was time lost to reading, he preferred to walk to the library, reading the last pages of an unfinished book on the way and reading a new book all the way back, for he had learned how to avoid pedestrians. "I think Providence meant me to be an ambulant reader, for I never once even stumbled."[5]

The art of serious reading, however, he learned from John Erskine, his professor at Columbia University, who challenged his students to understand what they were reading. Erskine and Mark Van Doren taught him how to read, and he felt fortunate.[6]

Another serious reader was John Shaw Billings, one of the most honored physicians of the late 19th century, graduate of Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, and world famous for his *Index-catalogue of the Library of the Surgeon General's Office*. He is also known as the father of the United States Public Health Service, and the creator of the New York Public Library with the assistance of Andrew Carnegie's grant of more than $5,000,000. During his life he wrote 200 papers on medicine, public hygiene, hospital organization, and the development of medical and general libraries. He entered Miami University in his fifteenth year, where most of his time was spent reading books in the college library, everything as it came—philosophy, theology, natural science, history, travel, and fiction.

> I was an omnivorous reader in my college days and waded through the college library, taking Jonathan Edwards' sermons, Fielding's novels and Burke's speeches with great impartiality. One Saturday morning as I was leaving the library with as many books as I could carry, Professor Bishop stopped me, saying: "Well, John, let me see what you are reading." Turning over the volumes he came on a copy of Smollett's *Peregrine Pickle*, which he opened. "Do you know anything about this book?" he asked. "No, sir," was my reply. "H'm, it's strong food for a boy your age," he said. Ruffling over the pages he added, more to himself than to me, "Well, take it along; you'll have to read it sometime, I suppose." His decision was the right one, I am sure, although I wondered a little when I read the book.[7]

Later, speaking at the Miami University comencement in 1895 he told the graduates that:

> I obtained the larger part of my education in the old library under this roof. I read without guidance, taking the books as they came . . . I didn't understand half that I read and supposed I had forgotten most of it a long time ago; but sometimes whole sentences come back to me that I have not recalled for forty years. Reading may serve a man in the distant future, enabling him to produce the right word at the right time, and much in life depends on that.[8]

Soon after that speech, in December of 1895, he was named director of the New York Public Library.

It was nearly forty years earlier, during the summer of 1856, that Billings was staying in Oxford to tutor some local children. The college library, on the upper floor of the old Main Building was locked up for the summer. But Billings broke in, as he confessed to the audience at the dedicaton of the Radcliffe College Library, "During the long summer vacation I used to make a burglar's entrance into the library by climbing over the roof and using a trap door into the attic. Then, alone among all those books, I had long hours of enjoyment. There was no wise librarian to guide me. I simply tried every book on the shelves, skimming and skipping through many of them and feasting on others."[9]

That would be harder to do in 1981, considering the enormous increase in library collections.

We naturally expect historians and biographers to use libraries throughout their writing life, but not many of them have written of their experiences with librarians, being content to acknowledge their help in the prefaces of their books. One who did was Catherine Drinker Bowen, whose early biographies of Tchaikowski and the Rubensteins reflect her early interest in music. These were followed by biographies of Justice Holmes, John Adams, Sir Edward Coke, Francis Bacon and Benjamin Franklin, the last published a year after her death in 1973. Her "Salute to Librarians," first published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, was reprinted in *Adventures of a Biographer*.[10] It is both warming and disturbing. She begins:

> The pleasing condition known as true love is seldom attained without difficulty. Nowadays, I can declare with truth that I am in love with librarians—engaged in a perpetual, delightful affair of the heart with all custodians of books.
>
> But in my early twenties, struggling in library basements with bound volumes of newspapers or shuffling through a jungle of card catalogues, I was convinced that librarians existed solely to keep people from reading books. It is natural for young readers to experience shyness in big city or university libraries; the presence of so many books is at the same time exciting and intimidating. The young scholar longs for introduction, a knowledgeable hand to reach, point, act as intermediary between himself and all those riches.
>
> In early days, I tried not to give librarians any trouble, which is where I made my primary mistake. Librarians like to be given trouble; they exist for it, they are geared to it. For the location of a mislaid volume, an uncatalogued item, your good librarian has a ferret's nose. Give her a scent and she jumps the leash, her eye bright with battle. But I did not know this.[11]

So Miss Bowen would look up the numbers of a dozen books which she needed to use at home, but when she took them to the desk she was told, like Eudora Welty, that only two books could be checked out at one time.

After receiving a crushing rebuff from the curator of the Slavonic Division of the New York Public Library, she decided to study not books but *librarians*. She sometimes had trouble in research libraries where the librarians always asked her, "You don't want *printed* material, do you?" The difficult Mr. Henry Adams, curator of the Adams Papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society, gave her a bad time, but finally came through nobly by supplying her with everything she had asked for, copying it all himself.[12]

But a librarian at the Library of Congress took her to the rooms where the Holmes family library was stored, and after learning that she planned to spend the day there, told her that he thought the library could take the risk of leaving her there alone. She says, "I never saw him again. But I remember that young man with gratitude. He led me where I wanted to go and showed me what I had come there to see, then took my measure and left me with the books."[13] Since, contrary to common practice, Miss Bowen did all her own research and reading required for her biographies, she was very dependent on librarians. She concluded her salute: "I have known librarians over half the world. I think their praises are not often sung, and I am glad to sing them now. Wherever they are, I salute them and wish them joy of their work."[14]

Mr. Anthony Burgess doesn't share Miss Bowen's enthusiasm for great libraries, at least if we take seriously his essay, "Why All This Fuss about Libraries?"[15] Of course, Burgess is known as a comic novelist whose comic skill relies on a combination of the horrible and the absurd to achieve a proper effect. Some may consider this essay both horrible and absurd, and perhaps comic. At any rate, he begins,

> People make too much fuss about the sacrosanctity of libraries. I'd better make it clear now that I dislike great libraries for highly personal reasons which I'm quite ready to erect into a bibliothecal philosophy. I was frightened by a library as a child, and I've never got over it. When I was in the fourth form, I was told to give a lecture to the rest of the class on James Elroy Flecker, getting my material from the Manchester (England) General Reference Library. When I got there I didn't know what to do. A sort of blindness prevented me from finding the alphabetical index: all I could find was the Dewey decimal one. The librarians were tough men in good suits. When I filled in an order form, I noticed that it required my address as well as my name. I thought this meant I had to take the book home (I'd found a title that would do, quite by chance, in the 820 section.) Taking it home, I was stopped. Everybody stopped reading to listen. Then, of course, I perceived that nobody was taking books home. It was a nightmare experience.[16]
>
> I have used small libraries and even built some myself, but I'm never happy in a public one. The books I seek are always on the bottom shelf, and bending brings on palpitations. When I go to look at my own books, just to comfort myself with the reminder that I, in my own small way, have become a part of this fearsome galaxy and that this, in consequence, cannot be so fear-

> some after all, I always find scrawled insults in the margins. On the title page of one of my novels, somebody had inked neatly, "BLOODY RUBBISH." The book that I want is never there, and when the librarian repeats the title it always sounds suspect. When a book of mine comes out, I usually present a copy, signed, to my local library. The librarian accepts it warily and invariably opens it at a page with a dirty word on it or a scene of loveless passion. Trying to insinuate pornography in, eh?—gratuitously seeking to corrupt those decent ratepayers with string bags and copies of Barbara Cartland.[17]

He was also miffed when he had to take out one of his own books and was told by an old man in the stacks that it was a waste of time reading it. "When I took it back I was fined 3s.6d. My own book, mark you."[18]

Burgess has a particular horror of the British Museum Library because of "those millions of cells which make up the genuine memory of mankind." And he has vowed so far as his trade of writing makes it possible to stay out of the great libraries.

> And this trade will flourish best if I stop myself thinking of all those millions of volumes in the British Museum Library. . . The writer has to think of himself as a lone star. To know that he's a mere speck in the galaxies of Bloomsbury is dispiriting and inhibiting. No writer is great enough for the great libraries.[19]

Max Apple was not frightened by a library as a child. Far from it. Son of a scrap dealer and grandson of a baker, he grew up speaking Yiddish at home but said in an article on "My Love Affair with English"[20] that it was his fascination with the English language that made him a writer. The author of *The Oranging of America and Other Stories*[21] tells of his trips to the west side branch of a public library, palatial to him, with its high-ceilinged reading room and mahogany tables.

> Across the street my grampa in the heat of the ovens was yelling at Joe Post in Polish and at Philip Allen in Yiddish; here the librarians whispered in English and decorated me with ribbons like a war hero because I loved to read. . .
>
> The books all in order, the smiling ladies to approve me, the smooth tables, even the maps in the wall seemed perfect to me. The marble floors of that library were the stones of heaven, my Harvard and my Yale, my refuge in the English langugage. What I learned from those books was indeed American Literature. . . .

Huckleberry Finn and the Kid from Tomkinsville were his "true buddies." When he read *Les Misérables*, his taste changed. He had checked out the book to impress the librarians. "But in that sentimental overwritten novel, I recognized for the first time the deep pleasure of reading about a whole life even when that life is filled with misfortune and awful coincidence." From there he moved to adult fiction. He concludes,

> I think it was in that library that I finally came to distinguish the

> separateness of the Yiddish and English languages. I could speak and think in both, but reading and writing was all in English. I specialized in reading and writing as if to solidify once and for all the fact that the written language was mine.[22]

Another great lover of words was H.L. Mencken, lifelong friend of the Enoch Pratt Free Library. Like Apple, Mencken was devoted to Huckleberry Finn, having little truck with series books, fanciful tales such as *Alice in Wonderland*, and a lifelong distrust of poetry. He could account for this aversion "only on the theory that I appear to have come into the world with a highly literal mind." But he loved Mark Twain, having found eight volumes in his father's library, whose contents ranged from *Chambers's Encyclopedia* to a two-volume folio of Shakespeare.[23] Mencken read through them all, even all five volumes of the encyclopedia, beginning with the shorter articles first. He writes in *Happy Days*,

> Thus launched upon the career of a bookworm, I presently began to reach out right and left for more fodder. When the Enoch Pratt Free Library of Baltimore opened a branch in Hollins Street, in March, 1886, I was still a shade too young to be excited, but I had a card before I was nine, and began an almost daily harrying of the virgins at the delivery desk. . .I began to inhabit a world that was two-thirds letterpress and only one-third trees, fields, streets, and people. I acquired round shoulders, spindly shanks, and a despondent view of humanity. I read everything that I could find in English, taking in some of it but boggling most of it.[24]

Later, as a journalist, editor, and critic noted for his acerbic wit, he continued to use the Pratt Library, and Edwin Castagna considered him its strongest journalist supporter. He quotes one of Mencken's articles in *The Sun* of May 7, 1939, which began:

> With the city preparing to lay out fresh millions on schoolhouses, sewers, street pavements, and the insatiable airport, the Pratt Library continues to lead the shabby and precarious life of a cockeyed stepchild. . . When, a few months ago, it passed the hat among its patrons, hoping to make up at least part of the deficit, it barely got its hat back.[25]

He was generous in his gifts to Pratt Library during his lifetime, and at his death he left it all his books and papers, including his notes on *The American Language*, as well as three-fourths of his estate of over $300,000.[26] No wonder Pratt is so proud of its Mencken Collection.

Mencken knew what to do with his books, and perhaps Winston Churchill should have suggested a similar disposition when someone asked him,

> "What shall I do with all my books?" was the question; and the answer, "Read them," sobered the questioner. But if you cannot read them, at any rate handle them and, as it were, fondle them. Peer into them. Let them fall open where they will. Read on from the first sentence that arrests the eye.

> Then turn to another. Make a voyage of discovery, taking soundings of uncharted seas. Set them back on the shelves with your own hands. Arrange them on your own plan, so that if you don't know what is in them, you can at least know where they are. If they cannot be your friends, let them at any rate be your acquaintances. If they cannot enter the circle of your life, do not deny them at least a nod of recognition.[27]

Carl Sandburg, son of a Swedish immigrant blacksmith, started to work at the age of eleven, combining schooling with various jobs. This winner of three Pulitzer Prizes was not as discriminating a young reader as H.L. Mencken. But he was a constant user of the Galesburg, Illinois, Public Library, which was presided over by the prim-faced, long-nosed Miss Phillips.

> As soon as I could I wanted to get a card to take out books and they told me I had to make an ap-pli-ca-tion. So I learned how to apply by filling out an ap-pli-ca-tion, I got my card and began taking out books, one by one, and the date I took the book out got stamped on my card. One by one I read all the books in the library by Horatio Alger, Oliver Optic, and C.A. Stephens. When all the books by those authors were out, I tried Hans Christian Andersen, and if he was out then some kind of Strange Tales of this and that.

But one day when all the books he wanted were out, he went back to the catalog and looked up some more.

> Only one I wanted was in. It was named *Queer Stories for Children*. As Miss Phillips handed the book toward me and I reached up for it, she said with a smile I didn't like, "Here you are little Queer Stories." I could have thrown the book in her face, though I didn't. She called me little and I had got over being little. Worse yet, she as much as called me "queer" and if you're queer you act queer, think queer, and talk queer. I said to myself she deserved the long nose she had and I wished it would get longer. And if I was queer she was snippity and I would rather be queer than snippity.[28]

I suspect the librarian was only trying to be pleasant.

Like Carl Sandburg, Ellery Queen read Horatio Alger as well as "Tom Swift, the Viking legends, the multicolored Lang fairy books, Frank Merriwell, Baseball Joe, the Rover Boys, Tarzan, The Three Musketeers, Jules Verne, Peck's Bad Boy, and—yes, the Oz stories. I can reread the Oz books today—and I often do." But it was when he was twelve years old during the winter of 1917 at his grandfather's that he first met Sherlock Holmes. "Oh, unforgettable day!" He still considers *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* one of the world's masterworks.

He finished reading it in one night and the next morning, very early, made his way to the public library.

> Of course it was too early for the library to be open, but I sat on the steps and waited. And though I waited hours, it seemed only minutes until a prim old lady came and unlocked the front door.
>
> But alas, I had no card. Yes, I might fill out this form, and take it home, and have my parents sign it, and then after three days—three days/three

eternities!—I could call and pick up my card.

I begged, I pleaded—and there must have been something irresistible in my voice and in my eyes. Thank you now, Miss Librarian-of-Those-Days! These thanks are long overdue. For that gentle-hearted old lady broke all the rules of librarydom and gave me a card—and told me with a twinkle in her eye where I could find books by a man named Doyle.[29]

As all catalogers know, Ellery Queen is the pseudonym for two cousins, Frederic Dannay and Manfred Bennington Lee, who had separate careers until 1929 when they began to collaborate on their enormously popular detective stories. The partnership only ended with Lee's death in 1971. But before he died, they donated their collection of detective fiction, possibly the largest in the world, to the University of Texas Libraries.

The novelist Paul Boles's enthusiasm for reading books is only equalled by his enthusiasm for writing them, and he waxes lyrical in his essay, "The Vision Then and Now."

For a long time, when I was a child, wanting to be a novelist from the age of seven, everything that was printed seemed to contain its own breed of magic. It became special just because it was printed. There were, as with a child, no second thoughts and no first critical thoughts. There was a mélange of hearty fare: *Tom Swift* and *Les Misérables*, all in the same gulp; there were *Moby Dick* and *Kazan* and *Baree, Son of Kazan*. All at once there were the novels, then like a rich green world, of Louisa May Alcott. Everything that later seemed prissy and stilted and carefully moralistic was no stumbling block at all: the eye glided over things like that as a fish glides, for the pure joy of being alive in water. The Gary Public Library was a warm expanse with adventure flickering from every shelf; the dark nose-filling smell of old books, old bindings, seemed to reach out with welcome. . . . In the long gray dusk when it was time and time past to go home I would still be reading as I went down the library steps and stood teetering on the curb: the great white whale would be out there somewhere in front of me—not far; just as close as the vegetable truck turning the corner and spattering grains of slush over my golashes. To a child this time of complete faith in all books seems forever. It has no bounds; it feels infinite, stretching ahead of him the way one summer can be made of a million years.[30]

I was a hound loose in a world of rich scents and magnificently interlaced trails; if after a hard hunt I brought home nothing but a rabbit, it made no difference; there was God's plenty to seek and find, and chances were good that next day I would pick up the reek of a mountain lion. . . .

That was the boy's vision; and it has not changed too much today. . . . I cannot go into any library, private or public, without a sensation of immense revelations about to be made. I cannot sit down in front of a thousand sheets of paper to begin writing a novel without the same excited, tremendous feeling: an emotion that is like stout Cortez's men, staring at each other with a wild surmise. All the potential gold of the earth seems to be about to reveal itself to me. . . . The finished work never satisfies me; an hour after I have written the last word of a novel I feel a tapering off of that splendid high mood of discovery which aimed so far and expected so infinitely much and, it seems to me, came up with so little. All the same, in a week, or two weeks, and at most a month, the feeling comes back—it is indescribably strong, and in some ways it is like an explorer who, after spending a little time in civiliza-

tion, suddenly, over his drink on the cool veranda, remembers the green sweet hot pulse of the jungle, and knows he has to go in there again.[31]

Another story-teller, Sherwood Anderson, who, like Sandburg, grew up in poverty in a small town, went to work in his early teens, and many years later became a member of that Chicago circle of writers which included Sandburg, Dreiser, Edgar Lee Masters, and Ben Hecht. There was no public library in Camden, Ohio, where he lived as a child, but he still read all the books he could lay his hands on, until, as he tells in his *Memoirs*, one day the superintendent of schools gave him a key to his study, which had an outside door. Anderson was allowed to come and go as he pleased, taking any books he wanted, and soon the school superintendent was going about town, boasting, "He has read more good books than any grown man of this town. He is educating himself thus. He is getting a better education than we could possibly give him in school."[32]

Louise Dickinson Rich, author of a number of children's books and several books on Maine, including *We Took to the Woods*, gives a lively description of her public library experiences. She and her little sister Alice were children who read voraciously from the time they first learned to read. And when they were employed to dust the books in their public library for five cents an hour they were delighted.

> We liked the money all right, but after the first day or so, we'd have worked for nothing if we'd had to.
>
> We never knew there were so many books in the world. We tried to be honest and conscientious, we tried not to peek, but turning us loose in a library was like turning an alcoholic loose in a wine cellar. We'd open a book with the innocent intention of seeing what it was about, that's all; and fifteen minutes later we'd rouse to find ourselves perched precariously on top of the ladder, or crouched uncomfortably on the floor before a low shelf, or standing like statues in the aisle, devouring page after breathtaking page. We'd slam the book shut and do half the next section at top speed, to make up for lost time. No matter what vows of abstinence we took, sooner or later we'd slip again; and we'd go home in much the same condition as one who has ill-advisedly mixed his drinks, our minds awhirl with a heady brew compounded of a few pages of Tom Paine, a little Pascal, a verse or two of Thomas Love Peacock (what a name!), and a dash of Pepys; or if we happened to be in the F's, a strong blend of Fielding, Franklin, Fitzgerald and Freneau.[33]

William Saroyan, who spent about five years in an orphanage after the death of his father, decided to be a writer while he was still in his teens. He was twenty-five before he sold his first story, but in 1940 he won the Pulitzer Prize as well as the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for *The Time of Your Life*. Two years later, in 1942, he wrote the scenario for *The Human Comedy*, which contains an account of two small boys, Lionel and Ulysses, and their visit to the public library.

> When the two boys entered this humble but impressive building, they

> entered an area of profound and almost frightened silence. It seemed as if even the walls had become speechless. . . .There were old men reading newspapers. There were town philosophers. There were high school boys and girls doing research, but everyone was hushed, because they were seeking wisdom. They were near books. They were trying to find out. Lionel not only whispered, he moved on tiptoe. Lionel whispered because he was under the impression that it was out of respect for books, not consideration for readers. . . .Lionel didn't read books. . . .He just liked to see them – the thousands of them.

And when the librarian asked him what he was looking for he said, "Books." Finally Lionel lifted one from the shelf and looked at the print

> "with a kind of reverence, whispering to himself as if he were trying to read. Then he shook his head. "You can't know what a book says, Ulysses, unless you can read, and I can't read," he said. He closed the book slowly, put it back in its place, and together the two friends tiptoed out of the library.[34]

One has a feeling that it would not be long before Lionel learned to read.

Writers as readers we have had with us for a long time. Let us hope they will be with us in libraries forever. Nor do we need Walt Whitman's poem to remind us:

> Shut not your doors to me proud libraries,
> For that which was lacking on all your well-filled
> shelves, yet needed most, I bring, . . .

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No. 2. The Library in the Graduate Program of Institutions of Higher Education in the Southeast, by Louis Round Wilson.

No. 3. The Library's Function in Education, by John E. Burchard.

No. 4. Development of Research Collections in University Libraries, by Robert B. Downs.

No. 5. The Study of Reading Effects, by Lester Asheim.

No. 6. The Magnetic Field, by Lawrence Clark Powell.

No. 7. Liberal Education, Specification, and Librarianship, by Jack Dalton.

No. 8. The Research Library in Transition, by Herman H. Fussler.

No. 9. A Rare Book Is a Rare Book, by Robert Vosper.

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No. 28. Copyright versus Intellectual Property, by Julius Jay Marke.

No. 29. The American Librarian's Dream: Full Bibliographic Control with Complete Freedom of Access, by Doralyn Hickey.

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(continued)

The lectures have been published in groups of three. The first volume was published in 1952 as Volume 55, no. 1, of *The University of Tennessee Record*; the second volume was published in 1954 as Volume 30, no. 6, of *The University of Tennessee Record, Extension Series*. Beginning with no. 7, the lectures have their own series, *University of Tennessee Library Lectures*.