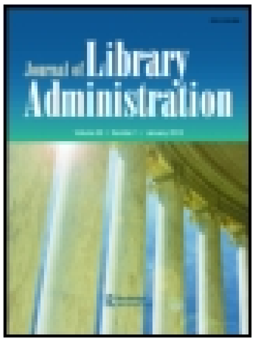

Journal of Library Administration

ISSN: 0193-0826 (Print) 1540-3564 (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/wjla20

Entrepreneurship and the Library Profession

Herbert S. White

To cite this article: Herbert S. White (1987) Entrepreneurship and the Library Profession, Journal of Library Administration, 8:1, 11-27, DOI: 10.1300/J111V08N01_03

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1300/J111V08N01_03

Entrepreneurship and the Library Profession

Herbert S. White

The management literature, along with numerous biographies and autobiographies, serves to describe the entrepreneur for us quite accurately. The dictionary definition of an individual who starts and conducts an enterprise does not really begin to scratch the surface. Entrepreneurs are perceived to be risk taking innovators, individualistic, believers in themselves and in their own competence regardless of the views of others, and as often as not stubborn, selfish, insensitive to the concerns of others at least when those concerns get in their way, and sometimes arrogant and ruthless. We know from statistics put out by the Department of Commerce and other government agencies that most individual entrepreneurs fail, and yet we have a tremendous admiration for those who succeed. Somehow their perseverance and courage in the face of overwhelming odds, negative research findings and the advice of friends, colleagues, and "experts" strikes a responsive chord, and the careers of Howard Hughes and Ted Turner fascinate us, perhaps because these individuals have dared to do and say what most of us know we would never have the courage to attempt.

Entrepreneurs of the "old breed" may also command our awe because we recognize them as a dying breed, killed off by changes in the organizational decision process. Entrepreneurs, as already noted, are rugged individualists, who will ignore the admonitions of others because they believe so firmly in their own judgements. Entrepreneurs are not only thought to be too often wrong to be tolerated by the organizational structure, but perhaps more importantly we believe that organizational decision making now tends toward committee approaches, consensus, participation, and consultation. In part this is because of the perception that this leads to better decision, but to a greater extent because it leads to acceptable decisions. Entrepreneurs frequently rub people the wrong way, in part because of their own low level of patience or tolerance for disagreement. The development of management theories that urge a greater level of involvement and decision sharing are largely based on the argument

Herbert S. White is Dean of the School of Library and Information Science, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

Journal of Library Administration, Vol. 8(1), Spring 1987

that this not only improves the quality of decisions but also enhances morale and commitment in the office, factory, or laboratory. At the same time, there are other and less glorious reasons. Participation and the use of committees can be seen as an escape hatch for managers who wish to avoid making decisions at all costs, and who would prefer to distribute them to a committee decision process which is risk free simply because that many people can not be fired or even punished. Management writers have therefore noted, in describing the growth of formal decision making structures, what has been called the end of an era. Not in totality, of course. The Ross Perots do occasionally surface, but the greater trend is evidenced by the risk avoidance strategy of the leveraged buyout, or the stock market tactic of not building an organization but of acquiring wealth through infiltrating one through the process of borrowing on its own equity, or of threatening to do so to receive a bribe which, under the nomenclature of "greenmail," is perfectly legal even if ethically odious.

The less we now seek to emulate entrepreneurs in the business community, the more we have come to look upon them as heroic larger than life figures. We recognize, at the same time, that entrepreneurs, even successful entrepreneurs, have their failings as executives. Most significantly, they are usually done in by the very success of the organization they have created. As organizations prosper and grow as the result of the drive, innovation, and ingenuity of its entrepreneur founder, they take on characteristics of the more standard bureaucratic model and exceed the ability of that individual to make all decisions. Entrepreneurially started organizations which have succeeded have done so because that success has then been transformed into a more traditionally structured mechanism or they have failed because of their success and growth. Either the span of decision making exceeded the ability of the one key individual unwilling to delegate to others or other fundamental problems such as unchecked growth leading to cash flow imbalances do the organization in. It is an interesting study to note that IBM was totally restructured to diffuse both authority and responsibility by Thomas Watson, Jr. after the death of his entrepreneurial father who founded the company. Entrepreneur founders often insist on making all decisions even when the sheer size of the company made bad decisions inevitable and no decisions even more likely. Management analysts suggest that this happened just in time, not because IBM would have perished (at least not yet) but because it could not have continued to grow. A library example can be drawn from the administration of Librarian of Congress Archibald MacLeish. His greatest contribution perhaps was a restructuring of the decision process to circumvent policies established by his predecessor, a great entrepreneurial builder who failed to recognize that his unwillingness to delegate was now strangling decisions. Entrepreneurs are generally seen as unwilling to adapt and as resistant to the sage advice of others who presumably know better.

The willingness to make decisions is their strength and the insistence on making all decisions is also their weakness. They can start organizations but they do not often manage mature ones.

In recognition of this trait, it is generally acknowledged that entrepreneurs do not stay within organizations, they leave and start their own. Some, such as the brilliant innovator who founded Apple Computers, Steven Jobs, do it more than once. Their knack, their accomplishment, and their success comes from starting organizations, not from managing mature ones. In fact, they often find the management of mature organizations to be boring. This perception of entrepreneurs as anti-managers is so closely held that it has come to be accepted as an obvious truth.

For the library profession this dichotomy is perceived to be equally stark. Libraries are, after all, very mature organizations. They have a hardening of decision arteries brought about not only by the risk avoidance tendencies of many librarians, but by a preference for minimal or no changes by the library's clientele, be these academic faculty members, special library users whose preconceptions come from what they have seen as university students, or the public library patrons heavily skewed toward children and the elderly. All are groups that have an affinity toward the library just as it is. Individuals who do not like the library just as it is do not tend to try to change it. They just ignore it and as we already know from a variety of research investigations the existence of an inadequate library does not pose an insurmountable barrier. Users adapt to poor service, find other approaches to information, or pretend they never needed the information in the first place.

All this tends to create a scenario which, in libraries as in other organization structures, but perhaps particularly in libraries, stresses an environment of cooperation and coordination, of "getting along," of working "as a team," and of not being aggressive or confrontational, or even assertive and outspoken. As a library educator I see recruiters who search for those who work well within groups, and who avoid the students whose academic brilliance and articulateness makes them unique. As an administrator I can certainly understand and even appreciate that preference. At the same time, we must recognize, as our colleagues in the more generic management field have recognized, that this will almost inevitably deprive us of entrepreneurs and the strengths that such individuals bring to an organizational dynamism. Entrepreneurs are not usually good team players. They can be opinionated, rude, loud, stubborn, even obnoxious. The redeeming quality only comes into play when they are right. Some organizational management consider it too great a price to have such people around disturbing the equilibrium.

Not all. The aforementioned Thomas Watson, Jr., having created for IBM a balanced structure combining delegation, authority, and responsibility, and certainly based in large measure on committee input and coordination, nevertheless argued passionately for the protection of what he called the organization's "wild ducks"—those individuals march to the beat of a different drummer, create difficulties and tensions wherever they go, but can also, just once in a while, be counted on to make the major breakthroughs that "organization men" could never make. We now know enough about hiring and selection policies to recognize that nobody would, in the 1980s, hire Thomas Edison as a junior research scientist. And yet, presumably, somebody should.

For libraries, oriented toward tradition and risk avoidance to a greater extent than most organizations and without the incentive of profits to justify chance taking, the temptation to hire a long line of inoffensive looking "grey" people is just about insurmountable. Nowhere is this pattern clearer than in the hiring of administrators for major academic libraries. Candidates from these posts come from three pools: (1) administrators of smaller academic libraries; (2) assistant administrators of large and even larger libraries; and (3) faculty scholars who would like to take a crack at running the library. All three of these candidate pools are almost automatically conditioned in support of the status quo, or at best of carefully suggested miniscule change. As this article will argue later, such attitudes will not serve us in the face of the crises we now face. Nevertheless, the climate is not ready for entrepreneurs in this setting. Entrepreneurs would without doubt make major changes, and there is no awareness that major changes are needed. Such changes could of course dramatically improve the library. They could also harm it and that is a chance nobody is prepared to take.

In addressing the issue of entrepreneurship in the library and information industry, Helena Strauch's chapter in "Careers in Information" assumes at the outset that entrepreneurial careers will be outside the structure of the traditional setting and outside the present library.[1] She stresses that such entrepreneurs leave their present employers and blaze new trails for themselves.

She emphasizes quite correctly the dangers, misconceptions, and myths that accompany entrepreneurship. The most significant of these is the point that while entrepreneurs are indeed free to follow their own hunches and implement their initiatives, their success will nevertheless be dependent on their ability to get others to see and accept the validity of what they see so clearly. The examples of library and information science pioneers she cites are Mortimer Taube, Saul Herner, Eugene Garfield, and Earl Coleman, among others. All fit the classic definition of the entrepreneur—brilliant, individualistic, visionary, courageous, impatient of the weaknesses of others—not builders of teams, delegators of authority, or developers of subordinates.

If that perception of irreconcilable differences between entrepreneurs and team managers were allowed to continue into the last 15 years of this century, then the impact on libraries of individuals with entrepreneurial spirit would indeed continue to be minimal. Bureaucratic organizations have efficient mechanisms for driving out the person who is different from the norm, because even those who are brighter, quicker and more efficient than the norm tend to make others uncomfortable. This is of course true throughout organizations, because human behavior is fairly generic. It is nowhere more true than in libraries for reasons already stated in part and to be elaborated later in this article. Students do not normally choose this profession in search of wealth or notoriety and the admonition of the 1970s that we should seek a consensus through consultation and participation has found an eager audience among librarians. That consensus decisions are invariably "safe," that they are usually unimaginative in conception and slow in development have been recognized as well for some time. Some administrators in the for-profit sector such as Thomas Watson, Jr., though, sought ways to balance individual initiative and innovation with the characteristics of a large slow-moving bureaucratic structure. They had the motive and incentive for greater profits and a greater market share, however. Libraries have no such performance measurement criteria and neither their staffs nor their users have come to expect any. We could therefore perceive ourselves as in a trap, discouraging entrepreneurs from entering our midst and driving away those who wandered in by accident.

A recent development named by its originator, Gifford Pinchot III, as *in*trapreneurship seeks to differentiate his argument that entrepreneurs do not have to leave and that they can work within the organization.[2] Pinchot's ideas are worth examining, because, as will be argued later, probably no profession has a greater need for this newly termed intrapreneur than librarianship. Pinchot stresses the importance of entrepreneurial approaches within organizations, with examples drawn directly from the for-profit sector – and argues persuasively that organizations that depend on "style" of organizational behavior as opposed to a concentration on results pay a heavy penalty.

While the term "intrapreneur" may be new, the ideas are really not. Other managers and teachers of management have stated that a continued reliance on innovation is essential for success in any organizational setting. William Zucker, professor at the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania, has argued that entrepreneurship is a part of the warp and woof of any organization. Robert T. Grohman, president of the clothing firm Levi Strauss, has stated that "Scarcity of innovation is the surest path to slackened competition, to emphasis on maintenance of effort, and finally, to inertia."[3] These writers, and others, argue that an atmosphere open to innovation requires a tolerance for failure, and an openness to risk.

It is perhaps Peter Drucker, the articulate and outspoken guru of management concepts, who puts the idea into its most useful perspective and who permits us to apply it to librarianship. It was Drucker who, a number of years ago, pointed out that managers only get credit for two activities, innovation and marketing, because operational maintenance of the status quo is assumed and earns no recognition. It was he who noted that managers needed to be innovative to avoid the risk of being boring, because boredom was a deadly sin in any management environment. Librarians, of course, can take the example from there. If we are taken for granted, if we are trivialized, and if our decisions not to generate an atmosphere of crisis then causes others to rush to solve them, it may be because we have not taken these injunctions to heart.

In a 1985 book *Innovation and Entrepreneurship* Drucker examines these issues in greater detail, and he makes some statements which librarians might find startling.[4] He argues, for example, that the last 15 years have seen the emergence of a truly entrepreneurial economy in the United States. This timing is interesting, because it would relegate the concept of "team management" to the 1960s, and replace it in the 1970s and 1980s with a more rugged individualistic model. For libraries, as always well behind their industrial role models, such a suggestion becomes particularly ironic. Our literature is still filled with urgings that we develop concepts of greater participation, consensus seeking, and committee decision structures, when Drucker now suggests that such an approach has been passé for some time.

The suggestion of the 1960s sociological argument was that people will work harder if they are happier and that what we really need are managers who are sensitive to the concerns and needs of people. That this "fad" has now run its course can also be seen from a general examination of the longevity of management theories and from an examination of recent newspaper accounts. It is most directly evident from the actions of corporations in the mid-1980s, which are ruthlessly stripping their organizations of middle management layers of coordinators, staff assistants, and facilitators, and relying on keeping individuals who "do things" and who "make things happen." The change, of course, is never total. Management fads have a way of swinging like pendulums, overcorrecting perceived imbalances and then precipitating a counteraction against an activity that had gone too far. Certainly no one would argue that sensitivity to individuals, an ability to listen, and a willingness to compromise are bad. What appears clear, however, is that these values as virtues in themselves have fallen by the wayside. Organizations do want individuals with these values if possible, more importantly they want people who will make a direct and personal contribution to the program of the organization, if necessary by cutting through the red tape and caution flags set up by the bureaucracy's "people people," the ones who do little but convene meetings and report the consensus achieved there. I attempted to address this fascination in our own field with style as opposed to substance of decision making in a column entitled "Participative Management is the Answer, But What Was the Question?"[5] The column drew little direct response, but at least some comment that I had rather cleverly exposed some of the weaknesses in an excessive use of participative processes. This exposure only pointed out that we had to work harder to make the process work, because participation was desirable as a social good and we needed to make it effective. Why, for heaven's sake? Because it makes for more efficient and effective libraries? Because it makes for more fulfilled and happy librarians? Neither point can be "proven," but in the 1960s such things did not have to be proven if they were "obvious." What we do know about job fulfillment would suggest that protecting staff members against abuse, unfairly low salaries, and objectives for which there are no resources of implementation are far more effective techniques than the recognized absurdity of sitting around in lengthy meetings pondering the undoable. I cannot help noting that as this is being written the radio reports the death of Admiral Hyman Rickover, one of the great, most effective, and to some, most obnoxious entrepreneurs. Rickover developed the atomic submarine, and in that process his unflagging enemy was the bureaucracy of the U.S. Navy, most particularly those admirals whose route to success was through the socialization process of getting along with others. The country club is still an effective route to success in the United States, as school ties are in Great Britain, party membership in the Soviet Union, and important relatives in the Middle East.

I hope that the reader will forgive the digression, which somehow seemed a necessary tribute at the time of writing. For libraries, the developments in management practice, and our own approaches to seeking collegiality and cooperation just as others turn to individuality and contribution may suggest that we are still, or perhaps once again, out of phase. As an educator and administrator I know that some libraries shun candidates who are "different," even though they know that in this case different may mean brighter and more articulate. I also know that some educators assign group projects and assign group grades, although they know that they cannot really tell who contributed what portion to the overall outcome, except that this contribution was almost never equally distributed. Hyman Rickover, by contrast, prided himself on refusing to accept recommendations with several equal signatures. He wanted to know who was taking responsibility and who would ultimately be credited or blamed. Rickover was unusual because he insisted on this practice in the 1960s when such behavior was considered bizarre. It is bizarre no longer, except perhaps in libraries and similar institutions.

In discussing entrepreneurship within the organization, Peter Drucker stresses that opportunities for innovation come from unexpected successes (the development of data base access services for libraries comes immediately to mind), or unexpected failures (here the obvious example would seem to be our failure to secure adequate financial support for our historic and traditional approaches). Drucker further argues that innovation should be based on an analysis of opportunities, that it should be kept as simple as possible, that it should start small, and that innovation should be for the present and not for the future.

Although Drucker does not specifically discuss libraries, his book points to the particular difficulty of public service institutions in attempting to deal with innovation. The problems he identifies are certainly descriptive of libraries; yet it is his unswerving conclusion that ways must be found around these difficulties:

1. We are judged by budgets rather than by results. True enough, but the solution is self-evident. It lies in the concept of program budgeting, of starting with proposed activities and moving from these to budgets, rather than the other way around. Program budgeting, of course, has been in vogue in responsible administrative circles for 20 years. If it has not been applied to library budgets it is because we have not developed either the justification or the insistence that it should.

2. We depend on a multitude of constituents, any of whom has at least a partial veto over what we do. Again, this is certainly an accurate description of libraries. It opens questions of "turf," of who controls the decision process of how libraries function, the professionals or the amateurs. Turf battles are not uncommon in any discipline, but doctors and lawyers won theirs long ago. Teachers are presently involved in the struggle to determine who decides curriculum and classroom size. Librarians, by contrast, have generally been loath to broach the issue. Some, particularly in academia, even argue that users know better than we what the library should do, a statement made specious by the recognition that most users do not even know what the library *could* do, only what it does.

3. Public service institutions see their mission as one of "doing good," as a moral absolute rather than in economic terms. If we do not succeed, we assume either that we must try harder or obtain more resources. It does not readily occur to public service institutions to examine what they do and why they do it. Drucker must have been looking over our shoulders when he wrote that.

Drucker's most telling points for us come when he describes what is needed to develop an organizational climate hospitable to entrepreneurship and innovation. It is my preference to list these all at once and then comment on them in greater detail. Drucker's points are:

1. A clear definition of organizational mission
2. A realistic statement of objectives

3. The recognition that a failure to achieve objectives requires the redefinition of these objectives in terms that can be achieved
4. The need to look at innovation as an opportunity rather than as a threat

The application of Drucker's points to the scenario of the library is quite evident. Libraries do tend to have mission statements, but these tend to be open-ended and unsuited to quantification. Such mission statements as "provide library services to all the citizens of the community" or "support the research and teaching mission of the university" are not inappropriate as slogans, but they suggest a clear need for translation into objectives. Objectives, management theorists remind us, are statements of what is specifically going to be accomplished in a finite period of time. They are allied to an identification of needed resources, and to the development of plans and strategies for accomplishing these objectives.

It is here, and in Drucker's third point which argues that a failure to achieve objectives (particularly because of an inadequacy of resources) requires a redefinition of objectives, that libraries, and by inference, other public service institutions, fail so badly. It may be because we do not control our agenda and instead depend on constituents to tell us what to do, constituents who may not be the same individuals as those who control our resources. It may be, as Drucker has also suggested, because we believe in the "goodness" of our service, and therefore take a personal responsibility for providing it, regardless of resources. Certainly, when our managers suggest to us that "they have confidence in our ability to cope" or that "we do the best we can," those statements contain a tacit admission that the job really cannot be done. We are often reluctant, though, to make that necessary statement to complete the scenario. As library managers, we give our subordinates assignments that cannot be satisfactorily completed because there is not enough time or not enough resources. When we knowingly perpetrate this fraud by urging *them* to "do the best they can," we do so much damage to organizational morale that management styles of autocracy, consultation, or participation become irrelevant by comparison. When individuals are given jobs in which they cannot succeed that injustice transcends the style in which we do it.

And yet, as a wholly emerging literature on the management of declining resources suggests, we do badly in relating our resources to our objectives, likely because we are measured on the basis of budgets rather than results. If this is the case, and I am sure it is, it becomes puzzling that we are unwilling or at least unable to renegotiate those expected results based on the resources provided. The clue may be found in the last and by his definition most important characteristics in the Drucker description of public service institutions. Because we are here to do "good" and because we see our mission as a moral imperative rather than in more mundane down to earth terms, it may be precisely because we do not *want* to limit our objectives that we fail to tie them to the resources provided. However, in this noble and perhaps understandable aim, we make two fatal mistakes. The first is that by a failure to tie accomplishments to resources we insure both decreased resources and ultimately decreased accomplishments. In other words, we doom ourselves to failure because we are unwilling to take the risks necessary to be managers. We also fail to recognize, as Thomas Galvin has reminded us, that "management is a contact sport."[6]

Our second mistake is even more serious, because it makes victims of our subordinates. In our unwillingness to fight for the resources they need to accomplish their jobs or to restructure the job to meet the resources, we sentence subordinates to play a game they cannot win. It seems ironic to me that in this profession we spend so much time trying to implement in the 1980s a 1960s philosophy of personal decision involvement. At the same time we ignore a reality that has been around a lot longer and is not going to change – that we owe our subordinates a job they can accomplish with the training and resources provided – and that we owe them a chance to win, if they are willing to try. It takes no genius to figure out what happens to the morale of individuals who learn that they cannot win no matter how hard they try.

A number of recent articles dealing with the management of declining resources in the public sector, but most directly that by Bo Hedberg written a decade ago, tell us quite directly how to deal with this phenomenon.[7] Hedberg outlines the stages through which a management confronted by declining resources must pass to ultimately deal with the problem. The first is the premise that the decline is temporary and that nothing needs to be done because the problem will disappear on its own. This is of course occasionally true, but not nearly as frequently as we would like to believe, or as often our managers urge us to believe. The most obvious test for such a hypothesis is to ask what situation is likely to improve and why this will occur. Frequently, the hope for better days ahead is nothing more than wishful thinking. As often as not the cut presages further cuts in the future. The prudent manager, of course, deals with realities and not with fond hopes. In contrast to the teaching of children's fairy tales, wishing will not make it so.

Hedberg's second stage recognizes that the cut is not temporary, but that somehow "it can be absorbed." Many libraries allow themselves to be cajoled or pressured into accepting this scenario, but Hedberg notes quite clearly that the argument is bankrupt, for two reasons. The first is that it creates yet more pressures on efficiency, on doing what we do as rapidly and cheaply as possible, rather than allowing a concentration of effectiveness, an investigation of why we are doing what we are doing and a determination of possible alternatives. The second is that as we suggest to our subordinates that they must "do more" because the budget has been cut, we create two unacceptable premises. The first is that they must somehow bear the brunt and accept the blame for our failure to succeed as managers, because clearly one of our jobs as managers is the obtaining of resources. The second is that we entrap them into an admission that they can absorb more work, and thereby into a self-indictment of not having worked as hard as they could have. Subordinates are smarter than that. The suggestion that more work can be absorbed must be categorically rejected whether or not it has validity. If higher production quotas are unilaterally imposed, they are met with dire warnings that quality will suffer. Of course, having been issued, these warnings must be made to come true and therefore they do come true.

Ultimately, Hedberg argues, organizations can only deal with declining resources by reexamining and changing the premises of what is to be done, how it is to be done, or both. That clearly involves us in renegotiating the "contract" with our constituent groups. Sometimes it is these individuals who also directly or indirectly provide our funds and that negotiation should be relatively simple. In other situations, the constituents and source of funds represent different communities. It is then necessary for the librarian to clearly establish the relationship in the understanding of both groups—so that constituents know whom to blame and that budget cutters understand whatever risks they incur in cutting budgets. It must be obvious to all readers that if there are no perceived risks in the cutting of budgets or alternatively no credit to be gained in restoring or augmenting a library budget, then library budgets will indeed be automatically cut. This is true because there is inevitably credit to be gained for frugality and economy. If that action has no price it becomes an absurdly simple decision to make. Librarians who do not understand that political reality participate in their own destruction and fail to protect their organizations or their staffs. It is these individuals who are our truly incompetent managers.

Budget cuts and other failures of programs and initiatives, Drucker reminds us, provide excellent opportunities for innovation. It is important in this case to stop harboring grudges, to cease looking for scapegoats, and not to engage in lengthy and paralyzing analysis. Rather, Drucker suggests that the potential innovator and entrepreneur simply look around. Options will suggest themselves as long as we concentrate properly on objectives and not on processes themselves. It can be argued that declining environments not only provide opportunities for innovation, they make the process essential. For, as my college tennis coach well advised me, "always change a losing game. The worst that can happen is that you will still lose. You therefore risk nothing."[8]

As librarians have the opportunity to examine the admonitions of

Drucker and others dealing with nurturing innovation and entrepreneurship within the organization structure, there are a number of concerns that must be kept in mind.

The first is that libraries, perhaps even beyond other public service institutions, tend to attract and then promote individuals with other than entrepreneurial and innovative characteristics. Entrepreneurs, we must remind ourselves, are not necessarily the most pleasant and affable of individuals. We can see this from the list of information entrepreneurs identified in Helena Strauch's chapter, all of them personally known to this writer. The point is that what they have done shows courage and it works. The biographical synopses of Admiral Hyman Rickover which now flood the media stress that same contradiction. Entrepreneurs and innovators are not likely to win popularity contests, if for no other reason than their advocacy for change and most of the organization resists change. The job of the manager in this environment is to separate what is perceived to be beneficial change from change which can have negative implications or which is change simply for the sake of change. However, as libraries, rushing to implement the 1960s sociological model of governance, seek individuals less noted for iconoclastic brilliance than an ability to fit into a collegial mold, the likelihood of the survival of innovators and entrepreneurs becomes lessened. Protecting entrepreneurs in an organization requires effort as Thomas Watson, Jr., in his admonition to nurture and protect "wild ducks," constantly sought to remind IBM lower level administrators. I recall telling one of my subordinate supervisors in one of my information industry assignments: "You cause me more trouble than any three of my other subordinates put together. But you are worth it." It was the nicest compliment I could think of. Of course, this puts us in mind of one of the premises that management theory has recognized all along. Good subordinates make trouble. They are impatient for change, for improvement, and for personal reward. Only a self-confident supervisor can handle this. When organizational dynamics demand that the individual first "persuade" his or her co-workers, the cause is likely to be lost. Groups are unlikely to foster innovation. Group decisions tend to foster compromise and safe approaches. When we deliberately opt for such a tensionless environment, we give up a great deal. It was indicative to me that at least one of the criticisms about my article that questioned the blind adherence to participation as a management style conceded that indeed participation did not always work, but that we should strive to make it work. That approach has nothing to do with organizational objectives and it has nothing to do with the role of the library. Nor, as we have learned, does it have much to do with making people "happy." Giving people job assignments at which they can succeed is more likely to do this, but such an action of course requires protecting them and the library from the imposition of objectives that cannot be accomplished.

Innovation and entrepreneurship involve risk. There is clearly the risk of failure, and would-be innovators must know that we are not just looking over their shoulder waiting for them to fail. Failure, in institutional initiatives and for individuals, is a normal thing to be expected, as long as there is some reasonable balance with success. It was interesting to note that Coca-Cola conferred a substantial salary increase on the executive who made the decision to implement the new formula Coca-Cola. That decision, marketing statistics clearly indicate, was a mistake and corporate management obliquely acknowledged that fact. The reward was not for success, it was for the courage to try.

Public service institutions such as libraries, we are reminded by Drucker, are not expected to take risks, because they are judged by their budgets and not by their accomplishments. If budgets were adequate that *might* be an acceptable approach, although not for the innovators and entrepreneurs who had accidentally drifted into our profession. However, we know that budgets are not adequate, and they are becoming less adequate all the time. We therefore must, for our own professional survival, concentrate on results rather than budgets, and apply a healthy dose of innovation and entrepreneurship to the process.

Drucker also notes that unexpected successes, unexpected problems, incongruities between what is and what ought to be, and the development of new knowledge and new technology all provide a fertile ground for the consideration of innovation. All these can be seen to apply to libraries and only a few examples will suffice to make the point. The reader can easily find his or her own.

1. The application of technology to the cataloging process, most specifically through the development of the MARC system, allows us to reexamine the premises and redesign the parameters of how we analyze. That is particularly true for subject analysis. Subject analysis for books is sparse in the library cataloging process for a number of reasons, but two immediately come to mind. The economics of manual card filing limited the number of cards to be produced and filed. Having opted for a detailed analysis on each basic card of the descriptive features for the book and having decided to file at least under author, title, and other applicable descriptive tags, only at most two or three subject cards appeared affordable. Moreover, the difficulty with card catalogs of performing coordinated multi-term searches suggested the use of more generic subject terms, even though we recognized (or at least presumably recognized) that such broad headings with many cards would make subject searches difficult. If anyone doubts this he or she need only spend a little time at the divided catalog of a major academic library. Most subject searches are begun in the author-title catalog. Whatever the rationale for this historic approach, it is valid no longer. Computer access to bibliographic information permits not only the economic storage of more records, but also the

coordinated searching of several access points. It provided for us the innovative and entrepreneurial opportunity to take advantage of the new technology by developing new analytical approaches, rather than just transferring manual cataloging rules to machines. It is perhaps ironic to note that one entrepreneurial commercial information service is now bringing out a tool with which to search for book information through greater subject detail. It is a need we have failed to address and at least somebody perceives the gap.

2. The development of computerized access for bibliographic searching has made that exercise far more productive, far more worthwhile, far more interesting, and at the same time far more complex. It makes historic reference department budgets based on the manual perusal of card files and published indexes totally irrelevant. This development also suggests a relatively simple justification for a manyfold increase in the public service budget of libraries, based not on history but on need and opportunities. It is, in any budgetary setting that concentrates on results, relatively easy to do. In the case of bibliographic searching, it is easy to demonstrate that the funds will be spent in any case and undoubtedly spent less efficiently if outside the library budget. A budgetary increase is also easy to do because the management literature reminds us that large increases with significant results are far easier to justify than small increases which produce no noted change. The sad indictment is not that we have failed, it is that by and large we have not tried. Instead, we have produced a tortuous literature that argues that teaching individuals to do their own information searching work is the "better" approach. This argument runs counter to evidence that we do it more economically and more effectively and that most users would rather delegate the process if they could. What we have done here is to continue to define the library's tasks as we have always defined them and to expel all tasks that do not fit priority definitions. We have of course applied new techniques to the tasks we have always performed, but that is neither innovative nor entrepreneurial. It is safe, it is sure—it is also boring and in the long term probably suicidal.

3. As a corollary to increased bibliographic access we have also developed a heightened demand for document delivery, as users and reference librarians are no longer restricted to finding out about things in our own card catalogs. Statistics indicate a growing reliance on interlibrary loan. We ought to be thrilled at that opportunity to broaden our services, although these increases are usually reported in our literature as troublesome problems. The reason, of course, is that we have never developed an updated strategy for dealing with the issue of shipping material from one library to another. We prefer to avoid the problem by pretending that this is nothing more than a mutually shared exchange. That, of course, becomes the ultimate trivialization of the process. Fortunately, technol-

ogy has developed techniques to help us with this problem and these techniques are widely in use. Paper copy can be reproduced by bouncing it off a satellite, or by transmitting it via telephone lines to a printer at the receiving end. I recall a demonstration of this process at the Library of Congress over 30 years ago. The quality was not very good, but the inventor clearly saw value for libraries as soon as quality improved. Little did he know that quality had nothing to do with our use of this technique. Our concern was and remains cost. However, we do not need to be as esoteric. Many commercial services, and even the formerly tradition-bound U.S. Postal Service, now have mechanisms for one day delivery. Why do we not utilize this service? Why do we continue to insist on using package delivery and lower class delivery at that? That process, added to delays at both library ends, can result in a wait of four weeks or longer. Is it because we really believe that what we do is so trivial that it is not worth a greater effort? I hope nobody will suggest that it is not because we do not have the money, because that excuse, if accepted, would effectively prevent any change from ever taking place. We obviously don't have the money, but the answer is to get some.

Innovation and entrepreneurship in this profession are rare enough that when some example does come to mind, it really stands out. Several years ago one of our brightest Indiana graduates accepted a position with an industrial firm to provide on-line search services in that organization's small library, services never offered previously. The corporation made it clear that this was only a one year appointment, funded by appropriations that would not and could not be sustained and that under no circumstances would the job extend beyond one year. Many students were and are reluctant to take such a position, but this young entrepreneur and innovator had no reservations. She told me that she had a full year to make herself totally indispensable and that long before that year was up management would be convinced that the funds had to be found somewhere to maintain the service. Of course, she was completely correct. The decision to turn this into a full-time position was made before the end of six months, to make sure she did not start looking for another job. Peter Drucker has also told us this. He reminds us that if we can create utility price is almost always irrelevant. Put another way, we know, or we ought to know, that corporations, universities, and even small municipalities find ways to afford what they really want to afford, and that could include library activities.

Entrepreneurs and innovators know that too, probably instinctively. I am not sure that one can really develop entrepreneurial and innovative perceptions in individuals unless the germ is already there. What we must do is find such individuals, attract them to our profession, and then nurture and protect them from all of the organizational forces that demand that they resemble everybody else.

Entrepreneurs are not often themselves the managers of large enterprises, including major libraries, although small and special libraries can function with entrepreneurs in charge. There is in management too much of the administrative, of the routine, of the maintenance of stability to allow senior executives in charge that much flexibility. It is an old management axiom that the higher one progresses within a management structure, the less freedom one has. What senior library managers can and should do is create a climate that welcomes and encourages innovators and entrepreneurs, that protects them from second-guessers when they fail, that guards them in their "difference" from colleagues and coworkers, and that makes it clear that risk is welcome even when it leads to failure, and is still preferable to never trying or suggesting anything. Finally, upper level library managers must create an environment in which people care about the organization, in which they understand the importance of their own contribution, and in which they are given assignments with a relationship to the resources provided—assignments in which they have a chance to succeed. That is of course true in all organizational dynamics, but it is particularly true in settings such as libraries, in which such a climate does not automatically develop. This, as already noted, is because those outside the library with whom we deal expect little and least of all innovation and change. By and large, our users want us to continue what they already find comfortable, only they want more of it. Our bosses want the same thing, only they want it all at lower cost.

It is an intolerable no-win strategy, and it can only be changed by individuals with the foresight to seek a better way, and the courage to fight for it.

Intrapreneurs are revolutionaries. They cause trouble but they are worth it. Hewlett Packard, one of the organizations mentioned by Pinchot as supportive of entrepreneurship and innovation, goes so far as to issue a Medal of Defiance, awarded in recognition of extraordinary contempt and defiance beyond the normal call of duty.

It is not at all certain that even Hewlett Packard, which encourages this process among its engineers, either welcomes or expects it from its librarians. As we already know from Drucker, librarians are not judged by their accomplishments, only by their budgets. Because it is for us a no-win situation, we have to change it in our dealings with those who fund us.

However, we have to do more. We have to attract innovative and entrepreneurial individuals into our profession, we have to hire them knowing that they will make trouble and protect them when they do. Obviously, only if their contribution turns out to be constructive. However, our 1980s application of outmoded 1960s management values which concentrate not on accomplishment but on getting along within an overall group model, a team approach whose theme is consensus, compromise, conformity and comfort, will quite effectively weed out whatever entrepreneurs we might attract before they can even begin to make a difference. We must have the discipline to change this model ourselves. We have no choice. Our present system of management structure and decision distribution is safe and comfortable, but it doesn't work. It would not work in a corporate profit center setting, either, but at least there we would find an executive like Thomas Watson, Jr. to worry about it. The discipline must come from within, because as already noted nobody else cares what we do, only how much we spend. Many in our user communities, of course, would just as soon we changed nothing that is already comfortable. That is unacceptable, because it trivializes our own professional role.

Most of all, we must search for individuals who seek to destabilize the status quo and who are willing to take risks in search of improvement and change. Not high risks. Calculated moderate risks, but risks all the same. Why? Because what we are doing now does not work and I do not think I need to prove that contention. In the final analysis, my old tennis coach is still a good management philosopher. Always change a losing game.

NOTES

1. Strauch, Helena M. *Entrepreneurship in the information industry*. In *Careers in information*, edited by Jane F. Spivack. White Plains, NY: Knowledge Industry Publications, 1982, pp. 73-101.

2. Pinchot, Gifford III. *Intrapreneuring: Why you don't have to leave the corporation to become an entrepreneur*. New York: Harper & Row, 1985.

3. Nelton, Sharon. *Finding room for the intrapreneur*. Nation's Business, 72, Feb., 1984, pp. 50-52.

4. Drucker, Peter F. *Innovation and entrepreneurship*. New York: Harper & Row, 1985.

5. White, Herbert S. *Participative management is the answer, but what was the question*? Library Journal 110 (no. 13), Aug. 1985, pp. 62-63.

6. Galvin, Thomas J. *Maxims for managerial survival in tough times*. Conference handout available from the author.

7. Hedberg, Bo and others. *Camping on seesaws. Prescriptions for a self-designing organization*. Administrative Sciences Quarterly 21(1), pp. 41-65, 1976.

8. White, Herbert S. *Bjorn Borg and the library materials budget*. Information and Library Manager 1, June 1981, pp. 3-4.