

Editorial

Endings and Beginnings

This editorial is my last for *College & Research Libraries*. At the end of the summer ALA conference, Don Riggs will become the *C&RL* editor. During his year as Editor-Designate, he has appointed a board, begun reviewing manuscripts, and submitted copy for the July issue. In July I will become the editor of *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, where Peter Hernon, the Editor-in-Chief, and I will attempt to provide both a complement to and some competition for *C&RL*.

Saying goodbye to the readers of *C&RL* is poignant because editing the journal has given me such a rich opportunity to think about the problems facing academic librarians and about how research and publication can begin to offer solutions. Receiving *C&RL* is currently a benefit of membership available to all ACRL members whether or not they go to conferences. The ACRL Board is discussing whether they will continue to define publications as a benefit of membership. Nevertheless, the needs of members who cannot attend conferences have been a consideration in my decisions to accept and reject articles.

In each issue, I have tried to provide educational articles about theory and practice in a rapidly evolving field. During the last six years, the Internet and World Wide Web have transformed many library services; the digital/electronic library is becoming a new byword. The access paradigm now challenges the warehouse or local collection paradigm for many libraries. Assessment of library services, the continuing increases in serials prices, copyright, and downsizing are key issues. Some believe rapid dramatic changes are required while others think older approaches continue to have validity.

When I was appointed, the ACRL Board asked me for some specific accomplishments:

Improved book reviews:

Stephen Lehmann and Bob Walther have edited an excellent Book Review section with the help of a diverse group of discerning reviewers. The quantity, breadth, and quality of books has enriched the journal enormously.

College librarianship: I have worked with college authors to bring every possible submission into the journal. However, submissions by college librarians and about college library problems continue to be limited. I hope various groups working to increase participation in research and publication will focus on this area.

More minority representation: A new study by James L. Terry to be published in a forthcoming *C&RL* issue, indicates that in the five years from 1989 to 1994 women, who represent more than 60 percent of academic librarians, equaled men as authors of articles published in *C&RL*. In the journal's first forty years, 80 percent of authors were men. Efforts to increase the participation by African American, Asian American, Hispanic American, and Native American librarians as authors, referees, and Editorial Advisory Board members have also been successful. The persons thanked in the Acknowledgments represent the diverse nature of the association's membership.

A more economical product: The journal shrank slightly from an expensive nonstandard paper size to a more affordable size, copy is now submitted on disk, the number of pages per issue has been reduced, and concomitantly, authors have



been required to shorten articles. ACRL, rather than ALA Publishing, now produces the journal. The resulting leaner journal has broken even or contributed funding to other ACRL programs in all years except one. The rising costs of journals generally make this a noteworthy accomplishment.

On time delivery: Each issue has come out within the cover month.

Each generation sees itself as the last defender of seriousness, scholarship, and standards. Certainly, when we librarians compare the safe, reviewed world of publications selected for and stored in a library with the helter-skelter landscape of information on the Web, we shudder and begin to consider what new techniques need to be taught to library patrons. *C&RL* continues to play that refereed, serious role in ACRL's publications program. The journal allows for the longer, more fully documented discussion of issues. Mary Ellen Davis and I, as the editors of *C&RL News* and *C&RL* respectively, have differentiated the length and type of articles for each journal. Other ACRL publications, such as the monograph series *Publications in Librarianship*, section newsletters, and listservs, have their own niches too. The segments of the

publishing program complement each other to meet the information and education needs of the membership. The publishing program's variety reflects diverse membership requirements.

The most frequently heard criticism of *C&RL* is that it is boring. Letters to the Editor belie this notion. Some articles that I might have judged somewhat pedantic, others delight in. What interests one person does not necessarily interest another, and the breadth of *C&RL*'s readership is a particular challenge to the editor. In October 1995, Jim Lehrer said goodbye to his longtime partner Robin MacNeil on PBS's *MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour*. They, too, reported that their most frequent criticism is that they are boring, but they also noted that each segment has an audience that finds it the most essential and fascinating component of the program.

Like MacNeil, I would like to thank you the readers for allowing me to work in a manner I could be proud of when I went home. The quality of the issue in almost 12,000 readers' mailboxes was my constant concern. When each of you opened the cover, read the abstracts, studied articles on your favorite topics, and became a better-educated librarian, you made my work as editor worthwhile.

GLORIANA ST. CLAIR

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