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Contributors

Hayward S. Anderson, Professor of Business Administration

Kermit Bird, Agricultural Economist, Marketing Division,
U.S.D.A., Washington, D.C.

Blanton E. Black, Assistant Professor of Social Sciences

Sylvia E. Bowen, Assistant Professor of Mathematics

Charles I. Brown, Assistant Professor of Education,
Bennett College, Greensboro, North Carolina

Arthur L. Brentson, Assistant Professor of English

Johnny Campbell, Jr., Instructor in Business Administration

James A. Eaton, Professor of Education and Director,
Testing and Guidance

Luella Hawkins, Associate Professor and Reference Librarian

Doris L. Harris Jackson, Cashier, Business Office

Prince A. Jackson, Assistant Professor of Mathematics
and Physics

Elonnie J. Josey, Associate Professor and Librarian

Calvin L. Kiah, Professor of Education

Robert H. Land, Chief, Reference and Bibliography Division

Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

Isaiah McIver, Assistant Professor of Social Sciences

Theodore Samore, College and University Specialist,

Library Services Branch of U. S. Office of
Education, Washington, D. C.

Nazir A. Warsi, Associate Professor of Mathematics
and Physics

Althea M. Williams, Assistant Professor and Circulation
Librarian

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The Library of Congress, The Library Services Branch and College Libraries A Colloquium*

by

Robert H. Land, Theodore Samore and E. J. Josey

The Library of Congress and College Libraries

Robert H. Land

The 1962 Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress lists the 16 national library functions performed by LC which in summary are: LC maintains comprehensive collections for the use of the Government, the scholarly world, and the public, making it a national center for research. Its collections are enriched through official, intergovernmental exchange of publications: copyright or legal deposit of materials; and gifts of personal papers, rare books, and other valuable materials and trust funds and bequests, which enable it not only to add to the collections but to present cultural programs in such fields as literature, art, and music. LC develops a comprehensive classification system, which is widely used by other research institutions, and cataloging codes, which are nationally accepted standards, and it serves as a center for cooperative cataloging of books and other forms of material by the Nation's libraries. It provides a national catalog card distribution service and maintains national union catalogs on cards. These serve as guides to the Nation's research resources in various forms and fields; and LC furnishes information about the location of needed materials to those who cannot personally consult these tools. LC publishes in book form a national bibliography, or a major contribution thereto, such as the Library's *National Union Catalog*. It gives reference service on its premises and provides extensive information from and about its collections by mail. It participates in a nationwide interlibrary loan system, which enables it to share collection responsibilities with other libraries and to make research materials generally available, thereby strengthening smaller libraries throughout the country by supplementing their research resources. It has an active bibliographic program and makes the results of it widely available through publication. It administers the national books-for-the-blind program. It presents exhibits selected from the national collections for the education and enjoyment of the general public, and circulates them at home and abroad. It experiments and conducts research in the area of library technology. Lastly LC engages in national and international cooperative bibliographic projects and works with other national libraries

*Presented at the College Section Meeting of the Association of College & Research Libraries at the 83rd Annual Conference of the American Library Association, June 30, 1964.

and international organizations to achieve standardization of rules in order to increase the accessibility of the materials of knowledge.

These functions do no more than indicate the many LC activities and services having relevance for U. S. college libraries.

To inquiries, "How are things at the Library of Congress?", I usually reply that, "*Some* things are fine." I do this to give an optimistic tone, to avoid bragging, and to be candid. It is, however, necessary this morning to give more than a customary emphasis to "*Some*" because LC's General Reference and Bibliography Division, in which I serve, and its Stack and Reader Division, are bearing the brunt, with the public, of an operation which is temporarily affecting many local college students, and, we hope, will have a lasting effect upon them and their successors. Since May the 4th, LC's stately Main Reading Room has been, and until some time this fall will remain, closed because of extensive renovations that will improve future reader service and comfort. Sometime before the closing, we invited readers, including those from local colleges and universities, to use any other available library facility before coming to LC as a last resort. The lasting effect we hope this will have on local college students is that it will be a means of weaning them from their dependence upon LC for their required course reading, resources for term papers, and opportunity for "boy to meet girl." Indeed, some of us at LC wish it to serve college communities in the Pacific and Rocky Mountain areas as fully as we do those near the Federal city. We see, in our wishful thinking, an analogy between college students and our Public Reference and Bibliography and Reference Correspondence Sections on the one hand, and between children and our children's Book Section on the other. The latter, a recent creation in LC, does not have a reading room for children nor does it offer any service to them; rather it serves those who write, illustrate, and publish children's books, who serve children in public and school libraries, and who teach and entertain children.

Thus, we would have LC serve college students only in exceptional circumstances and we would improve our services to those who do serve them directly. It might be diplomatic to say that, as the national library, LC does not wish to preempt the field of service of college libraries.

Presently we serve college students, who in ever-increasing numbers, especially during the winter and spring holiday seasons, seek at LC material for their term papers and other assignments and absorb our public reading room facilities and services. We receive complaints of being dispossessed, poorly served, and generally frustrated by the Library from our mature clientele—professors on sabbaticals, graduate students, and other research scholars. We do decline correspondence requests from college students for the compilation of bibliographies or for information connected with their assignments, debates, contests, theses, and other academic exercises.

LC wishes to serve all who are engaged in serious research and come to use LC materials, particularly if these materials are unique.

LC also welcomes inquiries by correspondents, if they cannot be satisfactorily answered through use of local, state, or regional libraries. Frequently we have to reply that, in the amount of time we are able to assign a staff member to an individual inquiry, we have been unable to make a satisfactory or positive response. Inquiries from librarians are given special consideration.

LC receives many requests for bibliographies of various kinds. In response we advise correspondents of the availability of pertinent published bibliographies and tell them of the number of entries filed under appropriate and specific subject headings in our catalog. We advise them how cards for these entries or photocopies of them may be purchased from LC's Card Division or Photoduplication Service. We mention, too, the availability for interlibrary loan service of pertinent unpublished bibliographies.

We say that LC does not compile extensive bibliographies in response to individual requests. The general bibliographies we compile are planned to fill either a need of the Federal Government or serve on a large scale the interests of libraries or special groups. Such bibliographies are designed: (1) to facilitate use of LC collections, particularly in subject fields in which recurrent reference requests are received, and, (2) to provide reference tools of wide usefulness outside LC by means of which inquiries can be answered readily or served in other libraries through recourse to the bibliographies. LC's General Reference and Bibliography Division has for a decade concentrated its bibliographic efforts on compilation of *A Guide to the Study of the United States of America: Representative Books Reflecting the Development of American Life and Thought*, which was published in 1960, and on a *Supplement* which is planned for completion in 1966. The 1960 bibliography, with 6500 main entries and half again as many more references found in annotations and headnotes, is probably to be found in most college library reference collections. Among other recent bibliographies on subjects of national import are: *The Presidents of the United States, 1789-1962* and *Biographical Sources for the United States*. We have in press, a bibliography on the late President Kennedy and *Children's Literature: a Guide to Reference Sources*. Other LC divisions have their bibliographic and publication programs. LC accepts funds transferred from other Federal agencies for support of some of these. Each year LC prepares in time for ALA distribution, a price list of LC publications entitled *Library of Congress Publications in Print*. It indicates for each entry how and where copies may be obtained. The 1964 list is presently available at our exhibit booth here.

LC publications are first announced in our weekly *Information Bulletin* that is mailed free to libraries requesting it. This bulletin serves libraries throughout the Nation by reporting on events and activities at LC that are of general interest; by giving early notice of the publications by others of reference and bibliographic aids; and also by carrying items of news in the library world. Thus, as an appendix to next week's issue of the *Information Bulletin*, the first widely circulated report of this and other meetings of this ALA con-

ference will be published. The *Information Bulletin*, together with the *Annual Report of the Librarian* and the *Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress*, is a regular channel of communication informing all libraries of LC's acquisitions, activities, and services. These three publications are important links between LC and college libraries providing evidence on many relationships that I have been unable even to mention.

The Library Services Branch and College Libraries

Theodore Samore

Let me first give you a very brief sketch of the place of the Library Services Branch in the structure of the Office of Education. The Office of Education is divided into four "offices" and three bureaus. One of the bureaus, namely, the Bureau of Educational Research and Development has five divisions. One of those five divisions is the *Division of Library Services* of which Mr. Lorenz is the director. And under the *Division of Library Services* are two branches: one, Adult Education and two, the Library Services Branch. We are now at home.

The Library Services Branch itself is composed of two units. One unit administers the Library Services Act, now the Library Services and Construction Act. Funds are expended by the State library extension agencies in accordance with a State plan for library development, prepared by the State and approved by the U. S. Commissioner of Education.

Here is the time to point out that the administration of the Higher Education Facilities Act of 1963 is temporarily administered by a U. S. Office of Education task force. This Act provides among other things, Federal funds for the construction of classrooms, laboratories and libraries.

The staff which is in charge of the Library Services and Construction Act is made up of three extension library specialists and supporting secretarial help. Each of the three specialists is in charge of a certain number of the fifty States who receive grants from the Federal Government.

The other units of the Library Services Branch is the statistical and research staff. This part is called the Basic Program Unit and it is composed of three public library specialists, two school library specialists, one special library specialist, one library education specialist and one college and university library specialist.

Both the lack of time and the relevance to our topic prevents me from going into detail concerning the workings of the Extension Library Unit and other members of the Basic Program Unit, that is, the public library specialists, library education specialists, etc. The aim of this introduction has been to clarify the structure of the Library Services Branch. I hope that it has been successful.

Now it is true that the entire Federal government, as well as fifty State governments, 2,000 County governments, and 25,000 local and City governments; not to mention thousands of associations, professional organizations, etc.—operate to serve either as citizens or librarians, or students or what—depending on your point of view.

However, I can speak with modest confidence on only one seg-

ment of that conglomerate, viz, the Library Services Branch. Other members of the panel have spoken (or will speak) of other aspects of the problem.

To put the matter in barest terms, the Library Services Branch exists primarily to help and serve in a variety of ways; and, conversely, you can help us help you better if you tell us how well or how badly the job is being done.

Although there is only one Library Services Branch there are almost 2,200 academic libraries in the country, and they all practice freedom of speech—in no uncertain terms. I shall indicate the four main services that the branch offers and then I shall mention the four correlative services you can offer us.

First, we offer consultant and advisory assistance on a variety of library matters ranging from building programs to staffing, cataloging and budget planning. The clientele includes representatives of Federal, State, and foreign governments, college officials, students and instructors of librarianship, foreign librarians and other educators, executives of research organizations, and professional associations, and others who request assistance or advice on problems arising in college and research libraries. Every effort is made to identify authoritative sources of information meeting the request of the inquirer and, wherever possible, to refer him directly to these sources and agencies.

Second, we try to identify major problems and trends in American librarianship. Some examples are: (1) legislation affecting libraries; (2) the administration and organization of libraries; (3) the resources, services and expenditures of libraries; (4) the education, certification and economic status of library personnel; (5) social and political issues which directly affect libraries; (6) social and political areas—such as, the poverty—in which libraries themselves play a direct role; and (7) areas in librarianship which deserve detailed investigation.

Third, we work with library associations, library schools, professional agencies and organizations, individual librarians, etc. to improve and extend both library services and resources.

Fourth, we study and disseminate information regarding the physical plant and equipment of all types of libraries, State certification standards for librarians, and bibliographies in special fields. One of the most recent examples is Cohen's *Library Science Dissertations*.

Fifth and last, we collect, publish and distribute basic statistical data standards on school, college, public and special libraries. This data, I might add, is prime material for testimony before congressional committees and other investigating bodies.

At this point I shall refer to service number four. Every year for the past four years our department has mailed a questionnaire to all of you. Before that date, ACRL did it for a period of fifteen years. The questions themselves have not really varied much in all these

years; but I suspect that what the questions *mean* has varied more than I care to think.

At any rate, we have built up much data that is simply stupefying. What does it all signify? I am not at all sure what it means but I believe that there are several ways in which this data is useful to you. Actually, the information is designed for the use not only of librarians, students of librarianship and library associations, but also of executives and governing boards of colleges and universities, commercial and industrial concerns, educations and other professional associations, and Government agencies.

In summary, then, this information furnishes (1) some factual bases for comparing library resources and services with ALA standards.

- (2) the information helps in budget planning and self studies.
- (3) it provides guidelines to accrediting associations and academic library consultants.
- (4) it yields on authentic measure of library progress and development.

The five services we—or I—would like to see you render us are: one, please return the questionnaires as soon as possible; two, please return the questionnaire; three, four and five are the same.

A College Librarian Views the Library of Congress And the Library Service Branch

E. J. Josey

Fellow librarians, this is an unusual colloquium and a provocative discussion, and I deem myself very fortunate to be able to participate in it.

Mr. Land's outline of the 16 national library functions of the Library of Congress is a stirring appeal to a librarian's conscience that all of these benevolent activities of the Library of Congress benefit not college libraries alone, but all libraries to a great degree. Mr. Land does not claim that his explanations of the accelerated growth of the work of the Library of Congress are applicable to college libraries alone, but he does consider it important to give us a panoramic view of the work of our great National Library in general.

Of the sixteen functions outlined by Mr. Land, it is my view that all are important to the work of the college library, but for those of us from the hinterlands, the services that are more important to us are the following: The Library of Congress is a national bibliographical center through interlibrary loan. Its National Union Catalog, its printed catalog card service, its development and publication of its classification system and subject heading lists and its publication of such numerous bibliographical projects and especially its publication of a *GUIDE TO THE STUDY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA* are tremendously important to the work of the college librarian and the college library. It is my belief that if a survey were to be taken suggesting the curtailment or the abandonment of these services by the Library of Congress, College librarians all over America would rise up in holy indignation.

An erudite critic of the Library of Congress, Paul Dunkin, in his penetrating analysis and commentary on the Bryant-Mumford debate—Mr. Land, pardon my indiscretion for raising this issue here—Mr. Dunkin writes, "None of these services is performed primarily for the libraries of the nation. Instead, they grow out of the needs—real or imagined—of the Library of Congress and their form and content is determined by those needs of the libraries which buy them. Yet the Library of Congress is like no other library in the country; what is good for the Library of Congress is not always good for the libraries of the country. For instance, L. C. Catalog Cards neglected Dewey classification numbers for many years although the Dewey System has long been predominant in this country—even among the large research libraries"¹

Returning to my earlier assertion that college librarians would rise up in holy indignation if these services were withdrawn, nevertheless, college librarians and some of our colleagues from the public libraries,

¹Paul Dunkin, "Pyramid or Volcano," *Library Journal*, January 1, 1963, p. 52.

Mr. Land, in spite of my comments, we are grateful to L.C. for its services.

Most of my allotted time has been spent on the Library of Congress. Turning to Mr. Samore's remarks regarding "The Library Services Branch and College Libraries," it is my conviction that the library education specialist and the college and university library specialist open up sweeping vistas of opportunities for college libraries for two reasons. First of all, we are happy to have a library education expert at the national level, in view of the fact that "forty-nine per cent of libraries in the four year institutions are sub-standard with respect to staffing, despite the modest requirement of our standards that a four year college employ three professional librarians . . ." We are certain that the distinguished lady who holds the position will probably give attention to the education of more college librarians. Of course this is inextricably bound up with recruitment and all of us are debtors to our profession.

No college library development can be lasting that is not based on a mobilization of national resources. With the college and university library specialist on the staff of the Library Services Branch, we know that this professional worker has mobilized all pertinent data relative to college libraries, especially all data which may be considered national resources. I voice the sentiments of all college librarians when I say that "the consultant and advisory assistance on a variety of library matters, ranging from building programs to staffing, cataloging and budget planning," are of paramount importance to college libraries. The truth of the matter is that many college librarians are not cognizant of the fact that these consultant and advisory services are available. The problem may very well be that somewhere along the line they may have gone amiss in their library education or professional reading. Nevertheless, it is my belief that in order to be of greater service to college libraries, availability of the services should be made known. It is a source of great satisfaction, for the most part, to know that a large clientele of persons have received these services. It is my firm conviction that external advisory and consultative aid are indispensable initially to guide and supplement the efforts of college librarians, in their zeal to improve library services on their campuses. In our country, college libraries are for the most part scattered around in small towns, and therefore, college librarians unlike public school librarians, cannot get together frequently to lean on each other for advice and comfort.

We are certain that in the months ahead, Mr. Samore's office will be a bee hive of activity, when colleges begin to submit their plans for buildings under the Higher Educational Facilities Act of 1963. Although Mr. Samore will not be directly involved, because a special task force will handle this responsibility, I am certain that he will have a great influence.

Without the publication of *College Library Statistics* by the Li-

²Frederich H. Wagman, "College Libraries—An Appraisal," *Scholarly Books In America*, December 1963, p. 6.