ACRL Members Run for ALA Council

The following members of the Association of College and Research Libraries have been nominated as candidates for ALA councilor in the spring 1983 elections. Members are encouraged to vote for these candidates to increase ACRL's voice in the affairs of the American Library Association.

George M. Bailey, associate director of libraries, Claremont Colleges, Claremont, California.

Barbara Bryan, university librarian, Nyseluis Library, Fairfield University, Fairfield, Connecticut.

Mary Louise Cobb, coordinator of public services, Maine State Library, Augusta.

Harold H.J. Erickson, director of library development, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Susan L. Heath, reference and collection development librarian, Nicolet College, Learning Resources Center, Rhinelander, Wisconsin.

Karen L. Horney, assistant university librarian for technical services, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

Philip E. Leinbach, university librarian, Tulane University, New Orleans.

Myra Macon, associate professor, University of Mississippi, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University, Mississippi.

Hannah V. McCauley, library director, Ohio University, Lancaster.

Stefan Moses, executive director, California Library Association, Sacramento.

Michael H. Randall, assistant head, serials department, University Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

A. Robert Rogers, dean, School of Library Science, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio.

Ada M. Seltzer, assistant director of public services, Medical Center Library, University of South Florida, Tampa.

Carla J. Stoffle, assistant chancellor for educational services, University of Wisconsin-Parkside, Kenosha.

Allen B. Veaner, university librarian, University of California, Santa Barbara. ■■

National Invitational Conference on Independent Scholarship

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The Independent Scholarship Project with support from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, the Northwest Area Foundation, and Spring Hill Center sponsored a three-day National Invitational Conference on Independent Scholarship in early November at the Spring Hill Conference Center in Wayzata, Minnesota. I attended as the ACRL representative.

The conference dealt with the plight of those doing serious intellectual work without university affiliation, people for whom scholarship is a joy, not necessarily a job. In addition, at a time when recent graduates of advanced degree programs cannot find faculty positions, the number of independent scholars is growing. If the institutions associated with scholarship do not react in a positive, helpful manner our culture may well suffer. This becomes clearer when one considers notable scholars who are not thought of as faculty, e.g., Arthur Koestler, Buckminster Fuller, I.F. Stone, Eric

Hoffer, Barbara Tuchman, E.F. Schumacher, Paul Goodman, and Rachel Carson.

The goals of the conference were to: 1) review findings regarding the needs, activities, and problems of independent scholars and their organizations; 2) suggest feasible initiatives by different kinds of organizations to improve the climate for such work; 3) identify further needed research; and 4) formulate conclusions and recommendations for widespread dissemination, discussion and action.

A report on the conference was published in the *Independent Scholarship Newsletter* in December (Ronald Gross, editor; The Independent Scholarship Project, 17 Myrtle Drive, Great Neck, NY 11021). This report includes recommendations to: 1) independent scholars and their organizations, 2) humanities councils and foundations, 3) learned societies, 4) libraries, 5) academe, and 6) scholarly journals and publishers. What I want to address here are the thirteen specific recommendations to libraries. These recommendations were made by and approved by the participants. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the librarians present, although in some, the influence of librarians is clear.

In order to come to these recommendations it was necessary to identify who "independent scholars" are. Ronald Gross, in his background paper for the conference entitled, "Independent Scholarship, Promise, Problems, Proposal," stated that "they share two defining characteristics: they are pursuing serious intellectual inquiry outside of academe, and those inquiries have resulted in significant findings which have been accepted by fellow scholars in their fields as significant contributions" (p.5). From this definition one can see that we are dealing with a relatively small number of individuals. This is important in understanding the recommendations.

Of the approximately 45 people in attendance at the conference, four were librarians: Betty Stone, representing ALA; Eldred Smith, representing ARL; Mary Hoban, representing SLA; Patrick Penland from the University of Pittsburgh; and myself, representing ACRL. After each recommendation I will present a brief discussion which summarizes the discussions at the conference and separate discussions among those representing library organizations. The librarians did not formalize their observations and as a result the "discussion" represents only my notes so that the recommendations are in a context for you.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO LIBRARIES

1. Libraries—including research libraries at major universities—should review their policies to assure that they facilitate the work of independents. This can be accomplished by making librarians aware of the needs of independent scholars through the professional organizations and their publications, programs at their annual meetings, and through continuing education committees.

Discussion: It was the feeling of the majority of those present that many of the problems independent scholars have with libraries are a result of librarians being unaware of or insensitive to the problems these scholars face. The recommendation addresses itself to the belief that many of the difficulties are perceptual and result from a lack of understanding. As librarians become aware of the independent scholar they will reduce the barriers to information scholars need.

2. Access to libraries for bonafide independent scholars should be free.

Discussion: This is probably the most difficult and controversial of the recommendations. The key word is "bonafide." This is not throwing the door open to everyone, even though many colleges and research libraries do; it is only suggesting that when a scholar needs access to specific material, which in many cases may be unique, the scholar should have free access.

3. Libraries need to find ways for the independent scholars to have access to collections and/or information when, because of vacation periods, etc., libraries have shorter, less convenient hours.

Discussion: The times when many colleges take breaks and curtail their hours are the only times when many independent scholars can do research, e.g., Christmas. What is requested here is that librarians be flexible and creative in assisting scholars.

4. Libraries should recognize that independent scholars need help in using the new technologies and resources. Librarians should offer orientation programs at times and places convenient to independent scholars.

Discussion: This recommendation was the result of the independent scholars at the conference realizing there was much about libraries they did not know, especially regarding the new technologies.

5. When libraries have computers or other hardware such as word-processing machines which could be made available to independent scholars for other uses associated with research and writing, they should make them available to independent scholars at times when otherwise they would be under-utilized.

Discussion: This addresses a specific need expressed by independent scholars. Whether or not a specific library could meet that need depends on the local situation.

6. Public libraries might act as fiscal receiving agencies for independent scholars who need affiliation for grants.

Discussion: It is very difficult for an unaffiliated scholar to get grant funds without a fiscal agent.

7. Libraries should engage "scholars-in-residence" to teach and support other independent scholars and the larger community, as in the "Writing-In-Chicago Program" at the Chicago Public Library, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Discussion: There have been a number of such programs in public libraries. These should be encouraged.

8. Libraries should develop guides through the American Library Association, or other library associations, to help the independent scholars find all the resources that are available.

Discussion: This is similar to Recommendation 4 but highlights the needs independent scholars have in the non-technological areas. One outcome of the conference may be an independent scholars' handbook, a section of which might be put together by librarians on libraries and their resources. Often academic libraries prepare such materials for their own clientele but do not make them readily available to the independent scholar.

9. Independent scholars should recognize the fact that librarians may be a more important resource to them in their work than libraries.

Discussion: It became clear to the librarians at the conference that the word "librarian" was being applied to anyone who works in a library. This rec-

ommendation came from the library representatives with the explicit suggestion that some of the independent scholars present at the conference had not been dealing with librarians.

10. Libraries should recognize that the truly serious scholar is the exception and can be handled on an exceptional basis.
Discussion: Almost every library makes exceptions for exceptional users. This recommendation suggests that this service should be extended to the non-affiliated scholar.

11. Librarians need to be sensitive to the non-assertive patron. For example, ways should be sought to improve the signage in libraries, the attitudes of staff, etc.
Discussion: The different library experiences of various scholars at the conference seemed to have some relationship to how assertive they were. This is a problem that should be addressed by libraries regardless of the needs of the independent scholar since many of our affiliated patrons have the same problems.

12. Librarians as professionals should explicitly recognize the value of the independent scholar in society and the independent scholar's special needs, and take steps to meet these needs, including support for the Independent Scholar's Project.
Discussion: When we look at the impressive list of just some of the independent scholars at the beginning of this paper, the societal value of the independent scholar is clear. Independent scholars can take chances which affiliated scholars would fear and can open up entirely new areas of study which may not fit into the existing departmental and disciplinary categories of academia. As librarians, we can contribute to the work of independent scholars significantly by providing them with access to the information they need. We might well want to look at our collection development policies to assure that we are making accessible to all our patrons the fruits of independent scholars even though they are sometimes produced in forms difficult to catalog or store.

13. Although the library professional has to become aware of the needs of the independent scholar, the independent scholar has the responsibility to assert his or her needs more aggressively and persistently.
Discussion: This relates to Recommendation 11, but should not be understood as "letting us off the hook."

The conference was successful in addressing recommendations in a number of areas, but there is much work to be done to see that these recommendations are further refined and implemented. If there was a shortcoming at the conference, it was the difficulty of dealing with the term "independent scholar." There were almost as many definitions as there were participants. I doubt if many libraries would deny access to Barbara Tuchman, but what about the hundreds of other scholars who may someday be as famous? ALA and ACRL should address the needs raised here and develop their own recommendations to the profession. ■ ■