

Letters

Publication Activity

To the Editor:

Paula Watson's stated objective "to provide some norms of publishing productivity for librarians" plays into the hands of those who continue to keep librarians as second-class citizens of academia. (*C&RL*, Sept. 77). Faculty members who are expected to publish have a work schedule that gives time for research, and the academic institution rewards faculty members who do research and publish the results. Furthermore, it punishes those who don't. Watson doesn't bother to present the conditions of employment of the academic librarians that she surveyed. She states that the librarians at four of the institutions have faculty status, but she doesn't define what she means by the term.

So long as librarians are required to work forty hours per week in an eleven-month year and receive virtually no incentives for research and publication, it simply is not fair to compare their productivity with those who have both the opportunities and the incentives. A better comparison would be made with the productivity of faculty administrators who work approximately the same schedule as librarians. The academic administrators do very little research and less publication, because there is no time for it and no incentive.

Watson is even wrong to lump together librarians from institutions that give full faculty status with those that do not. She should have divided her results between the two and compared them. Even that would only be a statistical study on what we are doing now as opposed to what we might do if given the proper conditions.

I believe that this problem is so complex that it requires careful analysis of each library; perhaps even case studies would be more appropriate. We've had too many of these generalizations about the lack of pro-

fessional interest among librarians. It is time for someone to describe an academic library where librarians are given the same opportunity and incentives as professors and then compare their productivity.—*R. Dean Galloway, Library Director, California State College, Stanislaus.*

Response

To the Editor:

Librarians are compared in my article only briefly and incidentally to teaching faculty. The main purpose of my study is to compare librarians with other librarians. My primary aim in attempting to provide norms of publishing productivity is in fact to protect librarians from unfair comparison with their teaching colleagues. Without objective evaluative standards against which to judge librarians, university promotions and tenure committees at institutions where librarians have faculty status must inevitably compare librarians with the teaching faculty.

Table 4 of my article shows that the university libraries surveyed are quite consistent both in percentage of staff publishing and in individual productivity. This suggested to me that it would not be instructive to divide the results of the study between those librarians with faculty status and those without it. I also felt that it would not be productive to investigate what I anticipated would be very minor variations in conditions of work among the librarians surveyed. Results of a questionnaire on conditions of employment of ARL librarians which have recently been released by the Pennsylvania State University Library Faculty Affairs Committee show a high degree of consistency among ARL librarians with and without faculty status in length of contract year, allotted vacation, and hours in the work week.

In the discussion paragraph of my article, I argue that librarians should be given time for research because I fully recognize the difficulties Mr. Galloway points out. Librarians are clearly handicapped in their ability to keep up with the teaching faculty in

scholarly productivity by the working conditions which exist at most academic libraries.—*Paula D. Watson, Librarian, City Planning and Landscape Architecture Library, University of Illinois Library, Urbana.*

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