

Socio-Psychological Research On College Environments

BY DANIEL P. BERGEN

THE *ALA Standards for College Libraries*, adopted in 1959, are shot through with the reminder that the level of an institution's library services should always be determined with reference to its unique character. The third paragraph of the *Standards* reads: "The standards laid down in this document must always be interpreted in the light of the aims and the needs of the institution of which the library is a part."¹ Yet, what do we, as college librarians, really know about the aims and needs of the institutions which we serve? To be sure, in the colleges of highest academic quality there undoubtedly exists a reasonable student-faculty-administration consensus on institutional *aims*, but even in such colleges there is less likely to be any thorough understanding of institutional *needs*. As one moves to the colleges at the rear of what is euphemistically called the "academic procession," what agreement prevails on aims and needs, catalog statements notwithstanding, must certainly take on a more nebulous quality. In the vast majority of colleges, therefore, there is probably little sense of what W. H. Cowley has called the "historical continuum" of an institution. The components of this continuum—sets of value, attitudes, beliefs, ideals, and institutional intellectual levels—give each college, studied over time, an identity of its own.² College librarians, it seems

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to me, have a positive obligation to seek means for more accurately describing the ecology of the library, that is, the wider collegiate setting of which the college library represents only a part.

The ways of assessing institutional character or environment are now manifold. All of them are more scientific and "refined" than those used by J. D. Salinger in *Franny and Zooey* and *Catcher in the Rye*. Since the mid-1950's, some of the more progressive members of the College Entrance Examination Board have been sending to secondary school counselors statements of their freshman class characteristics. These statements, while ordinarily including mean scores on the verbal, mathematical, and achievement test portions of the College Board examinations, seldom contain information which could not readily be obtained from the American Council on Education's monumental *American Universities and Colleges* (1960). They do not usually provide, furthermore, any indicators of what Philip E. Jacob termed the "institutional thrust," i.e. its personality in terms of the values commonly held by its students, faculty, and administration.³

For the beginnings of systematic attempts to describe institutional character, one must refer to a study by William

¹ *ALA Standards for College Libraries: Adopted by ACRL, A Division of the American Library Association* (Chicago: The Association of College and Research Libraries, 1959), p. 1.

² W. H. Cowley, "An Appraisal of American Higher Education" (An Unpublished Manuscript, Stanford University Department of Education, 1956) as discussed by E. D. Duryea, "Institutional Personality: Some Reflections Upon Its Implications for Administrators," *Educational Record*, XLII (October, 1961), 330-31.

³ Philip E. Jacob, *Changing Values in College: An Exploratory Study of the Impact of College Teaching* (New York: Harper, 1957), p. 114.

S. Learned and Ben D. Wood of secondary and higher education in Pennsylvania during the late 1920's and early 1930's. Their work was directed to "fixing attention primarily on the nature, the apparent needs, and the actual achievements of the individual student in his successive contacts with existing institutional forms. . . ." ⁴ Subsequent studies have sought to define the college culture by centering upon institutional productivity, or the proportion of a college's graduates that eventually goes on to earn the Ph.D. The interpretation of a college's productivity has necessarily involved a further assessment of institutional characteristics as conditioned by the intelligence level of the student body, the personal values and perceptions of the students, faculty, and administration, as well as those elements in the ecology of the college itself which have decisive impact upon the institution.

In 1953, Robert H. Knapp and Joseph J. Greenbaum, sociologists at Wesleyan University, defined the productivity of any undergraduate college as the percentage (per one thousand graduates over the period 1946-1951) which ultimately obtained the Ph.D. By their reckoning, the ten institutions with the highest over-all productivity in the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities were, in order: Swarthmore, Reed, the College of the University of Chicago, Oberlin, Haverford, the California Institute of Technology, Carleton, Princeton, Antioch, and Harvard College. ⁵ A somewhat less sophisticated but nonetheless useful attempt to measure college productivity was subsequently made by the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences. This study, reported in a 1958 publication, *Doctorate Production in United States*

Universities: 1936-1956: With Baccalaureate Origins of Doctorates in the Sciences, Arts, and Humanities, contained a raw, unweighted ranking of undergraduate colleges, based on the total numbers of their graduates which took the Ph.D. during the period under consideration. This survey did not, unfortunately, take into account the relative size of the colleges' respective graduating classes. A mean measure of the size of the institutions' graduating classes for the period, 1936-1956, would have rendered the NRC calculations much more meaningful. The ten leading undergraduate colleges in that study were, in order: California (Berkeley); the City College of New York (CCNY); Illinois; Chicago; Wisconsin; Harvard; Minnesota; Columbia; Michigan; and New York University (NYU). ⁶ Even more recent studies of that kind are William Manuel's *The Baccalaureate Origins of Medical Students* which, because it deals with a professional degree, is beyond the scope of our present considerations, ⁷ and the valuable survey of the Association of American Colleges entitled, *A Report on the Baccalaureate Origins of College Faculties*. That report, based on work done during the academic year, 1955-1956, took into consideration the relative size of the surveyed institutions' undergraduate enrollments for that base year. ⁸ The top ten, determined by a calculus of college teachers produced per one thousand full-time undergraduate enrollment in 1955, were, in order: Woodstock (a Jesuit college and seminary in Maryland whose graduates staff Catholic institutions); the College of the University of Chicago; George Peabody College for Teachers; Oberlin College; Reed College; Wesleyan University; Greenville College (Illinois); Swarthmore College; Bowdoin College;

⁴ William S. Learned and Ben D. Wood, *The Student and His Knowledge: A Report to the Carnegie Foundation on the Results of the High School and College Examinations of 1928, 1930, and 1932* (New York: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1938), p. xvi.

⁵ Robert H. Knapp and Joseph J. Greenbaum, *The Younger American Scholar: His Collegiate Origins* (Chicago: University of Chicago Pr., 1953), p. 16.

⁶ *Doctorate Production in United States Universities: 1936-1956: With Baccalaureate Origins of Doctorates in the Sciences, Arts, and Humanities* (Washington: National Academy of Sciences—National Research Council, 1958), pp. 62-63.

⁷ William Manuel, *The Baccalaureate Origins of Medical Students* (Washington: Gov. Print. Off., 1961).

⁸ Allan O. Pfnister, *A Report on the Baccalaureate Origins of College Faculties* (Washington: The Association of American Colleges, 1961), p. 3.

and Southwestern University (Texas).⁹ A third study, which purported to use the Knapp and Greenbaum indices, data on graduate fellowships and undergraduate scholarships, NRC statistics, distribution patterns for National Merit Scholars, and interviews, was Chesly Manly's somewhat random and unscientific attempt to rate the nation's best universities, coeducational colleges, men's colleges, and women's colleges. His five best in each category were, in rank-order: (1) Universities (Harvard, Yale, California, Chicago, and Columbia); (2) Coeducational colleges (Oberlin, Swarthmore, Carleton, Reed, and Pomona); (3) Men's colleges (Haverford, Amherst, Kenyon, Wesleyan, and Hamilton); and (4) Women's colleges (Bryn Mawr, Radcliffe, Barnard, Vassar, and Mount Holyoke).¹⁰ The Manly study has been widely criticized, though few knowledgeable educators have been at great odds with his invidious (at least for alumni) ratings. Perhaps the most incisive criticism of his study was simply that it did not employ the best available rating procedures.¹¹

Of the disciplines outside professional education, psychology and sociology have been most actively concerned with the problems of assessing college environments. Part of the psychologists' concern may be traced to their conviction that "the complexity of relationship between person and environment is inevitably obscured by the simplified and often inappropriate symbolism of correlation between scholastic aptitude test and grade-point average. . . ."¹² Efforts to find a more appropriate symbolism have resulted in at least two devices, one of which is the College Characteristics Index (CCI). The CCI, a three hundred

item "True-False" questionnaire organized into thirty distinct ten-item "press" scales, has been administered to faculty and students at a large number of colleges and universities. Underlying the construction of that instrument was the assumption that the "press" of a college environment is best reflected in the perceptions which students and faculty members have of it. "Press," for George Stern and C. Robert Pace, devisers of the CCI, is "reflected in the characteristic pressures, stresses, rewards, and conformity-demanding influences of the college culture."¹³ In two diverse institutions where Stern and Pace applied the CCI in May 1957, there were the following outcomes:

COLLEGE A

The major press . . . was toward orderliness and friendly helpfulness, with overtones of spirited social activity. . . . students have assigned seats in some classes, professors often take attendance, papers and reports must be neat, buildings are clearly marked, students plan their programs with an adviser and select their courses before registration, courses proceed systematically, it is easy to take clear notes, student activities are organized and planned ahead. Within this orderliness, student life is spirited and a center of interest. For example, big college events draw lots of enthusiasm, parties are colorful and lively, there is lots to do besides going to class and studying, students spend a lot of time in snack bars and in one another's rooms, and when students run a project everyone knows about it. At the same time, amid this student-oriented culture, there is a stress on idealism and service. Students are expected to develop an awareness of their role in social and political life, be effective citizens, understand the problems of less privileged people, be interested in charities, etc.

COLLEGE B

Here the dominant press of the environment falls in the theoretical-intellectual category. . . . there are excellent library resources in natural science and social science, a lecture by an outstanding phi-

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 270.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

¹⁰ See *The Chicago Tribune* (April 21, 1957). For Manly's views on the 20 best liberal arts colleges in the Midwest, see *The Chicago Tribune* (February 11, 1961).

¹¹ Dewey B. Stuit, "Evaluations of Institutions and Programs," *Review of Educational Research*, XXX (October, 1960), 375.

¹² C. Robert Pace and George G. Stern, "An Approach to the Measurement of Psychological Characteristics of College Environments," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, XLIX (October, 1958), 276.

losopher or scientist would draw a capacity audience, many students are planning graduate work or careers in science or social science, there are many opportunities for students to see and hear and criticize modern art and music, reasoning and logic are valued highly in student reports and discussions, students who spend a lot of time in a science laboratory or in trying to analyze or classify art and music or in seeking to develop a personal system of values are not regarded as odd, scholarship and intellectual skills are regarded as more important than social poise and adjustment, there is time for private thought and reflection, one need not be afraid of expressing extreme views, the faculty and administration are tolerant in interpreting regulations. . . . students . . . do not have assigned seats in class, professors do not take attendance, students are likely to study over the weekend, big college events draw no great enthusiasm, and the place is not described as one where 'everyone has a lot of fun.' Moreover, student leaders have no special privileges, family status is not important, students are not much concerned about personal appearance and grooming, and an intellectual is not an 'egghead.' And finally, exams are not based on factual material from a textbook, classes are not characterized by recitation and drills, grade lists are not publicly posted, students are not publicly reprimanded for mistakes, student organizations are not closely supervised, students tend to stay up late at night, work all the harder if they have received a low grade, and if confronted with a regulation they do not like they will try to get it changed.¹⁴

The current norm group for the CCI consists of an extremely heterogeneous bunch of colleges and universities spread geographically from one end of the nation to the other, with ideologies as varied as their geography. The existence of this norm group permits researchers to apply the CCI to an ever-increasing number of institutions and to classify them under one of four major groupings: (1) an intellectual-humanistic-esthetic

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 273-74.

cluster or emphasis; (2) a cluster which suggests an emphasis on independence, change, and science; (3) an emphasis on personal and interpersonal status, coupled with a practical or vocational orientation; and (4) an emphasis upon group welfare, social responsibility, and well-mannered community.¹⁵ Despite its state of refinement, the CCI is not without its obvious limitations. David Riesman, Harvard's imaginative critic of society, sees these as its failure to measure anything but student and faculty "ideology" about a particular institution and its lack of sufficient flexibility for application to colleges where the outlook of students and faculty is overly heterogeneous.¹⁶

Still another psychological device is the Environmental Assessment Technique (EAT) developed at the National Merit Scholarship Corporation by John L. Holland and his associates. Like the CCI, it operates on the assumption that a college's culture or environmental force is transmitted through people. To use Holland's reasoning: "If, then, we know the character of the people in a group, we should know the climate that group creates."¹⁷ Basically, the EAT is a weighted mixture of eight components: size of the undergraduate student body; intelligence level (as indicated by mean scores for the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test or the Scholastic Aptitude portion of the College Board examinations); and six typologies of personal characteristics as they relate to the student's selected major (realistic, intellectual, social, conventional, enterprising, and artistic). The EAT is particularly adapted to measure what psychologists call the degree of congruence between the college and the individual student.¹⁸

The sociologists, particularly Allen

¹⁵ C. Robert Pace, "Methods of Describing College Cultures," *Teachers College Record*, LXIII (January, 1962), 269.

¹⁶ David Riesman, "The 'Jacob Report,'" *American Sociological Review*, XXIII (December, 1958), 733.

¹⁷ Alexander W. Astin and John L. Holland, "The Environmental Assessment Technique: A Way To Measure College Environments," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, LII (December, 1961), 308.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 315.

Barton and Martin Trow, like, on the other hand, to view the college as "a social system with emphasis upon peer groups, role behavior, communications networks, and other organizational characteristics."¹⁹ Barton's "College Organization Variables" comprehend measures of a college's input (student, faculty, administration, financial, and physical), output (student knowledge, values, and interests, along with faculty research and publication); environmental variables (external to the college); social structure; attitudes; and activities.²⁰ His instrument, as a design for measurement, has the very important virtue of being able to assess the affect of extracollegiate environmental forces, a deficiency of heretofore devised psychological techniques.

In addition to the scientific measures of college environment, there are the more literary, but highly perceptive, stylings of David Boroff and David Riesman. Boroff, whose colorful profiles of Harvard, Brooklyn College, Swarthmore, Birmingham-Southern, Wisconsin, and the Associated Colleges of Claremont (California) first appeared in *Harpers* magazine, is basically a social commentator.²¹ It is to Riesman, the lawyer-turned-sociologist, that we owe the working concept of the "academic procession" and the prestige-ranking of colleges.²² He and Christopher Jencks, one of his graduate students and former associates at Harvard, have recently produced a brilliant vignette on San Francisco State College described by the authors as an "ethnography."²³ The description is quite appropriate because of their heavy use of anthropological insight and analogy. They describe the effect which student

rootlessness in a commuter college has upon the provision of institutional services.²⁴ They maintain, some external evidence to the contrary, that the majority of freshmen at SF State "come from homes in which neither books nor conversation (as opposed to talk) are available. . . ."²⁵ And they learned that the most severe threat to institutional intellectuality is not "collegiate" (i.e. fraternity-sorority) culture, but rather a culture created by students who regard any kind of intellectuality as a positive threat to their preformed values and self-images.²⁶

One of the best conceptual tools yet developed for differentiating colleges on planes of intelligence and values is called the "level of expectancy."²⁷ It has been found that the level of expectancy, "as the intellectual, cultural, and moral climate of a college," takes on peculiarly atypical configurations in institutions like Bennington, Reed, Sarah Lawrence, Antioch, and the College of the University of Chicago (where the liberal orientation is uniformly strong relative to other colleges), and Harvard, Wesleyan, and Haverford (where the respective orientations are toward personal autonomy, community, and leadership).²⁸ In a letter to the author, Paul Heist, now associate research psychologist in the Center for the Study of Higher Education at the University of California (Berkeley), further differentiated Antioch and Reed in this manner: ". . . from the standpoint of student background and the number of subcultures represented, Antioch would be the most diverse. Reed is perhaps made up of the greatest number who are somewhat alike in their free-thinking, their unconventionality, their

¹⁹ C. Robert Pace, *loc. cit.*, p. 276.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 274-75.

²¹ Reprinted in David Boroff, *Campus USA* (New York: Harper, 1961). For a recent sketch, see "Albany State: A Teachers College in Transition," *Saturday Review*, XLV (20 January 1962), 42-43.

²² David Riesman, *Constraint and Variety in American Education* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1958), pp. 35-65.

²³ David Riesman and Christopher Jencks, "A Case Study in Vignette: San Francisco State College," *Teachers College Record*, LXIII (January, 1962), 234. Reprinted in Nevitt Sanford (ed.), *The American College* (New York: Wiley, 1962).

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 244-45.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 241.

²⁶ David Riesman, "The Influence of Student Culture and Faculty Values in the American College," *Higher Education*, Yearbook of Education, 1959, eds. George Z. F. Bereday and Joseph A. Lauwerys (Yonkers-on-Hudson, N. Y.: World Book, 1959), p. 399.

²⁷ Edward D. Eddy, Jr., *The College Influence on Student Character: An Exploratory Study in Selected Colleges and Universities Made for the Committee for the Study of Character Development in Education* (Washington: American Council on Education, 1959), p. 13.

²⁸ Philip E. Jacob, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-106.

devotion to liberal causes, and their 'need' to criticize the culture."²⁹ In all of the forementioned colleges, the level of expectancy probably exercises such a potent influence that it can induce, in the occasional unreconstructed student, a complete redirection of values. Beyond value to the realm of academics, Riesman has pointed out that in institutions like these faculty members seem most willing to introduce their most brilliant protégés to the higher forms of research and scholarship.³⁰

Adopting a little different course, an interdisciplinary team at Cornell University improvised a strategy for determining "what college students think" at institutions as disparate, yet influentially representative, as Cornell, California at Los Angeles (UCLA), Wesleyan, Texas, Harvard, Yale, North Carolina, Dartmouth, Wayne State, Fisk, and Michigan. That study revealed that the percentage of students which strongly identified itself with the respective colleges varied from a high of 77 per cent at Dartmouth to a low of 38 per cent at Fisk.³¹ In their desire for a basic general education and a heightened appreciation of ideas, student affirmative replies varied from a 90 per cent peak at Wesleyan to a low of 59 per cent at Fisk.³²

The question must now be raised: What is the import of this kind of socio-psychological research for the college librarian? The answer is not easy to provide for, in my judgment, the implications could be quite broad-ranging. For example, it is possible to hypothesize that the college library is often not an essen-

tial element in the education of college students,³³ not only because of differing conceptions of the library's function held by faculty and librarians as Patricia B. Knapp has suggested,³⁴ but rather because of an almost total lack of congruence between the library and its services and its milieu—human values, intelligence levels, students and faculty attitudes and ideals, informal structures of influence, and networks of communication, to mention only a few of the ecological factors involved. As a case in point, a better understanding of institutional personality might have rendered library surveyors at Leeds University in England somewhat less struck by "the extent of private borrowing and of book buying"³⁵ in that university. At other colleges, where the implications of institutional ethos are well understood by librarians, statistical surveys of library use may have small function but to corroborate what is already fairly accurately known. At all events, if a decision is made to use quantitative measures in such institutions, one may be reasonably certain that the correct questions will be asked. To quote Archibald MacLeish: "We know the answers, all the answers. It is the questions that we do not know."³⁶

A good knowledge of institutional character may lead us moreover to a more realistic evaluation of the library's specific contribution to the educational process. In 1959, Donald Thistlethwaite, presently on the staff of Vanderbilt University, sought, on a generalized level, to make just such an evaluation. He equated the Ph.D. output in various colleges with their input, in terms of the intelligence level of the student supply, by adjusting

²⁹ Letter from Paul Heist to the Author (January 27, 1959), p. 1.

³⁰ David Riesman, "The 'Jacob Report,'" p. 738.

³¹ Rose K. Goldsen, Morris Rosenberg, Robbin M. Williams, Jr., and Edward A. Suchman, *What College Students Think* (Princeton, N. J.: Van Nostrand, 1960), p. 206. Other percentages were 63 per cent at Harvard and Wesleyan, 58 per cent at Yale, 57 per cent at North Carolina, 54 per cent among Cornell men, 52 per cent at Michigan, 45 per cent at Wayne State, 44 per cent among Cornell women, 42 per cent at Texas, and 40 per cent at UCLA.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 208. Other percentages were 88 per cent at Yale, 85 per cent at Harvard, 84 per cent for Cornell men, 74 per cent at North Carolina, 70 per cent at UCLA, 69 per cent at Michigan, 65 per cent at Texas, and 64 per cent at Wayne State.

³³ Patricia B. Knapp, *College Teaching and the College Library* (ACRL Monograph #23) (Chicago: ALA, 1959), p. 1. See also Lester Asheim, "A Survey of Recent Research," *Reading for Life: Developing the College Student's Lifetime Reading Interest*, ed. Jacob M. Price (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Pr., 1959), p. 13.

³⁴ Patricia B. Knapp, *op. cit.*, pp. 93 and 95.

³⁵ P. E. Tucker, "The Sources of Books for Undergraduates: A Survey of the Leeds University Library," *Journal of Documentation*, XVII (June, 1961), 95.

³⁶ Quoted in C. Robert Pace, *loc. cit.*, p. 271.

each college's Ph.D. productivity rate in terms of intelligence input or the academic ability of the student body. An important result of that study was the realization that there is a significant correlation between the number of volumes in an institution's library and the proportion of its graduates that eventually take doctorates in the arts and humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Thistlethwaite's own interpretation of this finding was that colleges with large libraries are the ones most likely to be endowed with other kinds of institutional wealth³⁷—gifted students, research funds, and highly qualified faculty are a few of the possibilities which come immediately to mind. The study clearly raises the further question of what specific quantitative and qualitative aspects of a college library, beyond mere size, contribute to an institution's Ph.D. productivity. It is my guess that a substantial portion of the factors affecting what Maurice F. Tauber has defined as "the correlation between libraries and educational effectiveness"³⁸ may in the long run be identified by a thorough examination of library-institutional congruence.

Adding to those already expressed, one might advance the further supposition that in the most productive colleges the degree of harmony between the functioning library and the wider institutional environment is much greater than in those institutions which, by any measure, are academically middling or feeble. In the best colleges, one may surmise that staffs devote themselves more fully to functions which are uniquely those of the library, namely, the provision of reference and bibliographical services³⁹ as keys to quality collections. The evidence at Dartmouth and Knox colleges per-

³⁷ Donald L. Thistlethwaite, "College Environments and the Development of Talent: Characteristics of Colleges as Related to the Percentage of Graduates Who Attain the Ph.D.," *Science*, CXXX (10 July 1959), 73. Reprinted in Nevitt Sanford (ed.), *The American College* (New York: Wiley, 1962).

³⁸ Maurice F. Tauber, "The Library," *Journal of Higher Education*, XXXIII (April, 1962), 227.

³⁹ See Patricia B. Knapp, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-94.

haps somewhat to the contrary,⁴⁰ it is, nevertheless, my instinctive belief that a congruence of expectation and performance between the library, on one hand, and faculty, students, and administration, on the other, is an absolutely critical element in an institution's rate of productivity. It seems to me almost inevitable that, where tutorials, seminars, colloquia, independent study, and similar pedagogical devices are employed and where the average student's sophistication in library use is relatively high, there too will the fruitful identification of the library with its institutional setting occur most naturally. Such institutions, in all likelihood, do not require a systematic plan for library-instructional integration such as that proposed by Dr. Knapp some six years ago.⁴¹ In superior colleges, the library is apparently conceived of as a laboratory for independent study⁴² by both students and faculty. As early as 1936, Douglas Waples used data gathered by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools to show that the closest correlate of library loans per student (of those options then considered) was per capita loans of books to faculty members.⁴³

Unquestionably the most imaginative current attempt to artificially induce congruence between a library possessing unique organization and a somewhat recalcitrant student-faculty clientele is that currently ongoing in Monteith College of Wayne State University under the direction of Mrs. Knapp. By way of brief background, Monteith College is the half-time environment of an undifferentiated (at least up to the present) group

⁴⁰ See "What is a Library?," *Dartmouth College Library Bulletin*, I (April, 1958), 46, and Patricia B. Knapp, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-93.

⁴¹ See Patricia B. Knapp, "A Suggested Program of College Instruction in the Use of the Library," *Library Quarterly*, XXVI (July, 1956), 224-31.

⁴² Guy R. Lyle, *The Administration of the College Library*, 3d ed. (New York: H. W. Wilson, 1961), p. 145.

⁴³ Douglas Waples and others, *The Library*, Vol. 4 of *The Evaluation of Higher Institutions. A Series of Monographs Based on the Investigation Conducted for the Committee on Review of Standards, Commission on Higher Institutions of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936), pp. 54-56.

of teachers and students. The enrollment at Monteith includes high, average, and low ability Wayne State registrants. To this heterogeneous group, it offers a program consuming approximately one-half of the students' time, of general education with emphasis on the social sciences. As things now stand, the Monteith curriculum parallels the more vocationally-oriented curriculum of the university-at-large.⁴⁴ As an experimental college, Monteith, through the provision of what Riesman calls "locales"⁴⁵ for faculty-student interaction, hopes to create an atmosphere uniquely its own. Through a process of "internal decentralization," those who guide Monteith's destiny have determined, to borrow again from Riesman's description, "to create a splinter culture within a big state university, and then to make this culture at once attractive to the untutored adolescent and to the scholarly professor, and then ultimately to breed alumni, who, if they do not become scholars, as some hopefully will, may at least be intellectuals."⁴⁶ In the current embryonic atmosphere of the college, Dr. Knapp and her associates are attempting to persuade a somewhat hesitant faculty and student body that a library is most properly "a system of bibliographical organization."⁴⁷ In a sense, the situation at Monteith represents the reverse of what has been described. Here the library, already reflecting the projected *elan vital* of the college, is trying, through planning, to create consensus with a faculty and student body whose current perspective on the library is anything but congruent with that of the librarians themselves. These librarians, operating in an atmosphere which naturally resist change and innovation,⁴⁸ deserve

⁴⁴ Riesman and Jencks, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 246.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

⁴⁷ Patricia B. Knapp, "The Monteith Library Project: An Experiment in Library-College Relationship," *College and Research Libraries*, XXII (July, 1961), 262-63.

⁴⁸ For a straightforward description of faculty inertia, see Donald H. Morrison, "Achievement of the Possible" in Beardsley Ruml and Donald H. Morrison, *Memo to a College Trustee: A Report on Financial and Structural Problems of the Liberal College* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959), p. 61.

nothing but the highest admiration. I strongly suspect that their work will have profound implications for the college library world. I also suspect that once the "institutional thrust" has been firmly established at Monteith, and their efforts have reached fruition, then and only then will the great merits of their plan be apparent to the library world-at-large.⁴⁹

Studies currently being conducted at the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, which combine the perspectives of both sociology and psychology, promise to further delineate the role of the library in the production of graduates capable of doing top-drawer work in high-prestige graduate universities like Harvard, California (Berkeley), Columbia, Yale, Michigan, Chicago, Princeton, and Wisconsin.⁵⁰ The studies also aim to provide more reliable models for characterizing colleges. One attempt will involve the application of thirty-three different psychological and sociological measures of college characteristics to a large sample of institutions. Another project will weigh the actual Ph.D. output of a college's graduates against the output which statistically might be expected from the intelligence level of its student input. Criteria such as financial resources, library size, faculty-student ratio, and college climate will be explored in an effort to explain differences in institutional productivity.⁵¹

Perhaps the most singularly important implication for the college librarian in an understanding of his library's ecology is its possible effect upon the decision-making process, or the part played by the librarian in what John J. Corson calls the "governance" of a college. Needless to say, library decisions which affect

⁴⁹ For the contrary view, based on a critique of the practicality of such a scheme, see Guy R. Lyle, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

⁵⁰ For a subjective comparison of graduate school prestige, see Hayward Keniston, *Graduate Study and Research in the Arts and Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Pr., 1959), p. 119.

⁵¹ *Talent: Our Prime National Resource* (National Merit Scholarship Corporation Annual Report for 1961) (Evanston, Ill.: The National Merit Scholarship Corporation, 1961), pp. 26-27.

an entire campus might be perfected through the information derived from a scientific understanding of college environment. When library decisions are not thus informed, there is always a possibility that the library, as an intracollegiate institution, will alienate itself from the wider college culture.⁵² Recalling our undergraduate days, almost all of us, I am sure, can cite at least one imprudent action by an administration which had divorced itself from the prevailing climate on campus. In a place like Antioch, where the culture is at once liberal and communal, one wonders about the consequence of an overabundance of formal library rules too rigidly applied or of a denial to the student-faculty community of the kind of book accessibility it has come to expect. The feedback would most assuredly be unpleasant. The character of the institution, then, defines the area within which the librarian can expect to effectively exercise his decision-making power. Additionally, a knowledge of environment can often condition the means selected by a librarian for the implementation of decisions. A librarian in a commuter college with little intellectual vitality and a low social metabolism would undoubtedly use different tactics on the problem of library-instructional integration than his colleague on a highly homogenous, intellectually-oriented residential campus. One might even venture that institutional understanding could become a bench mark upon which predictions of campus reactions to library decisions might be regularly based. Given additional funds for library materials, the librarian in a college with a strong artistic orientation, like Sarah Lawrence, might know that the best way to curry campus disfavor would be to skimp on the procurement of audio-visual materials, particularly reproductions of great art, films, tapes, and records. Such an understanding could conceivably influence (in an era of less shortage) a head

⁵² Edward D. Eddy, Jr., *op. cit.*, p. 133.

librarian's hiring patterns. Even now, in a place like Reed College, a librarian with the political persuasion of a "Goldwater" conservative might become not only a curiosity, but rather ineffective as a librarian as well. Finally, a good estimate of institutional character could prove invaluable in the design of new physical facilities or in the internal arrangement of an existing library building. If valid analogy may be drawn from a classroom experiment conducted by Lauren Wispe at Harvard in 1950, students in an examination-oriented college may prefer a high degree of efficiency in library services to warmth of surroundings, while those in a permissive college, less concerned with economy of action, might have reverse preferences.⁵³

With the progressive refinement of scientific measures of environmental assessment, it is entirely possible that the *ALA Standards for College Libraries*, instead of functioning as a set of goals, could evolve into sliding scales of quantitative and qualitative minima which can be applied differentially to each college in the light of its peculiar institutional character. It seems that only in such form could library standards be meaningfully applied as, for different reasons, Professor Ed Wight has recently urged.⁵⁴

The argument herein that college librarians can profit is from an awareness and application of socio-psychological research on the college environment, indeed that they ignore such inquiry to the possible detriment of their own libraries. The implications of such research for academic librarianship are only now beginning to manifest themselves. There seems little question, at any rate, that the college library, governed by those who are accurately informed of its ecology, cannot miss playing an increasingly vital role in the process of educating college students.

⁵³ Lauren G. Wispe, "Evaluation Section Teaching Methods in the Introductory Course," *Journal of Educational Research*, XLV (November, 1961), 163-64 and 169.

⁵⁴ Edward A. Wight, "Standards and the Stature of Librarianship," *ALA Bulletin*, LV (November, 1961), 873.