

Call number: 00-00-92

Library Seminar, 5/1/70

Summary created by: Summer Dougherty

Date(s) of creation of summary: 9/20/12, 10/2/12

Notes: Originals on 7 inch reels. Master and circulation copies on CD.

Mr. Earl Beistline continues speaking, saying there has been major growth for the library, facility-wise and content-wise and use-wise. He would like to encourage more use of the library, perhaps by formal training of the students at the university level, or perhaps by relying on high schools and elementary schools to better prepare students. He feels it is important to keep the library current and up-to-date so that is not only a storage facility for volumes.

Mr. Cutler thanks him and jokes that the speakers were recruited to the panel by telling them that because Howard Cutler was going to chair, they would not need to speak at all. Mr. Cutler tells an amusing anecdote: while he was at the Academic Deans' meeting, President Wood came into the room while Howard was talking and asked, "Howard, are you still talking?" Mr. Culter introduces Ted Ryberg, the Director of Libraries.

Mr. Ryberg starts by taking issue with a comment Dr. Theophilus made. Mr. Ryberg can't imagine where he got the idea that librarians feel that the library is *equated* with motherhood and God. He then comments that because they have just recently moved into the new library facility, they have the opposite problem they had in the old library. Although, he reassures everyone, they do not wish to trade new problems for old ones. In the old library there was so little space that it became necessary to stack books on the floor and it almost became a question of drawing straws for seats in the old library. They were certainly not able to encourage use of the library. Now they have room and must encourage library use.

Mr. Ryberg believes the Rasmuson library will be the last library the university has to build. He speaks about new technology, photochromic microimages, which is able to reduce 400 8 ½ x 11 pages to one square inch and is able to be bring it back to its original size.

He reflects on the positive changes the technology will bring but says he thinks and hopes, as a book collector himself, there will always be a place for books and a place for a core of materials in local libraries. He says that there will be larger cooperative units in the future and that there will be regional reference and resource libraries and direct connections with major libraries, like the Library of Congress.

This library was designed and equipped to promote independent study on the part of the students. Mr. Ryberg thinks the trend is toward independent study and he hopes that the library is comfortable and inviting enough for students to come and study.

The speaker notes that somethings which have been brought up as abuses have a big use factor. For example, the library wants to make available as much material as possible as is needed by the people here. The more this is done, and the more open the library is made the more vulnerable it becomes and the more abuse it is sure to suffer.

Mr. Cutler asks to what extent does the faculty abuse the librarians by putting in syllabi term paper assignments and library research assignments too late for the librarians themselves to serve the students adequately.

Mr. Ryberg(?) answers, saying that those sorts of situations have been known to happen in the past and are sure to happen in the future. He says it is important to help the faculty learn how to use the library. He says that the new facility already makes it easier to work with the faculty, though, he admits, the faculty do abuse the librarians! But the librarians make it easy for the faculty to abuse them by not being able to provide the services that they need. He hopes that the faculty will now come over and find out what the librarians are able to do. And when the faculty has an understanding of what is possible, they won't ask the impossible.

Mr. Cutler wonders about the librarians' abuse of the students. It is discouraging to be met by a gloomy clerk at the desk. It used to scare him to death when he was a student. He also noticed that there are dividing panels in the library now so that people cannot talk (or play footsie!) with their date while studying in the library. He says he found such activities very titillating as a student.

A girl says that at the University of Alaska the atmosphere is not as it was at Mr. Cutler's school. She says that everyone that she has come in contact with [here the audience laughs good-naturedly, thinking of footsie] has been very pleasant and helpful. She mentions, laughingly, that dividers can be gone around. At the college in Pennsylvania she went to, the librarians would walk around, like sentries, with whistles to blow at students who were speaking. She says the atmosphere of this library is beautiful; there are people everywhere to help you. [Here someone jokes, "Overstaffed!" and the audience breaks into laughter.]

A man agrees with the girl, saying that the library does have a beautiful, if you will, staff that sets the tone. The absence of complaints is an indicator of satisfaction and he believes the librarians should take the credit for this.

Mr. Cutler comments that John Boyd brought up the problem of accessibility. Mr. Cutler wonders if there is abuse in the form of lack of service to the student or faculty member by centralizing a library and forcing the patrons to come a considerable distance over campus to one central core in contrast to departmental libraries. Does centralization of library lead to less use or abuse of the library?

Mr. Ryberg(?) answers saying that is a "damned if you do, damned if you don't" situation. Economically a centralized library is most efficient: it can be staffed for longer hours with more specialized personnel. It does mean that people have to travel greater distances, though. However, centralization also means that patrons do not arrive at a library only to discover that the materials they need are at a different library. Just as much time can be wasted in that way.

Also, the traditional subject limits have been breaking down. It used to be that chemistry and physics and biology were neatly delineated. But now subjects such as physical chemistry, bio-physics and bio-chemistry are breaking down the borders between the subjects. It is no longer feasible to talk in terms of departmental libraries, only subject-area libraries such as a science library and a fine arts library. But even so, where would you put broad subjects like mathematics that are used by all subject areas? Putting broad subjects in one departmental library puts other departments that make use of the subject at a disadvantage. He says that it is a question of economics and convenience. Separate libraries are convenient if materials are duplicated widely between libraries.

A man makes a comment saying the geophysical institute library, for example, has an abundance of math materials. The materials needed in order to delve into more subtle aspects of finite topological spaces, however, are found in the math section of the main library. The speaker believes even with separate libraries, the materials tend to divide themselves up well between the libraries. He thinks the most important thing is to remain flexible and "play it by ear."

Another man comments that we are scared of duplication in view of cost benefit. We think of a book of being such an expensive item because the total cost is so high but we lose sight of the fact that highly paid professors who might make \$100 an hour must walk for half an hour, wasting \$50 worth of time to get a book. In light of this, he feels that the cost of a \$20 book is justified for multiple locales on a campus.

Mr. Cutler wraps up, saying that probably the biggest abuse of the library is what Peter Ray brought up: underuse. He comments on the multiple functions of a library: a student center, a depository of book, a depository of other materials. He comments on problems of user accessibility and keeping library materials up-to-date. He thanks the members of the panel.