

Report of Participant Observation
at Monash University Library
Sept. 1975 - May 1976

by

Professor P.D. Morrison

to

Mr. T.B. Southwell
University Librarian

1st July, 1976

Introduction

Professor Perry D. Morrison is Professor of Librarianship at the University of Oregon. By a series of happy chances his intention to spend a sabbatical year in practical librarianship, and in Australia, coincided with friendly contacts with Associate Professor McCulloch of the Monash Faculty of Education, who directed his thoughts to the Monash University Library.

Perry therefore suggested in mid-1974 that he join the Library staff for a nine-month period, to work in several departments for "the refreshment of actual work in a library to enliven my teaching," and to act as a "participant observer," submitting suggestions and a final report on his observations.

The success of such a survey clearly depends heavily on the personality of the surveyer, and in this regard we were very well served indeed. He gained, and held, and did not betray the confidence of all those he worked with. The wide theoretical knowledge and the different viewpoints he was able to apply to his duties forced us to look at things with different eyes.

Many of his suggestions have already been adopted; many more are clearly desirable, and his support should have them realized the sooner; we disagree with some, but the report will still be the basis for candid discussion of them.

The Graduate School of Librarianship has benefited from seminars he has conducted on research methods; he has examined for the State College of Victoria, advised on school libraries and addressed professional meetings. We only hope he and his university have gained as much from the venture as we, professionally and in the friendship of Jean and himself.

T.B. Southwell
University Librarian

2nd July, 1976.

Both the strength and weakness of the so-called participant observer method of studying an organization lie in the fact that it is a "worm's eye view" of the operation. One very quickly assumes the role--and the values--of a staff member at the level in which he is operating. Strangely enough, even though the staff knows that he is an observer, they accept him in his assumed role. This has the advantage of really getting at the situation as it is but, on the other hand, the observer tends to lose the detachment he might otherwise be able to maintain as an "outside expert". Thus, my views reflect to a certain extent an internalization of the values of the various departments in which I have worked. Thus, perhaps my chief value is in particular, specific recommendations as to procedure rather than in synthesis of policy matters. My view of the latter may be coloured by biased information I have absorbed from particular situations.

Let me say, in the first place, that in no way do I advocate that Monash sacrifice its pleasant, harmonious atmosphere on the altar of that American idol known as Taylorism. My feeling is that after some 15 experimental years, the Library should take stock of its achievements and decide which of its methods have stood the test and which have not.

The following observations are in addition to rather specific suggestions I have made to each of the Departments in which I have worked. In some cases, I have repeated these suggestions but in the most part they are very specific and are not included here.

1. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

A. State of Development: Monash University generally and its Library, particularly, shows a maturity and sophistication which is simply astounding when one considers the brief period of time during which this development has taken place. It exhibits both the advantages accruing to a young institution and, to an astonishing degree, has a maturity equivalent to many older libraries both here and abroad. Apparently the Library staff has studied history and learned from the experience of others in the past--with certain exceptions.

B. State of Collections: As far as I can determine from my own impression, rather than any survey, the collections seem to support

the programmes of the University effectively and, as libraries go, reasonably efficiently. It seems to have the books wanted by its patrons at the expense of no more dead wood than other libraries which have grown more slowly and, presumably, deliberately. In particular, I found the reference collection to be superb. It contains what one needs to answer most of the questions encountered and yet its size is relatively small. Similarly, the periodical collection is splendid. How the Library managed to acquire virtually all of the key journals from volume 1 on is a mystery to me, but it did. The excellence of the periodicals collection is particularly visible in the Hargrave Library whose monograph collections are also exceptionally useful and comprehensive despite a rather modest over-all size. On the negative side, I find the education collection somewhat weaker than other segments in terms of ability to support a major programme of the University.

C. Staff: This library system is staffed by the most considerate, friendly and helpful people I have ever known. Though sometimes lacking as much formal training as would be desirable--and will be possible in the future--the staff is very talented. While it is true that a professional staff should have maximum freedom to operate as individuals, there may be a certain lack of coordination in their efforts, of which more later. Goals of the organization are not always even known, much less "internalized", by some of the staff members. Although some staff members seem not to be aware of this, personnel policies are very generous as compared to those of the typical American academic library. Discontent may arise because of uncertainty about these policies on the part of staff. There probably is no library in the world staffed to an optimal level. Thus, this one, while relatively well staffed in numbers, is not so well covered in some areas (e.g. rare books) as in others (e.g., acquisitions.)

D. Administration: Seems to be well ~~staffed~~ in both quantity and quality. Policy is perceived as benevolent, but to some, "remote." More of this later. Whatever criticisms may be levelled at the

administrative style, there is no arguing with the fact that it has been successful in building a fine library in a very short time. Money alone will not do this.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Organization of the collections:

1. Discontinue the "U" collection and substitute a conventional Reserve Book Service. This is my most radical and controversial suggestion. In evaluating it the Library will wish to be aware that in my experience in other libraries with, and without, undergraduate collections had already produced grave doubts in my mind about the relative value of such collections in libraries other than those of very great complexities and poor housing (such as Harvard's where the prototype, the Lamont Library, was probably necessary.) Nothing I have seen here has improved my opinion of the value of undergraduate collections to a library such as Monash's. Obviously, the undergraduate collection idea has some virtue--it provides a relatively simple browsing collection for the undergraduate who is thought not to be up to coping with a large, heterogeneous collection. But my experience here, and elsewhere, convinces me that this value is counterbalanced by (1) the complexity it adds to the library. This confuses matters for the student rather than simplifying. When the typical Monash undergraduate undertakes a paper which goes beyond the assigned reading list, he or she typically assembles a list of books and articles from the catalogue some of which are in "U" and some in "M" or one of the branches. Often the book sought is in both "M" and "U" and the task of the student is to go from place to place until he finds a copy actually on the shelf. In short, to this student, the "U" collection is simply another place to look. (2) The second disadvantage is obviously that of the expense of maintaining two collections where one would suffice. This was well exemplified in the amount of staff time spent in transferring a large number

of books out of "U" last summer. This time would be better spent in reducing cataloguing backlogs.

I quite realize that discontinuing the "U" collection would be an expensive one-time investment of time and money because, for example, aisles would have to be made wider in the stack tower and narrower in the present "U" area. The library would also have to decide which segments of the unified collection would be housed there.

I further recommend that part of the present "U" area be devoted to the new reserve book service. This would be a larger collection than the present one because it would contain the books now classified as overnight and interfiled with other "U" books. Books requiring restricted circulation periods would be kept in the new reserve area. Books not needed during a particular term but expected to be used in a subsequent term would remain in the reserve book area but circulated for a week, as at present. Books which an instructor drops from the reading list would be returned to the main stacks. Items in the reserve area would not be so recorded in the card-catalogue but, as at present, in computer print-out. Incidentally, the library might consider one consolidated print-out for all books not in the regular stacks to include the "on loan" and the "reserve book" records.

I might amplify the last sentence above further: My limited experience with the system for placing books on reserve status and making photocopies for the same purpose made me long for a simpler system, but I have not been able to come up with one. Plans for a coordinated control data bank based on the present inventory data store should include a very careful re-examination of both the manual and computer aspects as well as the public relations task of persuading faculty to give the library timely and clear notification of its needs. The reserve book "problem" cannot be solved but every effort should be made to mitigate it.

B. Cataloguing

1. Present System: My reaction to the present procedures and produce is, briefly, "praiseworthy but expensive." Thus, my remarks can only reinforce concepts already under serious discussion in the library. It may well be that all of the local deviation from standard practice do, indeed, produce a better catalogue and a classification more responsive to local needs and wishes. If unlimited staff were available, I would heartily recommend continuing, and further developing, the present system. But the ultimate effect of, for example, arranging art books by geography rather than medium (the standard D.C. mode) is marginal compared to its cost. A cataloguing backlog is much more daunting to readers than a marginally less desirable shelf-arrangement of the books. Better to have more books arbitrarily arranged (to some extent) than fewer books treated in a more sophisticated manner. The Clark schemes for literature, for example, probably do produce a better arrangement than D.C. but at great cost in staff time.

Even if the decision is to keep the present system fundamentally, some economies will be required:

- a. More use of the work available from other sources should be used without professional examination if it does not affect the filing of the card or the book.
- b. Reproduce cards from a central source by photographic means or use the cards themselves as they came in from Blackwell or ANL without editing out collation etc.
- c. Some simplification of the classification procedures and scheme might be effected, but significant savings cannot be made in this area without some rather drastic changes.
- d. It would be possible to substitute an augmented "inventory" record for full cataloguing in fringe areas such as: pamphlets; serials, and government publications.
- e. Even if the present basic system is retained, it would be possible to reduce the card catalogue to a "register" of main

entries plus "see" references. Added entries (titles, subjects, second authors, etc.) could be supplied by computer printout on paper or film. The Australian National Library is already doing this at least to the extent of computerizing its subject catalogue,

- f. Given the current acquisition rates and the present staffing levels of the cataloguing department, extensive backlogs can be expected to persist. Therefore, I applaud Mr. Snoxall's suggestion that uncatalogued volumes be made available for regular loan, relying on COF as a record. This might mean the recording of a badge number on COF when a book is received and raises occasional problems about return of a book to a dealer if it proves to be an unwanted duplicate.
- g. Main argument for keeping the present system for the immediate future is to give time for a national cataloguing scheme to emerge, or lacking that, one for Victoria. Here, as everywhere else in the world, this dilemma has persisted too long-- if we embark on a new system on our own there is every possibility that it will not be compatible with emerging national or regional systems.

(Since I wrote the above I have seen the Cohen report, but my opinion has not changed as a result.)

2. Alternative system "A"

- A. Continue with card-catalogue and D.C. classification but "take it from the bottle" as it comes with as little modification as possible.
- B. Use cards from a central source, such as Blackwell, unedited insofar as possible. Eliminate most, if not all, of the special modifications of D.C. such as the Clark schemes.
- C. Computerization of certain areas as outlined in 1 d to e above would be possible. Computer production of cards from MARC would also be possible.

3. Alternative system "B": Change to L.C. Classification systems.

- A. If there be a decision to eliminate the "U" collection, this

area could be used for newly-classified books in L.C.

- B. Advantages: (1) Experience of other libraries have shown that between 80% and 90% of current titles can be catalogued without professional attention (2) Classification data including book number (equivalent to Cutter number) available for many more titles than is the same D.C. information w/o Cutter Number (3) System less plagued with basic changes than D.C. (4) Because more information is available from central sources, centralized EDP systems are more effective.
- C. Disadvantages: (1) Library will always have to deal with two collections; but, if, after a few years of dual operation, all D.C. books are reclassified upon return from loan, the D.C. collection becomes inactive and may be stored in cheaper off-campus facilities. (2) L.C. notation is simply not as easy to grasp and use as D.C. Despite experience in three libraries with L.C. I have never grown comfortable with it. (3) One class, PZ, in L.C. is almost universally altered by libraries which find the rest of the system acceptable virtually intact.
- D. For reasons of economy (and apparently the economies are considerable) several important libraries in Australia have adopted L.C. It will soon be more nearly standard for large American and Canadian Libraries than D.C. which is killing itself by continual, bootless changes.
4. Alternate "C": Develop the present inventory file into a complete homegrown EDP system with paper print-out, film or, even, on-line terminal access.
- A. I don't recommend this for some time yet in the hope that a centralized system for the nation--perhaps OCLC type--will emerge.
- B. Sooner or later however, unless a central system emerged, the Library must somehow eliminate the costly duplication of a manual card system plus the inventory record either by

without much success, but I think it can, and should, be done.

- e. Budgetary control of acquisitions: I confess to not really understanding the acquisitions budget nor the procedures involved in using it. However, I do have a few impressions: The traditional department allocation scheme has fatal defects in it, but it does provide an objective method of forcing selectors to reject as well as select. Approval plans tend to remove this constraint and one accepts books less critically until suddenly the money is gone. This need not happen, of course, and the way to keep it from happening is by budgetary control in considerable detail so that selection is governed by a planned allocation rather than by simple production rates of publishers. Profiles will define the subject matter of the programme but it takes fiscal controls to guide the selectors in how much of the gross production in each subject is needed at Monash. I don't know whether the present budgetary procedures are achieving this end, but my impression is that they could be improved.
- f. Organization of the Acquisitions Department: I have commented to the former head of this department on this subject. The changes recently announced in the staff bulletin are probably unrelated causally to my suggestions but are in accord with them. In general I think that some consolidation of similar functions (e.g. serials and periodicals) is indicated. In fact in regard to serials and periodicals, I have seen consolidated acquisitions, recording and public service schemes work rather well elsewhere and Monash might wish to consider putting all of this into one unit. However, it is not the prevailing mode of organization in Australia or America. Nevertheless, it continues to intrigue me.
- g. Computerized systems: It goes without saying that the COF system is still a developing one. I tend to favour changing it from author to title entry. An immediate need is for

burdened with "good" books at the expense of those specifically needed as well as "good." Rejection of a book which has value, but is not specifically needed, once it is in hand is very difficult to do--and seldom is. The programme is well-named and profiles should be refined so that insofar as possible "core" and not "marginal" materials are sent by the dealers. The present profiles by D.C. classes and "reputable" publishers may well need further qualification by specific subject name as the library gains experience with the system. As Adrian Turner has put it "The good can be the enemy of the best."

- d. Selection process: The appointment of a full-time selections officer was a very wise decision, indeed. This officer should solicit the aid of the subject specialists in Reader Services. These librarians have perhaps the closest association with the teaching and research faculty of all the librarians. Obviously selection implies rejection also. In working on "Query slips" received from Blackwell, NA, and Blackwell, England, during my stint in Acquisitions, I had the uneasy feeling that we were accepting a greater proportion of the books than we could afford. Whereas each title was fully justified taken alone, I had the feeling that taken as a whole the corpus of books accepted was too great a proportion of those queried and that more should have been either rejected outright or referred to subject specialists on the faculty or staff for adjudication. Much as I dislike government by committee, I think there should be a materials selection committee of librarians representing various subject areas which would solicit opinions from other specialists on the staff and faculty. Such a committee would not only assist the selections officer with specific titles but also formulate detailed selection policy statements. During my brief stay in Acquisitions, I tried to develop a few such statements but

- without much success, but I think it can, and should, be done.
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- g. Computerized systems: It goes without saying that the COF system is still a developing one. I tend to favour changing it from author to title entry. An immediate need is for

specific titles of monographs in series to be entered in COF piece-by-piece rather than just by series. It is my understanding that the Library is at least considering a coordinated data-base system in which COF would metamorphose into an inventory or catalogue record in one continuous system. Frankly this idea has been around librarianship for a long time and I'm beginning to doubt its practicality, but it remains attractive.

- h. Gifts and Exchange: While I concede that it is frequently cheaper to buy rather than beg, nevertheless some primary source materials (manuscripts, fugitive publications) can be obtained by gift when they cannot be purchased. Similarly, exchange relations with selected libraries in Australia and overseas can produce out-of-print materials not obtainable otherwise. It is my understanding that the library once had a gifts and exchange officer specifically designated. I recommend that this position be restored and that it be attached to the rare book department (which I recommend be redesignated as the department of special collections.)

D. Hargrave Library: I found this branch very impressive--lean and efficient in both operation and collections.

1. Staffing: Inasmuch as I was in Hargrave during vacation periods, I am not able to evaluate the contention of the Hargrave Librarian that it is understaffed beyond the sense that all libraries could use more people. However, I tend to think that there is substance to her contention. The very efficient staff seemed to be working "flat out" even during a vacation period--this I do know. It is quite clear to me that the present staff cannot absorb a heavier load or produce a higher level of service without additions. It does what it now attempts very well indeed but can absorb no more. For example, were it not for the truly exceptional talent and energy of the interlibrary loans officer at Hargrave (the

service in which I worked primarily) that function would fall seriously in arrears even at current demand levels. Unfortunately the present fiscal restraint on libraries in Australia is bound to result in increased interlibrary loan activity.

2. Service points: Although the configuration of the building seems to demand it and it is logically justified, I wonder whether at present staffing levels, Hargrave can afford a separate service point for abstracts and bibliography. Perhaps when a general reorganization of space in Hargrave becomes necessary, a consolidated reference-bibliography area should be established where periodicals are now and as close to the card catalogue as possible. I realize that this is easier to propose than accomplish!
3. It is tautologous but I'll point it out anyway: Some way of eliminating double entry of periodical issues, once in main and once in Hargrave should be a part of any new, computerized periodical handling system. I can say no more than this because I have not worked in the Main Library periodicals department and am, therefore, not in a position to evaluate the apparent duplication of records in the present system.
4. Interlibrary Loan: I have made some specific suggestions in this regard to the Hargrave Librarian which I shall not repeat here. However, I would like to add here a suggestion that somehow the Telex system be used for Hargrave ILL rather than the mails and, to some extent, to reduce the volume of telephoning now done.

A passing observation: It seems to me that CSIRO and ANL (ANSTEL) are duplicating one another in offering location services in the field of science. CSIRO has the SAAL records but one goes to ANL for monographs, actually CSIRO's own union catalogue is actually more effective and faster than ANL for locating monographs. This is a matter requiring study and is at a level above that of this report.

5. Let me reiterate that my opinion of Hargrave is very high indeed. One of the best science libraries I have ever observed.

E. Reader Services: Here again I shall not repeat specific suggestions made to the staff of this department.

1. I am convinced that the New Head of Reader Services is attacking the problems I noticed in a most expeditious and effective manner. These problems stem from overly complex systems, lack of division of labour and of internal staff communication.

2. Some comments:

- a. The reference collection is one of the best I have seen. It is relatively small yet has in it the works one needs to answer all but very few questions presented. I know of no suggestions that the collection be fragmented but, based on my experience with such devices, I can't resist advising Monash to keep its reference collection together. After having worked in so-called subject divisional reference services, it was a joy to serve in a consolidated one.
- b. Loans system: Inasmuch as the present interim system is about to be replaced by a computerized machine-readable recording scheme, I need not comment upon it except to say that in total the present system is frustrating for the patron and invites staff error when the pressure is on. If the "U" collection is eliminated and a separate reserves loans desk established, the exit loans procedure would go much more smoothly.
- c. Reserve books: I have already reported to the department head some suggestions for reducing the complexity of this operation. I think the Library has now had enough experience with the basically-sound EDP system that it should now be recharted, rationalized, and manuals

prepared. Liaison with faculty members is not too bad but could be made even better by a system of routine reminders of the importance of submitting timely notice of reserve needs.

- d. Staffing of the public service seems meagre compared to that in other libraries in which I have served but the current "rerostering" operation being conducted by the new department head should (a) result in better deployment of present staff, particularly on evenings and week-ends and (b) better data as to quantity and type of staff actually needed for optimal service when money becomes available. A staffing plan should emerge--and will.
- e. Audio-Visual: Here I am again in the position of stating the obvious--the present service is less than rudimentary for an institution of this size and complexity. I understand that a campus-wide committee is working on this problem. The difficulty of its task is exceeded only by its importance.

Let me hasten to say that I am amazed that the present staff is able to accomplish as much as it does, but it obviously cannot do nearly enough. My experience with audio-visual services elsewhere has often been less than happy and has impressed upon me the difficulty of the problem rather than suggested any solutions. I confess that sometimes I think that libraries should confine their audio-visual services to microforms and other book-related services and leave "instructional materials" to some other agency, but this flies in the face of logic.

- F. Rare Books: The Library in this, as in other areas, has assembled collections of a quality one would hardly expect possible at this late date and in so short a time. One also is astounded at how well the collection is administered with so very little staff.

- a. A policy statement on rare books should be developed. I would have this statement labelled "special collections policy" to give recognition to an existing aspect of the programme which should be further developed. I refer, of course, to the collection of current and relatively recent manuscripts and fugitive materials which in the future, as well as at present, will be the raw material for social, political and historical research. The rare book programme is important in that every major university (and especially one with a bibliographically-oriented school of librarianship) needs examples of the printed word as it appeared in the past as well as a source of historical and literary information. However, the number of rare books an institution like Monash can acquire is limited not only by money and the fortuitous generosity of collectors but also simply by unavailability of even 19th century material in its original form. However, a relatively small amount of staff time and attention can result in collections of Victoriana and of materials in South East Asia studies, for example, which are now currently useful and will be the source of historical studies in the future.
- b. Staffing: The Rare Book Room even in a narrowly defined role, out of which I think it should emerge into a broader charge, is understaffed by any standard.
- c. Pending major additions to the staff, there are some obvious palliatives which will enable existing staff to make better use of time and expertise:
1. Cataloguing of rare book room material should be done by staff of the Cataloguing Department. The treatment of rare books is not, nor need it be, essentially different from standard cataloguing with the exception of a few notes referring to standard lists and indicating association notes. These can be supplied by the Rare Books Librarian prior to cataloguing. Not only will this relieve the Rare

departmental working collections lest unwarranted and unrecorded duplication of materials sap resources which would otherwise be available for providing official central library and main branch collections.

- b. Continued development of subject specialists on the library staff in close contact with departmental faculty may help to dampen the insidious growth of departmental collections which even though they be inferior to the main collections will be used in preference to the main library because of propinquity (Zipf's Law of Least Human Effort.) A delivery service to faculty may also be worth its cost if it prevents unnecessary growth of departmental libraries.
1. Administration: The empirical evidence of a smooth working library is tribute to the effectiveness of the administration.
 - A. Department head level: As far as I can determine, staff is rather well satisfied with current departmental administrations. The two recent appointments appear to be well-received. My own relationships with, and observations of, departmental administration have been most positive indeed.
 - B. Central Library System Administration: The fact that the present "unobtrusive" style of central administration from the University Librarian's Office is working reasonably well is an argument against any drastic change in it. There is, indeed, some discontent on the staff but certainly no more than is normal these days. On the negative side is the quite manifest feeling on the part of some staff members that central administration is unapproachable and, even, uninterested in the feelings, opinions and interests of the rank-and-file. This impression I know to be contrary to fact, but it is also a fact that this feeling does exist on the part of the staff. One can be cynical and say that if the central administrators

rules but who may lack that sixth sense about security which rare book people acquire. More serious is the fact that the readers are let out by a variety of student assistants and others in periodicals who might be easily "conned" by a clever thief. When staff is available the rare book room should be staffed two evenings a week until 9.00 p.m. or so. Then, if a second copy of theses become available on the open shelves, rare book use could be restricted to times when the room is staffed.

G. Branches other than Hargrave: I have little to say about these since all I know about them is what I have gathered in brief visits.

1. Biomed: Appears to be a very busy branch with collections of an excellence on a par with Hargrave's which I have already praised. My brief observations confirms staff opinion that the tall, narrow quarters of Biomed are barely adequate for the present readership.
2. Law: Appears to be better housed than Biomed. Inasmuch as the simple classification scheme used there seems to satisfy the staff and presumably the readers, I have no reason for suggesting the library adopt some more sophisticated system such as the K scheme. I do have some sympathy with Law's desire to do its own cataloguing. This is what is done at my home University and presumably is satisfactory. Main entry data is supplied to the central library catalogue by the law cataloguers. Alternatively there is no reason that the actual work could not continue to be done at main with subject headings to Law specifications, if, indeed, subject headings are needed at all in this type of library. I don't know enough about this to have a valid opinion.
3. Unaffiliated quasi-official Branches.
 - a. The situation appears not to be out of hand currently, but the University should develop a policy governing

departmental working collections lest unwarranted and unrecorded duplication of materials sap resources which would otherwise be available for providing official central library and main branch collections.

- b. Continued development of subject specialists on the library staff in close contact with departmental faculty may help to dampen the insidious growth of departmental collections which even though they be inferior to the main collections will be used in preference to the main library because of propinquity (Zipf's Law of Least Human Effort.) A delivery service to faculty may also be worth its cost if it prevents unnecessary growth of departmental libraries.
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tried to take a more active role in the everyday affairs of the library they would be accused of meddling in the freedom of staff to assume professional responsibility. Administrators really can't win these days--some staff members tend to blame their own existential agonies on the boss. Be this as it may, it is probably advisable for the administration to cultivate a more visible role in internal library affairs--not a drastic change but a subtle shift of emphasis.

1. Recent attempts at "communication" activities should be encouraged and extended, ill-attended as some of the communications meetings are. Although the programme had an insecure, exploratory character, I found the activities of the training officer of a great deal of practical help. Encouraging participation in management by the staff is frustrating--but also rewarding work. Many staff members say they wish to participate, to learn, to develop, but getting them to actually engage in such activities is a matter requiring much patience and tact.
2. There is need for a new, shorter, more pertinent staff manual. I have been discouraged from access to the present manual on the basis that it is obsolete and therefore misleading. Apparently it is available to the persistent staff member but is not in active use. The new manual should set forth the objectives of the library and each of its main departments and branches and the functions of each major officer. Channels of communication both ways should be defined. Specific personnel policies should be succinctly spelled out. Although I much approve of as much latitude to deal humanely with special cases, nevertheless in this day and age of litigation, unfortunately, regulations must often be made almost painfully explicit. Sick leave policy is a

conspicuous example: Some staff members feel that the the present generous, but indefinite, policy is being arbitrarily administered. I have another reason for advocating a generous, but definite policy: At Oregon, the State System of Higher Education has had a policy for faculty which is similar to that in effect in the library here. Recently the legislature decided to pay retiring state employees for half of their unused, accrued sick leave. Because there are no records of sick leave (and no definite allowance) for faculty (including professional librarians) this group of state employees are not receiving this benefit. Individual losses are in the thousands of dollars.

3. Development plan: Associated with the development of a staff manual would be the formulation of a plan for future development. The EDP Conferences are a commendable start in this direction. Such an operation is probably more important as a process than a product. by participating in the development of the plan, staff representatives from all levels would be encouraged to think about the objectives of the library system as a whole and the part each can play in attaining these objectives. Such a plan should set forth various strategies for attaining the objectives given various funding levels and projected status of University, state and national plans.
4. Evaluation scheme: Concomitant with a development plan is a scheme for assessing how well the library is meeting its goals. This would involve such ~~empirical~~ devices as questionnaires and interviews directed at staff and students; internal staff-written appraisals of progress, and, as funds permit, case studies of how patrons use the library and with what effect. If properly exploited,

such studies are worth their cost not only in terms of giving feedback to the staff and administration, but also as support material in budget requests.

III. CODA

This experience has been all that I had hoped it would from my point of view. It certainly has been pleasant and educational and I am confident that it will improve my teaching. The hospitality of the staff has been nothing short of marvellous: "When asked what he liked best about Australia, he replies, 'the Australians'." Both the University as a whole and the Library, specifically, have proven to be much more sophisticated and well-developed than I had anticipated. I hope that the benefits have not been all in my direction: perhaps my day-by-day work in various departments has been a benefit to the Library in cases where a warm body is better than nothing. Another benefit will be to American libraries--I shall be taking back specific suggestions for our own library (the Periodicals Currently Received list being one of them), I shall be writing articles for American library periodicals (so far I plan to do one on Australian serials and one on the participant observer technique as applied to library study in general); and finally I am sure that what I teach my students will be enriched by what I have learned about Australian librarianship-- a sort of microcosm of librarianship generally, a small population yet exemplifying a great variety of libraries and approaches to their problems.