

## Letters

To the Editor:

I agree with Raleigh DePriest ("That Inordinate Passion for Status," *CRL*, March 1973) that the desire of librarians for academic status is not merely an empty and ignoble thirst for admiration. Many librarians feel, probably correctly, that the regard society has for their work is inadequate, and that attaining academic status will automatically give them a more elevated station. The desire for recognition rises out of deep psychological needs and is therefore by no means unimportant; I believe, however, that the more tangible benefits of academic status—tenure, higher salaries, sabbaticals—constitute the authentic appeal that it has for librarians.

Consequently, I have no quarrel with those librarians who see their work as a direct contribution to the educational goals of their institutions, and who aspire to academic status with its benefits, tangible and intangible. I have difficulty, however, with the view, evidently shared by Mr. DePriest, that librarians should be granted, or should attempt to secure, status as full-fledged members of the faculty. Let me mention three problems, about which Mr. DePriest is silent, but which librarians must face if they wish to attain faculty status. There are other obstacles to the attainment of faculty status, but these seem to me important and worth restating here.

First, the institution in which librarians practice their profession vary widely. It may be, as Mr. DePriest states, that the amount of preparation required of librarians in the state colleges of Pennsylvania is greater than that demanded of faculty. This is scarcely the case, however, at institutions elsewhere. At Big Ten or Ivy League institutions, the preparation that most librarians have would compare unfavorably with that of the faculty, and librarians would be unwise to use the extent of their training as a basis for requesting faculty status. No one can pretend that librarians at prestigious

institutions are more able than librarians elsewhere merely by virtue of the positions they hold; nevertheless, the criteria for faculty appointments are more severe at some institutions than at others, and librarians would be hard pressed to meet them. Some institutions, perhaps regrettably, are more equal than others.

Second, librarians have different specialties. Mr. DePriest is able to make a reasonably convincing case for faculty status for reference librarians and bibliographers on the ground that they teach library use or descriptive and analytic bibliography, formally or informally. No such case can be made for librarians in cataloging or acquisitions work, many of whom do not see a student or faculty member, except at a distance, for days at a time. Instruction, in the classroom or elsewhere, is not a factor in their lives. That their contribution to the development and use of library collections is as important as that of reference librarians or bibliographers may not be doubted, and any program to elevate the status of librarians which excludes catalogers or acquisitions librarians is unfair and, I believe, will ultimately work to the disadvantage of all librarians.

Third, not all librarians are employed by academic institutions. For librarians in public or special libraries, the issue of academic status simply does not exist, and one imagines that they must take a very detached view of the entire controversy. Librarians at academic institutions who are distressed because they do not have faculty status must decide where their primary loyalty lies, with their own profession or some other. I think of myself as a librarian, and share with colleagues at public and special libraries certain skills and work attitudes. I have considerably more in common with librarians at other institutions than with faculty at my own, and I suspect that this is true of librarians in general. In my experience, it is certainly true of other

professions: physicians who are attached to schools of medicine are physicians first and faculty second; similarly, lawyers are lawyers first, clergy are clergy first, and so on. The primary recognition which the practitioner of a profession receives comes by way of his profession; genuine recognition will come to librarians only to the extent that we are able to establish a social need for our services, not because we have been successful in attaching ourselves to teaching faculty.

None of this is meant to disparage the importance of the role librarians play in the educational process. Recognition for this role, however, must be based on the work librarians do, not on our occasional participation in teaching. Nothing demonstrates our contempt for our own profession more surely than our continual agitation to be made part of the faculty.

First steps toward recognition for librarians as librarians have been taken at some institutions. A recent management study at Columbia, for example, recommended three general classes for university staff, officers of instruction, officers of administration, and officers of the library. Something like this, providing recognition for librarians as a separate academic group, is to be preferred to straight faculty status, since it would recognize the unique nature of the work done by librarians, and it would go a great way toward resolving the profitless debate about faculty status in which we now find ourselves.

*Robert Balay*  
Head, Reference Department  
Yale University Library  
New Haven, Connecticut

To the Editor:

Library literature is so often characterized by the same kind of drivel found in other educationally oriented journals that one despairs of ever finding an original observation couched in a felicitous style. For that reason, I found Raleigh DePriest's "That Inordinate Passion for Status" in the March 1973 issue of *CRL*, a stimulating and enjoyable experience. The well-written article provides ample evidence of wit and learning on the part of the writer. One nodded with approval when DePriest sin-

gled out Gore and scolded him for his blatant and fatuitous exhibitionism.

In the same issue of the journal, one had to regret that editorial revision of the McAnally-Downs article had not removed some of the redundancy. Fred Kilgour came through again with the same clichés. Rolland Stevens, as part of a great institution which recognizes the importance of the librarian as a faculty member, does a great disservice to the Illini.

*Roy Nelson Van Note*  
Director, Murphy Library  
Wisconsin State University  
La Crosse

To the Editor:

There is enough material in McAnally and Downs to keep the ink of commentary, if not the blood of controversy, flowing for months. The laconic Buckman note about "some effective attack on major national problems" is alone worth a major national address to the academic profession by one of the former university library directors who "opted out of" his job.

In a letter to the editor it's more logical to comment on one or more of the many intramural problems turned up by Mc. and D. I select two, both related to the library's deteriorating position in the university. (1) The library director should be a dean, or better yet, a vice-president in the manner of modern administration. Incidentally but surely, this would reestablish any lost relationship between the director and the university president. (2) A library planning committee has been suggested. But the committee should also be permanent or standing. "Planning" is useful in the title as a missionary device to keep the committee "honest," to prevent its agenda from slipping off into the trivial. The work of a library committee considering new facilities always seems vital. But there are other major issues and problems developing all the time though too often they are not recognized as such.

*Paul Bixler*  
Librarian Emeritus  
Antioch College, Ohio

To the Editor:

Robert C. Sullivan's otherwise compre-

hensive basic collection of publications in the area of microform acquisitions (*CRL*, Jan. 1973) should have included *Microform Review*. Since Jan. 1972, this quarterly has published reviews of more than seventy major microform publications. Written by a subject specialist, the reviews are critical and give basic information on physical format, bibliographic apparatus, availability, and terms of payment. Each issue also includes articles and brief news items on microforms, a bibliography of recent books and articles, a list of new books appearing simultaneously in hard copy and microformat, and notices on current filming projects.

As one of the few substantive, independent journals devoted to reviewing micropublications, *Microform Review* has been of considerable value in our acquisitions program and should be consulted by librarians interested in microform acquisitions.

Diane K. Goon  
Reference Librarian  
Columbia University Libraries  
New York

To the Editor:

Robert Sullivan's paper, "Microform Developments Related to Acquisitions" (*CRL*, Jan. 1973) is a useful and needed review of the subject. Of the several microforms he discusses, the least familiar is Computer-Output-Microfilm (COM).

Mr. Sullivan states that applications of COM are apt to be "painfully slow and expensive" and that COM is "not suitable in a situation where the data base changes rapidly." But as an alternative to publishing in hard copy, COM can be produced at such an extraordinarily low cost (one quotation: \$25.00, for the first run of ten pieces of 42X microfiche containing nearly 125,000 lines of data, plus \$3.00 for each copy) that data change might be excessively costly only if daily updating were required. His cautious optimism about its application is probably because there are so few known applications to library operations.

One application of COM whose cost has been so low it could be called "unpriceless" is the *Louisiana Numerical Register* (*LNR*), the new regional union catalog containing locations for 1,100,000 volumes

in twenty-one libraries. After all costs were added including absorbed costs (keypunching, computer time, travel, salaries) and actual dollar outlays, unit costs (each data record entry) were computed to be 5.6¢ per entry, or 2.8¢ per title. One factor in the low cost is the short data record which consists entirely of the LC card order number and the letter code designating the library. Initial purchase price of the fiche for participating libraries has been set at \$8.00 for the fiche, a six-page manual, and a notebook-container. Annual updates will be \$3.00 or \$4.00 per copy.

Statistics of use on the first conventionally printed edition of the *Register* containing half the number of volumes as the new COM edition, show that 50 percent of all interlibrary loan titles searched in the *LNR* were found in at least one of the sixteen original cooperating libraries. It would seem reasonable to expect that the new COM edition containing double the original entries would satisfy a greater number of searches and that, for the low cost of continued input and updating, would identify COM as a technique warranting considerable optimism for union catalogs and other compilations with a large number of short data records.

William E. McGrath  
Director of Libraries  
University of Southwestern Louisiana  
Lafayette, Louisiana

To the Editor:

Despite Ellsworth Mason's long and successful association with the academic community he shows a lack of understanding of some of the processes of academic life (*CRL*, Nov. 1972). His statement that "in any university of quality, this means no promotion above the rank of instructor without the Ph.D. degree" is, of course, absolutely false. Many situations and disciplines do not require the Ph.D. degree for advancement. It would seem that Mr. Mason's prejudice against faculty status for librarians has prevented him from appreciating the diverse composition of college and university faculties.

In considering the "Joint Statement on Faculty Status of College and University Librarians" I would suggest that *CRL* readers look beyond the inflamed rhetoric of

Mr. Mason's editorial to the facts of faculty status and investigate how it has been successfully implemented in many academic institutions.

Alan D. Hogan  
Assistant Director  
Systems and Processing  
University of Toledo, Ohio

To the Editor:

The Jan. 1973 issue of *CRL* included a review by Anita R. Schiller, University of California, San Diego, which contains several errors (p. 74-5). The publication being reviewed was *Women and the "Equal Rights" Amendment: Senate Subcommittee Hearings on the Constitutional Amendment, 91st Congress*, edited by Catharine Stimpson in conjunction with the Congressional Information Service (New York and London: R. R. Bowker Co., 1972).

The review states that "during one recent period 21,000 women were turned down for admission to the University of Virginia, while not one male was rejected." The reviewer was referring to testimony given by Miss P. Dee Boersma, a graduate student from Michigan, before a Senate Subcommittee on Constitutional Amendments of the Committee on the Judiciary, May 7, 1970 (p. 180 of the Stimpson volume). Miss Boersma, in turn, was referring to a statement by Congresswoman Griffiths before the House of Representatives on March 9, 1970, in which she said (without providing documentation): "In the State of Virginia 21,000 women were turned down for college entrance, while not one male student was rejected." (*Congressional Record*, March 9, 1970, p. 6396).

The review attributed to one institution within the state figures that were supposedly applicable to the entire Commonwealth of Virginia. The review also used the phrase "during one recent period." It is true during the nineteenth century that the University of Virginia and several other institutions within Virginia were all-male schools. The University, however, became co-educational at the graduate and professional levels during the first half of the twentieth century, and was co-educational at all levels in 1970.

Although less serious than the error in quotation, the review as published stated

incorrectly the title of the book and also misspelled the author's first name.

Kenneth G. Peterson  
Associate University Librarian  
University of Virginia  
Charlottesville

To the Editor:

Anent the illuminating and gratifying article by Ms. Pamela Reeves, "Junior College Libraries Enter the Seventies" *CRL*, Jan. 1973): in the last paragraph she paid a nice compliment to Macomb-South (Michigan).

In 1964 I started the library, developed the concept of a learning media center (library, A-V/ETV, programmed education), helped design and equip an 89,000 square foot, three-level building, etc., etc.

On January 5, 1973, I was informed that my contract was not to be renewed for 1973-74. Moreover, the position, library director, has been eliminated.

A real gasser, wouldn't you say?

Laurence R. Ebbing  
Library Director  
Macomb County Community College  
Warren, Michigan

To the Editor:

Impressed by the following article in *CRL* and would like five reprint copies to share with our administration.—McAnally, Arthur M. and Downs, Robert B., "The Changing Role of Directors of University Libraries," *CRL* 34:103-25 (March 1973).

Although addressed to directors of university libraries, I found much of the material very relevant to my work as director of a modest-sized but growing college library.

Professionally, I have two suggestions. It would be good to develop a symposium around our ". . . Changing Role." After more than a decade of service in three college libraries, I have concluded that not only the director but each professional librarian has a unique status and service role as a librarian. We are neither administrators although we have *administrative duties*—nor are most of us "full" faculty. The faculty will be the first ones to inform us that we are not teachers as they are. Yet most of them admit that we have a *supportive teaching service*. Caught in this profes-

sional dilemma, I have been working on an article, "The Librarian as a *Tertium Quid*" or third substance, neither *divine faculty* nor down-to-earth *human administration*; but a librarian—the best of both, of course.

My other suggestion is to share with my colleagues the following poem. The McAnally-Downs article stresses, along with other things, our need for more money in the library. It is a comfort to know that large university libraries have the same problems we do in colleges across the country. More than once a week I gain some solace from the perspective of the lines which Sam Walter Foss read at an ALA meeting in 1906. It is good to know that more than two decades before I was born, librarians were concerned about their need for more money. The following poem sits on my desk:

"Sing, O Muse! the Head Librarian . . .  
 weighted with the lore of time,  
 Trying to expend a dollar when he only  
 has a dime;  
 Tailoring appropriations—and how deftly  
 he succeeds,  
 Fitting his poor thousand dollars to his  
 million dollar needs."

From *The Song of the Library Staff*, written by Sam Walter Foss and read by him at the 1906 Annual Meeting of the American Library Association.

Charles E. Nairn  
 Director of Library  
 Lake Superior State College  
 Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

To the Editor:

The late Arthur M. McAnally and Robert Downs' very interesting piece, "The Changing Role of Directors of University Libraries," (*CRL*, Mar. 1973) seems to raise more questions than it answers. The issues and solutions that are presented only partially identify and treat the ailments generated by the increasing number of head librarian positions vacant at major universities in the United States. Some of the problems that were omitted or briefly discussed are: the lack of leadership by library directors, the errors in the selection and appointment process for new library directors, the poor administrative preparation, the myth of the Ph.D. as a credential for administration, the composition of fac-

ulty search committees and their reliance on other head librarians, the limited administrative talent available in the heirs apparent, and the failure of librarians to orchestrate their opinions concerning the changing role of library directors to faculty and university administrators and decision makers.

Many head librarians could generate considerable support from their presidents, chancellors and upper echelon administrators if they could marshal information concerning their problems and then disseminate it via a medium used by these individuals. Before this happens, however, all of the problem areas should be uncovered, even if they cause several head librarians and aspiring young directors anxiety. I believe that Paul Wasserman's words on library leadership should be read carefully (in his recent book *The New Librarianship: Challenge for Change*), along with Warren Bennis' recent article on "The University Leader" (*Saturday Review*, Dec. 9, 1972). Concerning the development of a screening mechanism for library managers, Robert C. Albrook's article, "How to Spot Executives Early," based on Dr. Saul Gellerman's research (*Fortune*, July 1968) should be required reading. This leaves ACRL, ARL, and the Council on Library Resources with the question, "what are you doing about this problem and how do you intend to communicate it to academic faculty and administrators?" If more research is needed, how about letting some young Turks get in on it?

Obviously, the changing role of library directors is a growing problem. However, all aspects of the problem should be investigated. For getting us to focus our attention on this matter, the article by McAnally and Downs deserves great praise. Thank you, *CRL*, for printing it.

Robert P. Haro  
 Associate University Librarian  
 University of Southern California

To the Editor:

Arthur McAnally and Robert Downs have written one of the finest articles I've seen in *CRL*. Directors must adapt to endure, they say. True enough. But others will say this makes directors mere pawns of the times. I say the pawns who gain con-

trol of the center make it possible to endure in the end game. And those directors who read the title as "Changing Role of University Libraries" will be the ones who will endure. Those who don't, will resign.

*William E. McGrath*  
*Director of Libraries*  
*University of Southwestern Louisiana*  
*Lafayette, Louisiana*

To the Editor:

If and when you are ready to move with a separate organization for academic librarians, you can be assured that I will be available to do whatever is needed to get it off the ground.

*Hendrik Edelman*  
*Assistant Director*  
*Cornell University Libraries*  
*Ithaca, New York*

To the Editor:

I am writing to answer a question you asked in the editor's note preceding the article "The Academic Job Crisis: A Unique Opportunity, or Business as Usual?" by W. A. Moffett, *CRL* 34:191-97 (May 1973).

In response to the question, "Should a subject specialist Ph.D. be required to obtain a library degree as a demonstration of professional commitment?", I feel he most certainly should. How can librarians refer to themselves as members of a profession if the library degree is not required for membership?

Though we all know it is possible to achieve competency in many fields without a degree and that a degree itself is no guarantee of competency, formal educational requirements are prerequisites for membership in most professions. To teach in an elementary or secondary school one must complete certain education courses, even though it is possible for one to become a successful teacher without education courses. One can learn law without obtaining a law degree, but a law degree is required in most instances to qualify one to take the bar examination.

Why should librarianship be different? If librarianship is a profession, there should be formal degree requirements for membership. Perhaps the library school curriculum should be changed but not the requirement that one must first obtain a library degree

to become a member of the profession. This requirement should be vigorously supported as a demonstration of professional commitment. Not to require the degree defeats the integrity of the profession which many have worked to achieve.

*John E. Pickron*  
*Head, Acquisitions Department*  
*Tulane University Library*  
*New Orleans, Louisiana*

To the Editor:

As a recent library school graduate who is a subject specialist as well as former Ph.D. candidate in English, I believe I am in a very good position to comment upon the issues raised in Mr. Moffett's article. Mr. Moffett cites a surplus of Ph.D. holders "in every major discipline," and as an historian, goes on to discuss the especially critical oversupply in his field. My own field is English literature which most observers agree is as overcrowded as history. It is my belief that it is primarily from these two fields, English and history, that the library profession is getting the greatest number of refugees. There are other routes for the job-hungry mathematician or sociologist to take, but the options available to the exprofessor of history or literature are strictly limited. We need more subject experts in the fields of physics, economics, and especially computer science, to become librarians. How many history or English bibliographers can the nation's libraries employ?

Also, I believe that the library schools are currently attracting many applicants like myself who switched from a Ph.D. program in English (or history, philosophy, languages, or art) into library science. My own decision was made after I taught in a liberal arts college for a short time and came to the conclusion that it simply was not worth the effort, time, and money required to finish my Ph.D. degree (at least not at that time) when I would probably not find a teaching job after I completed it. I did a small scale study of the changing job market for librarians while I was in library school in which I came to the conclusion that the library profession is facing a massive influx of frustrated humanists who have not been able to find teaching jobs, especially on the college level. My reading, conversations with colleagues, and experi-

ence as a job seeker have all been confirming this opinion in the almost two years since I wrote that paper. I sincerely believe that we librarians are in danger of allowing our profession to become as overcrowded and suicidally competitive as the profession of college teaching in the humanities. We seem to have learned nothing from the experience of these other fields. Enrollment in our library schools grows and grows, despite a contracting job market and a generally gloomy economic climate. Enrollment at my own library school rose 30 per cent the year that I began my studies there.

Who is going to take the responsibility for trying to prevent our already tight job market from becoming ridiculously overcrowded? I feel that many library school administrators are deceiving themselves by saying, "There are plenty of jobs available, look at the vacancy listings in *Library Journal*, *CRL Newsletter*, *American Libraries*, and the *Sunday New York Times*." Yet, upon closer examination, these advertisements usually are for middle level management positions or for other types of jobs which require experience in the profession. It seems to me that this problem simply must be faced immediately by both the library schools and our professional organizations. ACRL should strongly recommend that library schools consider limiting enrollments. Perhaps even some kind of quota system is needed for limiting the influx of excollege teachers in the humanities. Academic libraries need economists, psychologists, mathematicians, computer experts, and not an ever increasing horde of humanists.

I would also like to comment on the editorial remarks at the beginning of Mr. Moffett's article. I am aware that some people have contended that subject specialists do not need a general knowledge of the principles of librarianship, and I disagree with this contention. It is vitally important that the subject specialist librarian know intimately the book trade, and the bibliographic structure of his discipline as well as possess a vast knowledge of the subject matter itself. The mere possession of an M.A. or Ph.D. degree certainly does not qualify the holder as a subject specialist *librarian*. This is not to say that the possession of an M.S. degree in library science qualifies its holder as a librarian either. What is essential is

a lot of experience with libraries, and with library related work. This includes a real understanding of the operations of a library, e.g. acquisitions procedures, classification systems, etc. This is the knowledge that is needed by the subject specialist if he is to effectively serve the needs of his academic constituents. He must be able to interpret the library and its operations to the members of his department. We all know many professors who are very competent in their narrow specialities, but who do not have the bibliographic sophistication needed to carry out a literature search in some other related area, even one that is within *the limits of their own disciplines*. Thus it seems to me that a subject specialist Ph.D. needs this grounding in the principles and practices of librarianship not only "as a demonstration of professional commitment" but also as a real preparation for offering quality library service to the academic community.

*Eric J. Carpenter*

*Bibliographer, English and American Literature*

*Lockwood Memorial Library  
Buffalo, New York*

To the Editor:

The librarian has been called the "last of the generalists," and Dr. Moffett's suggestion in your May issue of *CRL* that having a specialty piled higher and deeper is a necessary advantage is erroneous, except for those few huge academic libraries that can support a subject specialist in a specific subfield.

Thank God the day is past when the typical librarian was a retread from another profession who averted his glance and muttered in embarrassment when you asked what he did for a living. Today's librarian is a proud librarian who may go back for some additional training which he has judged will improve his performance.

So, when Dr. Moffett receives his library degree, I'd advise him to apply for a position as a librarian who just happens to have an advanced degree in history which might be of some use.

After all, it's a truism in personnel administration that you never offer a position to the applicant who can't find another job;

you offer it to the one who is already in demand.

*Phillip Wesley, Director  
Educational Resources Center  
California State College  
Dominguez Hills, California*

To the Editor:

It was touching to read "Professionalism Dismissed?" The usual present day debunking, iconoclastic, and hopeless viewpoints were expounded with sophomoric academicism.

It is unnecessary and inappropriate to discuss one of the newer, lesser professions analogously with older, prestigious ones. Let real librarians rather be busy, as they have been, doing their often demanding, and intricate work (for example, the cataloging of rare books) in their own unassuming, ethical, and professional manner. May the present, and future generations carry on this fine and commendatory work with "their eyes straight before them," instead of being diverted by present day systems of looking in all directions, and getting little of worth accomplished, but rather, attend to their own business, and a higher and more recognized professionalism will be the inevitable result.

*Harold B. Martin  
Librarian, Philadelphia City  
Planning Commission  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

To the Editor:

I found Simmons student Leo N. Flanagan's article on "Professionalism Dismissed" (*CRL*, May 1973) interesting and provocative.

Carefully avoiding the dust-worn traditional Webster's 3rd outside my office door, I came home this evening to my Random House to seek out advice on what the word "professional" means in a modern context. The first definition stated that it meant "following an occupation as a means of livelihood or for gain." The ninth and last was "an expert player, as of golf or tennis, hired by a club, community, etc. . . ." The rest were not much better. Several were worse! Frankly, it appears that the term "professional" has lost its meaning in recent decades.

Could it be that we could drop this whole

fetish about professionalism and bury Melvil Dewey's unfortunate statements about it? It is possible to replace it with having our nameplates followed with our advanced degrees: M.L.S., M.S.L.S., Ph.D. We should notice that our doctor does not call himself "doctor" but rather John Doe, *M.D.* And your dentist calls himself a *D.D.S.* Why not a similar identification for librarians?

*David Y. Sellers  
Planning and Budget Officer  
Cornell University Libraries  
Ithaca, New York*

To the Editor:

Leo Flanagan's "Professionalism Dismissed" (*CRL*, May 1973) has several interesting and some valid conclusions, but his discussion is not sufficiently rigorous.

For example, he falls into the error of assuming that because all librarians are not at the top peak of professionalism, that librarianship is not a profession! But the existence of unlicensed (or bad) doctors or accountants does not invalidate these professions.

What should have been mentioned in the very valuable article is a real definition of what professionalism involves. If I may attempt an ad hoc description, it would do along these lines:

A professional person is one with a specifically trained capability in a definite field of intellectual knowledge or service. This field is so specialized (e.g. tax law) that the majority of the public is obliged to consult the professional in his professional capacity in order to get any insight in the field.

But the catch to all this as far as library work is concerned is that librarians are supposed to be familiar with *all* knowledge, or at least know where to find out about virtually anything.

So perhaps in the strictest sense of being professional, that one knows everything about one's field, it is impossible for a librarian. Even Goethe, as the Duke of Hesse-Weimar's librarian, could not know everything. (But which doctor knows everything about medicine?)

Yet in a very real sense, a librarian can know where to find out about say 90 per cent or more of what he is likely to be asked, which is something only an excep-



tionally well-trained professional could be expected to do. Evidently, no untrained or unprofessional person could handle this type of work, on this level.

Flanagan's comparison to a grocer is invalid; even a supermarket does not need a card index, and most people shop unaided. I have liked to compare a library with a shoe store, in that all sizes have to be kept in stock, in spite of knowing that they will not all be used. But for a real comparison to a library, it is necessary to come up with a competitor, e.g. a book store. Now a book clerk with the subject guide to *Books in Print* under the counter can be fairly knowledgeable, but I think it is evident that he will not know books and information sources as a librarian will. And of course a librarian has more reference books at hand. So a librarian is a professional informant in a way that a book clerk is not expected to be.

But it seems a little extreme for Mr. Flanagan to imply that without the library equivalent of the A.M.A., we are not a profession! We know that national associations of this type have a tendency to become more interested in lobbying than in maintaining professional standards. But the criteria for a professional association are not its wealth and its clout, but whether its members are a profession. (And the definition of a professional as a member of a professional association is putting the cart before the horse. Training, ability, and expertise are the criteria of professionalism, not simply card-holding.)

There may not be any way of determining what the relative percentage of request types is on a general basis, but I would say that the average inquiring patron wants to know:

1. the answer to a specific question (i.e. information), or
2. a book or article on a specific subject (say, "book").

Thus it is not as important for the librarian to know "everything" as it is for him to know *how* to put information in the patron's hands in usable form. I.e. knowledge is most valuable as improving communication technique.

Also it is vital for a librarian not to be an ideologue who has the "authority" to force his views on a patron. The patron is

assumed to be able to make up his own mind on presentation of the "evidence." Any librarian worthy of the name will learn as much or more from an unusual or differently stated question than the patron himself, rather than being an omniscient superior being who can lay down the law.

The comparison with a druggist (or rather pharmacist) is also invalid; the pharmacist bears the same type of relationship to a doctor that a bookseller does to a librarian.

Of course librarians who are more involved with management or processes are not as directly concerned with information-giving to the public. But I don't see how anyone can claim that managers are not professional, even if it is a different type of profession.

Nor is the librarians supposed to be concerned with the souls of men, except to the extent of presenting the truth to make men free to discover their own souls. Even a philosopher could not give usable "soul" information to the average patron; this is a field for the professional social worker or minister. It would not be reasonable to expect librarians to take on such moral responsibilities outside their profession. But they should fully explain to the patron what advisory services of this type are available, and provide direct contacts if necessary. (This doesn't mean that one can never offer a patron a book that will inspire him.)

The library profession is not one of faith (except in knowledge), but of *works*. The last thing that a librarian should be is the priest of a faith, even of Dewey. Information is often too transient to become a matter of dogma to be imposed on the public. Besides, the average patron would refuse to be brainwashed in this way.

(The "lifetime of personal growth" that a librarian should strive for is not a matter of faith, but of expanding his professional capacity, i.e. his works) [ditto, his wanting to "serve his fellow men"].)

It is unreasonable to expect librarians to "first become masters of" all subjects before providing information on them. No one, not even a scientist, knows what electricity really is. Yet librarians must be able to recommend appropriate books on electricity every day. Nor does anyone know the solutions to all of the social and econom-

ic problems of today. But we still must know the best answers that are available, and go to any reasonable (or unreasonable) lengths to provide such material for patrons. Librarians should be masters of books (in preference to theoretical knowledge as such) and lackeys, or rather servants, of the public. (cf. Gilbert's "We are Venetian gondoliers—your equals in everything except our calling, and in that at once your masters and your servants.")

"When librarians acquire professional faith and professional competence . . ." is clearly the wrong emphasis. Not all the faith in the world can substitute for the minimum adequate competence that a librarian must possess before he should attempt to stand before the public as an expert.

Mr. Flanagan's credo, "Professionalism . . . implies the *power to do* what one says one wants to do" is unclear. All librarians should work for the reform of their institutions, and maximizing their effectiveness in providing the public with required information. But the very professionalism that Mr. Flanagan so forcefully and ably urges would not be furthered by having each librarian be a power unto himself to do his own thing as if in a vacuum. Professionalism means working within the profession.

It is difficult to believe that most librarians would not find the following activities mentioned by Mr. Flanagan a drag, and a distraction from their primary informational function:

1. "deciding new systems" (only a board can do this);
2. "finding money and spending it" (fund raising?!);
3. "diverting government spies" (!) (Mata Haris in the stacks?);
4. "diverting shifty politicians";
5. "diverting self-appointed censors."

"The broad knowledge" that librarians should acquire in these mostly extraneous fields could only be at the expense of professional requirements. The picture of the librarian as vigilante and self-righteous crusader is not an attractive one. A librarian who seeks to impose his views as infallible on everyone inside and out of the library is primarily an indoctrinator on an ego trip rather than someone who genuinely wants to improve both institutions and public service. Would a lawyer who wanted to write his own law be considered professional?

Most of Mr. Flanagan's recommendations for longer education for librarians are sensible and valuable. (Although Ivan Illich's cure for the schools, i.e. closing them, would not work for libraries either.)

But implying that the A.L.A. should be the equivalent of the A.M.A., is again the wrong emphasis; professional standards criteria are more important. Perhaps what we need is something like the British chartered librarian standard; like the C.P.A. certificate for accountants.

It is not clear what Mr. Flanagan means by "big unions" "taking over libraries and librarians' functions." The other biggies are all too evident. But should libraries try to compete with IBM by buying a computer system? And the implication that indoctrination or "political" type polarization of librarians is the answer for combatting the electronic information media monopoly is a delusion.

(The author evidently needs more experience in the field, where he will surely make his mark. His idealism is tonic, and may his sense of the practical soon be equally impressive.)

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