Letters

To the Editor:

I read with great interest "Faculty Client Files" by Calvin Boyer (*College & Research Libraries* 47:533–34 [Nov. 1986]). I could not agree more with Mr. Boyer on the need and benefits of these files in our academic libraries.

They can be utilized not only for monitoring the curricular, research and professional subject interest of faculty but they allow library subject specialists to more closely keep track of the expertise of individual researchers as well as trends in university programs and directions to improve referrals, collection development decisions, and orientation for new librarians. Furthermore, they allow us to identify areas of interdisciplinary studies and common interest areas between diverse departments. Sometimes faculty themselves are unaware of related research or interests of their colleagues at the institution. And as a result of these activities, they can plan an important role in improving public relations for the library.

Most importantly, as Calvin Boyer pointed out, "both librarian and faculty member would profit from the creation and maintenance of such files."

At Arizona State University we have maintained such files, first manual and later computerized, since the early seventies. A recent article in *Information Technology and Libraries* describes this system (Vladimir T. Borovansky and George S. Machovec, "Microcomputer Based Faculty Profile," *Information Technology and Libraries* 4:300–5 [Dec. 1985]).

The time is long overdue for the library/information profession to emphasize the role of the librarian (information specialist, subject specialist, etc.) as a skillful information resource professional and these client files can play a very important role in this process.

VLADIMIR T. BOROVANSKY
Arizona State University, Tempe

To the Editor:

I would like to comment on Jean Meyer Ray and Angela Battaglia Rubin's comment ("Pay Equity for Women in Academic Libraries," *C&RL* 48:36–49 [Jan. 1987]) that "two outstanding women have conducted extensive research on the status of women librarians." The women whom they cite have indeed conducted significant research in this area. However, as Ray and Rubin's references show, Heim's study, *Career Profiles and Sex Discrimination in the Library Profession,* was coauthored with another outstanding (woman) researcher, Leigh Estabrook. Other researchers have also contributed significantly to this area, including Betty Jo Irvine, Barbara Moran, and myself. Ray and Rubin's comments therefore seem unnecessarily and inaccurately restrictive.

NANCY VAN HOUSE
University of California, Berkeley

To the Editor:

Your recent editorial ("Worlds of Reference," *C&RL* 48:93–94 [Mar. 1987]) was particularly timely since the California Institute of Technology (CIT) is also faced with moving and integrating its alphabetically arranged Engineering Library periodical collections. I agree with your "it's natural" analysis but with a question. With the advent of AACR2, what do you do with all the bound volumes that were previously shelved under the name of a soci-

ety, etc.? A second concern is how stupid title changes are handled (e.g., *Journal of Metals to JOM to Journal of Metals*).

One solution under serious consideration at CIT is adopting the NLM practice of using an alphabetized call number. For a user's point of view, I recently had lunch with a faculty member who had just returned from a year long sabbatical in Switzerland. His unsolicited response to my question about library services was that they had some "crazy" system whereby journals were classified according to their subject content making it impossible to go directly to the shelf to find what you are looking for.

DANA L. ROTH
Science & Engineering Libraries
California Institute of Technology

To the Editor:

Emily Werrel and Laura Sullivan's review article ("Faculty Status for Librarians," *C&RL* 48:95–103[Mar. 1987]) indicated, to me, that the current issue is not so much *should* academic librarians have faculty status, but what does it *mean* when they do. In that regard, the ongoing debate about whether librarians share their scholarly colleagues' obligation to "publish or perish" remains a significant topic. I would argue that, when academic librarians are dutifully executing their jobs, they contribute to the publishing output of others, and in that way fulfill their scholarly obligations in a more fair and meaningful way.

Werrell and Sullivan point out that many writers have contended that the very nature of the librarian's job does not readily accommodate research activities. Librarians do not generally receive release time in order to pursue research. Additionally, they do not have the necessary research infrastructure of graduate student assistants and departmental support. I believe, also, that library research is something entirely different from that of other scholars. We are not trying to break new frontiers of learning—we are trying to discover better ways to do our jobs. Our profession's true challenge is to keep pace, bibliographically, with advances in all other fields of learning. That is a monumental academic task . . . but it is not the same kind of work that the physicist performs in the laboratory.

The academic librarian is often of invaluable assistance to researchers. Occasionally, appreciative scholars will give credit to assisting librarians, such as in a preface or a footnote. I suggest that academic librarians should be able to claim some credit for these publications, at least to the extent that, through their bibliographic acumen, they participated significantly in the scholarly process. After all, that's what we were trained to do.

Now, if we can just convince researchers to remember us when they are thanking their colleagues.

GREGG SAPP
Idaho State University

To the Editor:

I have read your article on authority and participation with interest and appreciation ("The Nature of Authority," *C&RL* 48:110–22 (Mar. 1987]).

In your review of the literature (p.114) you state: "Power is treated as a fixed rather than an expanding factor." Permit me to call your attention to what I take to be a significant exception. I refer to my essay, "Professionalism, Decision-Sharing and Bureaucracy" which appears in volume 5 of *Studies in Library Management*, edited by Anthony Vaughan. In this essay I try to demonstrate that the amount of decision sharing permitted varies with the different professional occupations, and that the greater the status of a professional occupation the greater will be the amount of freedom won from bureaucratic controls. Thus, within an academic bureaucracy, for example, professors have a considerable degree of decision making within their own hands, compared to the amount available to librarians.

The expanding nature of power can be seen also (though I did not make this point in my essay) when comparing academic institutions of high repute with those wherein the professor is regarded as an interchangeable part. It has been my belief that in the latter kind of

institution librarians and professors are little different in the matter of decision-sharing permitted.

LOUIS KAPLAN
Madison, Wisconsin

To the Editor:

I appreciated ''The Selection Decision'' by John Rutledge and Luke Swindler (*C&RL* 48:123–31 [Mar. 1987]) and will probably make it required reading for my selection class. The authors appear to have a realistic view of how the selection criteria model can be used and of its limitations. Use of the model may promote some needed objectivity in book selection but will still permit the subjective influences one gets in ''Living with Books.'' I doubt the contention that the ''model will find its greatest utility in adding precision to and enhancing the consistency of the individual selection decisions''—except of course in the ideal situation. As Rutledge and Swindler indicate, such a model may be helpful in giving faculty and staff more confidence in the selection decision-making process. This most professional of a librarian's duties always needs such help in being accountable to the librarian's constituencies.

DON LANIER
Northern Illinois University