

# Letters

To the Editor:

The article on "Microform Developments" (*CRL*, Jan. 1973) by the former assistant chief of the photoduplication service of the Library of Congress provides a useful synthesis pertaining to the handling of swiftly changing carriers of stored knowledge, yet not that different from the codex. However the article omits one important aspect of the microform picture, that is—*lending* by cooperative projects.

The microform industry is prosperous and derives at least a part of its profits by providing an excessively highly prized product to institutions which, by their nature, are usually financially hard-pressed. They occasionally, as does among others Hoover, pass at least costs incurred in serving its scholars, to the wider community of libraries. [sic] To maximize service at lowest cost cooperative programs mentioned by Mr. Sullivan strive to hold in nonprofit-making hands a master negative and loan positive made available to member institutions. The research material is infrequently used and often voluminous. One copy is likely to suffice for North America or even the whole world. The borrowing library has the choice between borrowing and buying microform or hard copy for immediate, permanent access. Nonmember institutions may only purchase microform or hard copy at cost plus  $\frac{1}{2}$  the cost of the negative. This applies to the Foreign Newspaper Microfilm Project on which area studies programs are modeled.

Librarians that cannot keep up with the large volume of special and other journals concerned with microform may like to concentrate on the *Microform Review*, a quarterly, that started to be published by Microform Review, Inc. at Rogues Ridge, Weston, CT 06880, in January 1972 at \$30 for

the hard-copy and microfiche edition and \$20 in one medium only.

*Hans E. Panofsky*  
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To the Editor:

"Library Group Practice" by Larry Auld and Irene Voit (*CRL*, Jan. 1973) is but one more poor attempt to analogize librarians with other professions. In building their analogy, they fail to note the extent of training needed by the medical specialist. They do note, however, that lawyers remain unspecialized and a similar fiction follows among librarians. This is all poor analogy. I wish they would examine (measure) the time spent by the lawyer with his client as opposed to the time spent by the medical specialist with his patient (after the proper medical workup). The disparity of time elements alone would discourage false analogies to the lawyer-client or doctor-patient relationships.

Librarians as individuals or groups are analogous to no one; they are not akin to lawyers, doctors, clergymen, faculty, or administrators. I suggest the authors spend their time examining the unique characteristics of librarians in mapping their function. Poor analogy and half-baked suggestions for reorganization show only that librarians have little understanding of themselves or their functions. Don't wait for others to successfully describe the librarian, if we remain a mystery to ourselves.

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To the Editor:

Re: Eli Oboler's letter (*CRL*, Jan. 1973), there seem to be problems in Pocatello that I cannot match. I'm happy with my job, find librarianship varied and exciting, and therefore do not "find it extremely distressing to have to spend one-sixth of my working life at the same old grind" with "my nose to the grindstone." My confreres are productive scholars, not "gadding about . . . each summer and . . . between semesters." I earn far more than the faculty, and am not "paid . . . miserably . . . in relationship to standards for teaching faculty." Indeed, after listening to Eli's confession of his sorry lot, one is tempted to counsel vocational rehabilitation.

Obviously, if there will be no pressures on librarians as faculty to work for advanced academic degrees or to publish, and they can con the faculty (with whom they are now in tight competition for budget) into letting them get something more for nothing, they should do so. But, as I asked in my editorial, who wants to work in such a university? The two library staffs mentioned in my editorial were not miserably paid comparatively and were not required to terminate if tenure was denied. The University of Delaware has recently joined the group that has decided not to request full faculty equivalency.

Let me emphasize two of my points by reshaping them. (1) Librarianship as a profession is at the present time in far better condition than the teaching profession, a reversal that has occurred over the past twenty years. (2) Tenure restrictions will soon be more rigorous throughout the country than at any time in history. If librarians can steer clear of them, it is to their advantage to do so. Six years ago at Hofstra we began to see those squeezed out of the CUNY system through tenure quotas drifting out to Long Island. Now if you get squeezed out, where do you go?

Since my editorial, the executive board of the American Association of Colleges, one of three groups intended to join the Joint Statement, has turned it down because librarians don't distinguish between those who engage in teaching functions and those who do not. Our blanket claim of librarians as teachers has always been

unjust to all non-public-service librarians.

Since Oboler and I are antithetical personalities, we cannot see things alike, but nowhere is our difference so marked as in his blind and unfeeling rejection of the Venus de Milo, which I protest. As any right-thinking man can plainly see, Venus has a great deal to offer, even without arms.

Ellsworth Mason  
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To the Editor:

In his excellent compilation of useful information regarding acquisition of microforms (*CRL*, Jan. 1973) Robert C. Sullivan very properly pointed out that librarians too often think only in terms of acquisition from commercial sources, overlooking the wealth of material to be acquired from the photocopying and microfilming services of other libraries. He pointed out also that the *a priori* determination of whether a distant library holds a wanted item is becoming increasingly possible with the issuance, now about one-fourth completed, of the printed *National Union Catalog, Pre-1956 Imprints*.

But it is worth pointing out also that *microforms* too may be used very handily for the location of desired items at distant libraries—whether for microfilming, photocopying, borrowing, or merely verifying. A number of libraries, among them the Yale University library, sell microfilm copies of their entire card catalog to other institutions to facilitate rapid searching of holdings by scholars or librarians at distant locations without the need for travel, phone calls, or letters. While a microfilm of the card catalog of a single library will obviously have the drawback of being less inclusive than *NUC* for pre-1956 imprints, it can offer the offsetting advantages of being more up-to-date, being accessible through all filing terms rather than only main entry, and being fully available right now. And, of course, the cost of such microfilm aids and the space required for storage are both very low in comparison to printed volumes.

Acquisitions, reference, and interlibrary-loan librarians should give serious consideration to the acquisition of microfilm of the

full catalogs of at least the few major libraries which they tend to contact most frequently for searches, loans, photocopies, or microfilms.

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To the Editor:

Ellsworth Mason's less-than-happy editorial in the November issue of *CRL* ("A Short Happy View of Our Emulation of Faculty") is succinct, persuasive, and extremely misleading. A scholar and former English teacher himself, Mr. Mason must know that tenure and what he describes as "longer vacation periods" are not intended as academic "rewards," but are vital elements of scholarly development. Tenure is not, by definition, intended to protect the incompetent, but is designed to permit those who must speak out on controversial issues to do so. Nonteaching periods are moreover essential if sound research and quality publication are to be expected from academics. Far from being, as Mr. Mason calls them, "sausages from a casing machine," these elements form the basis for perceptive teaching and the expansion of knowledge.

There are in this context, therefore, two questions for academic librarians to answer. Does librarianship need research? Must librarians, as intellectual members of the community, be free to speak their minds on controversial issues such as censorship? To both these questions many librarians would answer "yes." Further, to Mr. Mason's query, "Is this the kind of life librarians want to lead?" the response is surely again strongly affirmative—from at least those members of our profession who would be professionals. Nor Mr. Mason, to use one more of your own adjectives, do we expect such a life to be "cushy," just rewarding.

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To the Editor:

It was with some surprise that I read in the January 1973 issue of *CRL* that El Centro is distributing "16mm cartridges to numerous locations on campus." (Page 18, paragraph 1.) I do not know where Mr. Sullivan got his information, but such is not the case. The system he described has never been used, or proposed, at El Centro.

At present our library catalog is COM produced microfiche format. It is not a reproduction of catalog cards. Bibliographic information is stored on magnetic tape. Every two months, the tape is up-dated and a new set of microfiche is produced by a contracted service firm.

Our present catalog is contained on 21 fiche—7 for author, 6 for title, and 8 for subject. This is a listing of about 35,000 books and 1,500 phonodisks.

The author and title indexes are similar in format. For an author entry, author is given first, followed by indented title. The order is reversed in the title index. In each index, the call number appears above the first line of the entry and is indented ten spaces.

The subject index format is a variation of the above. A subject heading is given, followed by an indented alphabetical listing, by author, of all the books and phonodisks owned by the library on that subject. This author entry follows the format of the author index. Cross-references are also listed. (We hope to add "see also" references this year.)

We have found that this shortened bibliographic entry is satisfactory for the students in a community college library. There has been no public outcry for any of the additional information normally found on the catalog card.

If you will bring this error in Mr. Sullivan's article to the attention of your readers, it will be appreciated.

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