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# An unfinished agenda

By Joseph A. Boissé

*ACRL Vice-President/President-Elect*

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*The next ACRL President's theme looks forward to another hundred years.*

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**T**he Fifth National Conference of the Association of College and Research Libraries will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the College Library Section of the American Library Association. The theme for the conference, "Building on the First Century," will provide an opportunity for both a look at past accomplishments and a preview of the challenges we are likely to face in the future.

During my presidential term I hope to focus on some of those challenges. My theme will be: "The Unfinished Agenda: Planning the Second Century." There are two challenges in particular to which I want to devote special attention. These are: 1) Librarians for the Future; and 2) Services for the Future.

The first of these issues has two parts: recruitment and education. The Association needs to develop a strategy which will result in bringing into the field more young people. In addition, our recruitment efforts cannot ignore the rapid changes taking place in our society. The most populous states in the country are also those where the ethnic mix is changing most rapidly. Our recruitment efforts must target these groups so that our profession will better reflect our society ten, twenty and thirty years from now. I will establish a task force whose charge will be to develop an appropriate recruitment plan for ACRL.

In my view, ACRL must also become more active in the area of library education. We are already a major provider of continuing education opportunities for our membership, but we must go further. We must work with library educators and

other associations of librarians in order to design the library school curriculum of the future. As practitioners we have quite a good idea of the skills and abilities needed to be a competent librarian. We must translate those ideas into specific recommendations to schools of library and information science.

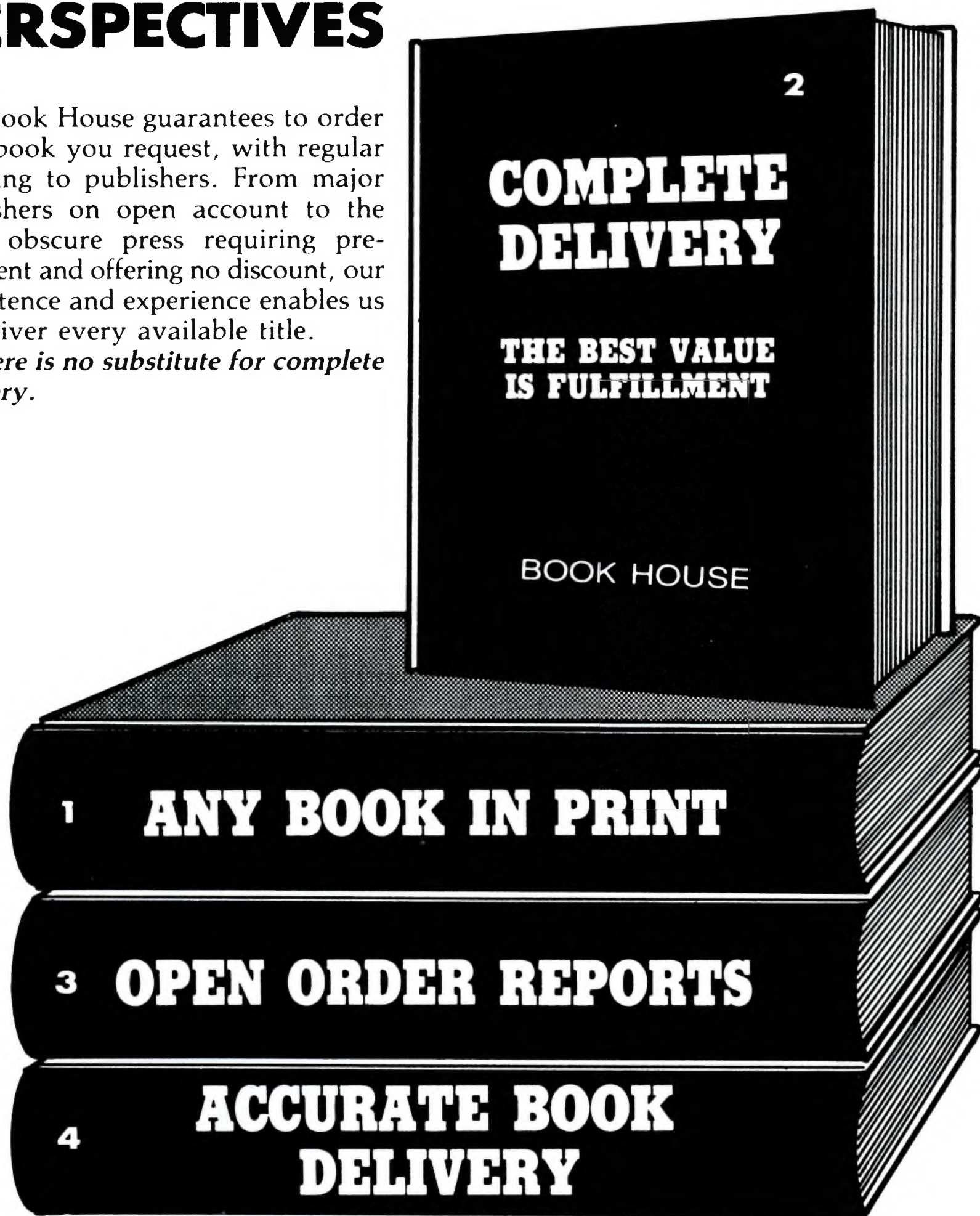
During the past decade or more, a tremendous amount of energy has been spent considering the changing technological environment in which we operate. No area of librarianship has gone uninfluenced by technology. New committees have been formed to study these changes and to make recommendations concerning their impact; innumerable conferences have addressed various issues related to technology; new journals have appeared specifically to publish articles about technology; new professional groups have come into being to foster and promote technological change. During my term in office I would like us, as an association, to refocus our attention and do some serious thinking about services for the future. What will be the role of the public services librarian in the future? Will traditional patterns of public services in our libraries change significantly? If so, how? I plan to bring together, prior to the Dallas conference, a small group of librarians to work for a couple of days as a Think Tank. The results of their deliberations will be reported to the Association during the President's Program at Dallas.

ACRL members who wish to be involved in these activities are encouraged to write to me. I would also welcome suggestions for programs and activities related to these priorities. ■■

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## LC also looks to the future

Librarian of Congress James H. Billington has announced a comprehensive review and planning process to chart the future course for the Library that will include staff members, Library constituents, and a professional management consulting firm.

Basic to the planning and review process will be a Librarian's Management and Planning Committee, consisting of 25 mid-level Library managers and other staff selected throughout the Library, without formal representation of any given unit or constituency. Ellen Hahn, chief of the General Reading Rooms Division of the Research Services Department, will serve as chair of the Committee, and Winston Tabb, chief of the Information and Reference Division of the Copyright Office, will serve as vice chair.

Billington said that the success of the Committee will be judged by its members' ability to work together to address the broadest and highest interests of the Library as a whole. The Committee has been asked to 1) find ways to increase the Library's effectiveness in serving the Congress, the Federal Government, the nation's libraries, scholars, the entire creative community, and all citizens; 2) review the Library's legislative, national, and international roles and responsibilities; and 3) recommend broad goals the Library should strive to achieve by the

year 2000, and practical steps to implement them.

Billington challenged the Committee, and the Library's entire staff, to seek realistic ways to sustain and extend the Library's collections, to improve management for enhancing the Library's responsiveness to its constituencies, and to reach "inward more deeply" by assisting users to exploit collections fully and by attracting more researchers. He has also charged the Committee to examine ways in which the Library can "reach out more broadly" by sharing its resources and disseminating its wisdom more widely and effectively in ways that raise educational levels. He expects the Committee to recommend priorities for the allocation of the Library's resources in light of present and foreseeable budget stringencies.

Two other advisory groups are being named. One consists of people representing the Library's broader national and international constituencies, and one will be an outside consulting firm asked to make recommendations on administration and management.

Billington called on staff members for suggestions they may wish to make at any time regarding any aspect of the process. Reports on planning and review activities will appear in the *Library of Congress Information Bulletin*. ■■

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## Letters

### Information for administrators

To the Editor:

As a librarian who has crossed over into another area of information services, I was particularly pleased to see the article, "Information for Administrators," in the January issue of *C&RL News*. Technologies will present librarians with ever expanding opportunities to provide information support to college and university administrators.

I would encourage, however, that we not limit ourselves to isolated support of the administrative function. Rather, we should take the initiative to become part of Strategic Information Systems (SIS) and Decision Support Systems (DSS) being developed at many universities. By incorporating our services with those provided by other campus information providers, we can truly have an impact on decision-making at the highest organizational levels.—*Judith A. Copley, Manager of Information Technology Planning.*

### Backlogged books

To the Editor:

Since the middle sixties the Orange Public Library (New Jersey) has been organizing and *displaying* its non-fiction backlog by accession number. (A backlog assures a constant flow of books for the cataloger, maximizing the cataloger's time.)

After a book is received, the ply of the order form previously filled by title as an "on order" notice is replaced with another ply of the order form now bearing the accession number (see my "Backlog to Frontlog," *Library Journal*, September 15, 1969). Daniel Gore seized upon this idea and adapted it for Macalester College. Gore provided rough subject classification to the Frontlog by preceding the accession numbers with the LC class letters (see Gore's "In Hot Pursuit of FASTCAT," *Library Journal*, September 1, 1973).

Displaying the backlog makes new books browsable, and browsing is a major factor in book circu-