

(1969-72). The four-story structure, noted for its innovative system of lighting, brings natural light into the exhibition spaces through the unique combination of filtered skylights, plate glass windows, and two interior courts.

Mellon's gift of the British art center continues his long record of support to Yale since his graduation in 1929. Gifts from Mellon and the Old Dominion Foundation, of which he was chairperson, have made possible the restoration of Connecticut Hall, the construction and endowment of Morse and Ezra Stiles Colleges, the purchase of the Boswell papers and other books for the Yale Library, as well as the underwriting of numerous academic programs.

When this gift was announced in 1966, Mellon emphasized his belief that the university, with its already recognized pre-eminence in British literary and social studies, was the logical choice as the recipient of his British collec-

tions. "It seems to me," he said, "that Yale, with its great holdings in British literary and social research material, such as the Walpole and Boswell papers, can make the best use of the resources of my collections for educational and historical purposes. . . . In addition, it was at Yale as an undergraduate that my personal interest in English literature and art began in earnest, and I have always been deeply grateful to the university for this fact."

Long a leader in eighteenth-century studies, Yale now possesses the visual resources for thorough study of the interrelationships of British art, literature, and history, according to Yale President Kingman Brewster, Jr., who stated that "Mr. Mellon's gift makes a major contribution to the cultural vitality of the city and to Yale University, and in a broader sense, to the cultural resources of the nation." ■■

Letters

Dear Editor:

The following opinion may have grown beyond an appropriate length for a "letter to the editor," but it is a point of view which should be given wider consideration. The question which prompts the commentary has significance for more people than simply those to whom the response is immediately directed.

What are the major issues confronting undergraduate librarians today?

The answers will vary, of course, since an issue which looms as significant in one situation may be insignificant in another. Or an issue in one setting may be perceived in another as a mere need to exchange ideas and information. On the other hand, there are factors which distinguish real issues from matters more efficiently resolved at a personal level of information exchange and decision making. For example, issues are always preceded by inquiries and the identification of problems or matters of concern which are not easily resolved. These become issues as they are addressed as points of debate or controversy, and the desirable outcome of the dialogue is to achieve an acceptable resolution or new course of action.

Even though an "issue" in one environment cannot be construed as universal, there are currently legitimate matters of general concern which undergraduate librarians cannot ignore. They are emerging, not only as library systems and programs develop, but also as we experience change in institutional expectations and constraints.

At the 1977 ALA Midwinter Convention meeting of the ACRL Undergraduate Librari-

ans Discussion Group, some of the significant problems were identified and the issues were skirted—even pushed by a few of the participants toward an open forum—but the discussion was notable in that the debatable and controversial issues were not clearly engaged. There were some impressive labels applied to describe the drift of the meeting ("needs of users" and "the role of the UGL"), but these were never developed beyond being convenient semantic hooks. What emerged was a preoccupation with the uncertainties and apprehensions produced by the function of local library management and with the need to exchange how-to information on specific systems and services. (In all fairness, the meeting was intended as a planning session for the Detroit Conference. Further, some of the more vocal at the meeting were not "undergraduate" librarians, but four-year undergraduate institution librarians. They were welcome, but their outspoken views skewed the group's purpose and compromised its effectiveness.)

Discussions on the internal operations and procedures of undergraduate libraries are appropriate and should be encouraged, but it is impossible to realize the potential of an undergraduate library—or any library, for that matter—through a continuous examination of such topics. Undergraduate libraries are too often characterized in terms of effective reserve procedures, automated circulation systems, security controls, and response-based library instruction programs; but these alone will be self-defeating. They are merely tools or elements in a much larger programmatic arena which has far-

reaching service philosophy implications beyond the influence or importance of any of the separate parts held aloft as "issues."

Surely an ALA conference is an appropriate place to exchange what has been learned about technological innovations, improved procedures, and how they can be applied to undergraduate libraries. But the need for the passive transmission of information, or the act of sharing ideas and discoveries, in a national forum must be distinguished from the more important need for an active confrontation of ideas and opinions in order to develop alert, critical, and forceful positions. My conclusion is that the exercise of broad-based discussions at high level conferences on such matters as narrowly defined managerial and technical problems of undergraduate libraries will, at the very least, detract from more substantial issues.

We can anticipate that complex and enormous inquiries will be initiated into the very nature and existence of undergraduate libraries. How we respond is paramount to the continuation of related resources and services. If the focus is on local day-to-day situations, we will very likely be responsive to internal administrative and over-the-desk service requirements, but unresponsive in more critical ways to external expectations and restraints.

My purpose in these observations is not to engage in a soapbox effort to save undergraduate libraries. As a generalization, that notion is simply not sound; and I would not venture a specific opinion on the future of any UGL without first studying the results from an extensive and logical assessment of local circumstances. On the other hand, I am convinced of the need for the UGL for which I have been responsible since 1972, and the issues which stand out as challenges in that setting also carry implications for the more than thirty-five other undergraduate libraries which still exist in North America. Some of the issues seem almost perennial and may never be resolved, but the intensity with which others are being brought to bear portends a dim future in the absence of an articulate and acceptable response.

For example, aside from the generalizations of program planning and personnel administration, there is probably no specific area requiring judgment of a higher order than with the development of a unique, rational, and institutionally sound policy on collection development. The need is magnified because of current fiscal developments, and there are some searching questions being asked which, considered collectively, identify a major, controversial issue. For example: What is the purpose and scope of the UGL collection? How does the collection relate to the larger collections of the parent institution? How will the collection size and duplication of high-demand materials be

controlled? What methods can be used to determine appropriate levels of acquisition funding? What are the most effective methods, materials, processes, and procedures for facilitating the actual selection activity? Who are the current and potential users of the undergraduate library? How do they use the library, and how adequate is the collection for their needs? How much study and evaluation on the nature and use of the collection is necessary in order to systematically formulate a policy? What research methods and evaluation techniques must be used to support the formulation of a policy? Who should be responsible for planning, developing, and implementing a policy?

Another vital issue springs from the question: What are the philosophical reasons for the existence of an undergraduate library and the purposes it serves? Other inquiries then logically follow: Is there a carefully formulated and documented service philosophy—a *raison d'être*

Guidelines on Manuscripts and Archives

The Association of College and Research Libraries announces the publication of *Guidelines on Manuscripts and Archives*, a compilation of statements developed by the ACRL Rare Books and Manuscripts Section Committee on Manuscripts Collections and approved as policy by the ACRL Board of Directors.

The twelve-page pamphlet contains the "Statement on Appraisal of Gifts" (originally published in the March 1973 issue of *College & Research Libraries News*); the "Statement on Legal Title" (*C&RL News*, March 1973); the "Statement on Access to Original Research Materials in Libraries, Archives, and Manuscript Repositories" (*C&RL News*, November 1976); the "Statement on the Reproduction of Manuscripts and Archives for Noncommercial Purposes" (*C&RL News*, November 1976); the "Statement on the Reproduction of Manuscripts and Archives for Commercial Purposes" (*C&RL News*, May 1977); and the "Universal Gift Form and Instructions" (*C&RL News*, March 1975).

Guidelines on Manuscripts and Archives is available upon request from the ACRL Office, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. Please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope, or postage and a mailing label. Orders for multiple copies may be billed for postage.

—represented by clear statements of purpose, objectives, and goals rather than an agenda of internal operational procedures? How and why is a UGL different today from what it was in the 1960s or before? How is it changing? What are the institutional and environmental pressures that influence and shape the nature of UGL service? What is the UGL role in the larger scheme of a library system's service? Who should formulate a service philosophy statement?

A third issue is shared by other types of libraries which for decades have relied heavily on experience rather than research and study to effect change and improvement. Undergraduate libraries, though relatively new, do not escape the impact of the observation even though they are generally perceived as innovative, creative service units. Why don't undergraduate libraries engage in more scientific research to determine such things as the characteristics of successful UGL services? What will research tell us about the role which a UGL should assume in the scheme of providing university-wide library services? In what ways are the needs of the academic community not

being met by undergraduate library service?

These three major issues—the need for unique collection development statements, the urgency to formulate relevant service philosophies, and the requirement for developing and applying sound evaluative methodologies—could be broken into simple, practical problems and reduced to levels of information exchange. On the contrary, they are evolving as ever larger and inclusive areas of debate and controversy. The principals are not only those directly responsible for undergraduate library service, but also the faculty, students, and university administrators who are forcing the issues. Those who must have answers are probing for new directions and assurances as the need for change inexorably becomes a major challenge. We can neither respond nor contribute to the need in a vacuum of knowledge and understanding, and there is no better time than now to face the challenge through discussion of the issues with personal resolve and collective consideration.

Keith M. Cottam

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ACRL Chapters

• The spring elections of the **EASTERN NEW YORK CHAPTER** of ACRL produced the following results for 1977-78 officers:

President—Kingsley Greene, Union College, Schenectady.

Vice-President—Lynn Hannan, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs.

Secretary—Dorothy Christiansen, State University of New York, Albany.

Treasurer—Nancy Lufburrow, State University of New York, College at Potsdam.

At-Large Representative—Lynn Case, St. Lawrence University, Canton.

At-Large Representative—Barbara Rice, State University of New York, Albany.

The spring conference of the chapter was held at Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts on May 26. Sheila Creth, personnel librarian of the University of Connecticut, presented the program on "Evaluative Interviewing."

• "Book Conservation" was the topic at the **ACRL OREGON CHAPTER** meeting May 20. The guest speaker was Jack C. Thompson, a conservator specializing in the conservation and restoration of paper, textiles, and leather. He has been a consultant for conservation to the Oregon Historical Society since 1974.

• The **KANSAS CHAPTER** of ACRL held its regular spring conference in conjunction with the Kansas Library Association May 12-13 in Topeka. Speakers were Dr. Gordon R. Williams, director of the Center for Research Libraries in Chicago, on "The Library's Role in Providing Access to Information"; and Dr. Florence DeHart, professor at Emporia Library School, on "The Copyright Scene."

New officers selected for 1977-78 were the following:

Chairperson: Richard Rohrer, assistant director, Kansas State University Libraries, Manhattan, Kansas

Vice-Chairperson: Barbara Robins, humanities librarian, Emporia State University Library, Emporia, Kansas

Secretary-Treasurer: Rowena Olsen, director, McPherson College Library, McPherson, Kansas

Nominating Committee: Meredith Litchfield, chairperson, assistant director, Kansas State University Libraries, Manhattan, Kansas; Jane Hatch, associate librarian, Marymount College, Salina, Kansas; and Irma Dietrich, reference librarian, Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, Kansas. ■■