

# Library Service to Undergraduate College Students

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## The Divisional Plan Library

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### INTRODUCTION

I SHALL DISCUSS with you the idea of the divisional library. These remarks might be entitled: "Do undergraduates deserve an education?"

In approaching the problem of providing good undergraduate library service, let us first examine several fallacious assumptions which influence contemporary college and university librarianship.

### FIVE FALLACIOUS ASSUMPTIONS

1. *Undergraduates don't count.* First among these is the common notion that undergraduate students don't count. We are interested only in our graduate students and in the research carried on by the faculty. How often one hears remarks like these on the university campus. Here, for example, is a great state university in the Middle West with nearly 20,000 students on its campus, almost 15,000 of them undergraduates. It boasts a new multi-million-dollar library building designed, it is said, to serve research carried on by graduate students and the faculty. Undergraduates don't count. In practical effect it would be better if they weren't there. I have heard remarks like

these many times on the campus of the great state university on the West Coast where I labored early in my career. And I have heard them repeated and amplified on many other campuses.

2. *A college education is completed in four years.* Second, an education is completed in four years of college. A college education consists of courses of study which can conveniently be measured in units and graded numerically for quality. In general these courses are related to each other and grouped together in terms of prerequisites and majors. Outside the major field of study, the history of our culture and the broad view of our contemporary society are served by a few more or less unrelated units of "this, that, and something else," selected in amounts appropriate in size to fill the package. The completion of a major entitles the student to enroll for graduate or professional training in the same specialty. If he does not choose to do so, and the majority do not, he can put his education on the shelf and forget about it. His education was completed in four years. He is an educated man.

3. *The library is a warehouse of books organized for the convenience of the library staff.* Third among our fallacious assumptions, the university library, speaking collectively for the library complex, is the warehouse for books and periodicals. It

must be organized to suit the convenience of the librarians who work there. The convenience of the students and faculty is secondary. The convenience of undergraduate students in particular is hardly worth considering. And so it follows that reference books, which are for the most part encyclopedias and other compendia, fill the reference room, as it is so called. Unbound periodicals come in quantity and pose a special problem in record keeping and are therefore routed to a periodical room. Assigned readings are segregated from all other books and fill a reserve book room. Documents, which in the library world mean simply any printed item with a government imprint, enjoy a special distinction in housing and service in this strange caste system. The student in search of an idea is given quite a run-around. Only in the central book stack are books arranged in accordance with the ideas which they contain. Nearly all of the stock of readable books is in the book stack. And, of course, on most campuses undergraduate students are not given free access to the book stack.

4. *Librarians are custodians, not educators.* Fourth, librarians are not educators. They are custodians. Their work is clerical. They function in an environment full of negative rules framed to protect the book from student and faculty alike. Books are acquired by the library in order that they may be preserved. Their preservation requires a complicated set of descriptive records, duplicated and re-arranged, entirely or in part, many times over. Rule keeping and record making are so absorbing of time and energy that none is left for taking part in the educational process involving faculty and students. Nor are librarians capable of such participation. Their professional education has not prepared them to assume a position of such responsibility in the academic community. The thought that they should be given academic status with appropriate ranks is shocking and abhorrent.

5. *Cataloging and reference work are in no way related.* Fifth and last among primary fallacious assumptions that are presently influential in our university libraries is the notion that the technical services and the public services must exist in separate sovereignties with a minimum of communi-

cation between them. Cataloging is an esoteric art. Only a true initiate can understand the cataloging process, or for that matter the end product, the catalog card. Perhaps it isn't necessary to be peculiar in order to be a cataloger, but it helps. Reference work, on the other hand, enjoys a special prestige. Perhaps reference librarians are born. Certainly they do not need to labor in the bibliographical process in order to acquire competence in the interpretation of the library's collections. A reference librarian would rather be dead than be seen cataloging a book.

#### A CONSTRUCTIVE PHILOSOPHY OF LIBRARIANSHIP

Stated in this manner, these five assumptions or principles appear to be somewhat ridiculous. And yet, in their general application to our universities, and to their libraries, these assumptions are true to a surprising degree. Among universities with more than 5,000 students the exceptions to these generalities are still so few in number that they are conspicuous. With library service to the undergraduate student uppermost in mind let us examine these five assumptions. Let us restate them in support of a more positive view of general education and a more constructive philosophy of librarianship.

*Universities and their libraries must serve students at all levels and must support both teaching and research. The divisional plan library provides effective library service.*

First and foremost, if we may speak for a moment of tax-supported institutions, a state university has three major obligations. It must provide a good general education for the young men and women who are residents of the state. This implies good teaching, with libraries organized to lend effective support to the education of these students. The university must also train professional students and graduate students in the methods of research and must support faculty research in the interest of local and national welfare. A university is *per se* a community of enquiring minds. No field of knowledge is closed to its enquiries. Finally, in addition to teaching and research, a state

university renders a wide variety of services to the citizens of the state.

Clearly, the university has an obligation to offer its undergraduate students the opportunity of acquiring an education. We must hear no more talk to the effect that undergraduates don't count. These students are the future citizens and from their ranks come our leaders, not to mention our professional students and even our graduate students. A university which recognizes no obligation to these students is dishonest in accepting their money and their time. Such loose talk about their insignificance in the academic community could bring swift retribution from the taxpayers.

The university library can and must serve the university program—that is, teaching and research—both on and off the campus. Honest analysis indicates clearly that emphasis has thus far been placed upon service to graduate students and faculty members through such devices as closed stacks, carrels, seminars, faculty studies, the reference collection, extended borrowing privileges, and an elaborate system of small, specialized, and restricted branch libraries. A few concessions have been made to the undergraduate student in the form of the undergraduate reading room with a small collection of materials, a few thousand reserve books on open shelves, and here and there a browsing room of general nature. No one could possibly say that these devices represent an honest effort to provide good over-all library service to the undergraduate student body.

The University of Colorado experimented with a pilot plant to house an adequate undergraduate library. Barriers between books and students were removed by placing the books on open shelves in large enough quantity to reflect the entire undergraduate curriculum, including books of general interest as well. And the word "books" was reinterpreted to include all forms of print immediately pertinent to the program; that is, books, periodicals, pamphlets, reference sets, and so on. These were brought together not by format and process, but by content and idea. Large workable collections were brought together by subject matter to serve groups of related departments of instruction—hence the phrase divisional plan. Harvard University has carried the idea forward with

a model undergraduate library of 100,000 volumes in a separate building, an ideal arrangement but for most of us an expensive one.

The University of Nebraska has adopted and developed the Colorado plan with a divisional library serving the humanities, the social studies, and science. At Nebraska practically all of the vestigial organs of the traditional library have been eliminated. At the same time Nebraska has steadily improved all of its library services in support of graduate study and research. It is of interest here to note that an expanded divisional plan will be housed in the new building at Michigan State College.

*Education is a lifelong process. The divisional library encourages and develops the reading habit.*

Brief attention can be given here to the fallacious proposition that an education consists of prescribed courses which can be completed in four years of time serving. A college education should awaken a student's curiosity and train his mind to enable him to continue educating himself throughout his lifetime. If the habit of reading is to be acquired in college then every opportunity in that direction must be made attractive. In this the library can exert leadership.

A professor said to me, not long ago: "The only books that are of any importance to my students are the ones I assign to them to read." If this were true, a few books on reserve would serve all undergraduate needs. We should recognize, however, that there are few college courses in applied science or social science that are not quickly out of date.

In the past, perhaps unintentionally, insurmountable barriers were placed between the student and his books. Closed stacks and a complex organization of service by form and process such as reference, periodicals, documents, and reserves were among these barriers. At Nebraska these barriers have been removed. One hundred thousand books and other materials, carefully selected for the purpose from the million or more in the stacks, are arranged by content in a series of large reading rooms. Comments from many students and faculty members lead us to believe that in this study environment

students are reading more books and books of wider variety than heretofore.

Be it noted here that these materials have been carefully selected for what we call the college library. Other approaches to this problem are being tried elsewhere. At Princeton and Northwestern, for example, there are no divisional reading rooms, but the book stacks are open to all students. We believe that it is no service to the undergraduate student with a problem to solve or a paper to write—particularly to the lower division student—to turn him loose among a million books consisting mostly of research materials. In Nebraska, where many of our students come from Clay Center and Beaver Crossing, from Ogallala and Wahoo, we are certain that this is true. We carefully guide these students into the university curriculum and we must also guide them into the world of print. We regard the completely open book stack in the large university as a lazy man's way of solving the problem of undergraduate library service, or as an admission that there are simply not enough funds to tackle the job. Let me add, however, that no student at Nebraska is ever denied his right to browse among the stack collections if he wants to do so.

*The library is the students' laboratory.*

In contrast to the attitude that the library is a warehouse for books and that its contents must be arranged for the convenience of the staff who manage it, let me suggest a businessman's approach. Books are the basic tangible commodity on the campus. The library is a merchandising center. Books should be well displayed to attract the customer. By this we do not mean *a few books*, or a shelf of *new books*, but *all the books* in the college library. Librarians are the sales force. Their function is to bring books and readers together. Librarians should, therefore, be trained to defer to the personal needs and tastes of the student and to apply their expert knowledge in his interest, with tact and discrimination.

In the social science reading room, for example, we are presenting the undergraduate student with a workshop of printed materials in this broad field. This is his laboratory. Here he will accomplish most of

his reading in the social sciences and here he will write his term papers. Here in convenient arrangement are books, periodicals, and newspapers; pamphlets and other vertical file materials; encyclopedias and indexes. When we talk about a convenient arrangement of materials we are thinking primarily of the student's convenience. His assigned readings are on open shelves in call number sequence with the rest of the collection. Only a few titles are segregated behind a desk on two-hour reserve. These few are the books in very heavy demand. All overnight, three-day, seven-day, and two-week books are in the open shelf collection. Librarians determine the nature and content of these various groups of materials, including the two-hour reserve collection. Librarians consult with faculty and students to solve their library service problems, but authority in the arrangement and distribution of materials rests with librarians.

Shelving the majority of assigned readings on open shelves has the advantage of enabling students to help themselves. Shelving these books in call number sequence with the rest of the collection has the added advantage of continuously acquainting the student with other books on the same subject. One book leads to another. In such circumstances browsing among books becomes a part of the daily study routine, and this leads to scanning books that catch the eye, and thus the reading habit is launched.

The large reading room is broken up into small study areas through thoughtful use of free-standing book cases. Students work in small groups in small areas where they are literally surrounded with books of interest to them. Acoustical plaster on walls and ceiling and rubber tile on floors eliminate noise and distraction. Soft white fluorescent lights create the illusion of continuous daylight. The several reading rooms are contiguous and freely accessible to all students. All circulation procedures have been concentrated at the single central loan desk. There is only one inspection point, at the exit. The reserve book room has been abolished and its room space converted to an unsupervised study hall, complete with lounge corner and with coffee, coke, and apple vending machines. When conversation must flourish it can flourish in this study

hall. Here, too, is a battery of typewriters freely available to all students.

In such a building, with emphasis upon service throughout, graduate study and faculty research also have greatly improved accommodations. At Nebraska the book stack is now a place of relative quiet. The former problem of paging books from the stacks in great numbers has now been transformed into a comparable problem of housekeeping in the reading rooms where the students are encouraged to leave books on the tables. When the new central library was built provision was made in the stacks for a book escalator. It has not been necessary to complete and operate this equipment because the problems of getting books is no longer concentrated into the book stack. In the reading rooms this problem of finding books has become much less a problem because the principle of self-help is applied extensively under the watchful eyes of a competent staff. In the book stack are more than a hundred carrels. On the fourth floor are 16 seminars which serve also as graduate study rooms. On the fourth floor, too, are 40 faculty studies—separate private rooms, which are, in the words of several of our scholars, the finest improvement on the campus in their lifetimes.

At this point one or two misconceptions about the divisional plan should be cleared away. Is the divisional plan expensive? Isn't it more expensive to operate than a traditional library? The answer is, no! The cost of a competent public service staff is directly related to the size of the student body, to the length of the schedule of hours of public service, and to the quality of the service program. Many libraries are trying to do too much with too few. The reference librarian is expected to cover all fields of knowledge. A divisional librarian restricts his service to a broad but limited field of knowledge, and with correspondingly greater competence. One should bear in mind, too, that there is no prescribed number of divisions and reading rooms. A divisional plan can be set up and operated in one room. Or, if circumstances seem to warrant, it can be set up in three, or six, or some other number of divisions.

Finally, how about the cost of duplications? To this we would say that no more

duplication is implied in the divisional plan than would be necessary for adequate service under any other plan or organization. Many libraries appear to be reluctant to face the cost of necessary duplications.

*Through training and experience librarians in the divisional library must acquire sound academic judgment and must exercise broad professional competence. They must be recognized as bona fide members of the academic community.*

The organization and direction of a library division call for imagination and creative energy. The public service staff in a divisional library must be adequately trained in subject matter and in librarianship. The humanities librarian, for example, does not need to know more than any citizen should know about atomic energy or federal reserve banks, or about the sources of such information. But he must be deeply interested and widely read in all language and literature, in philosophy and the fine arts. It is highly desirable that the humanities librarian and his staff have at least master's degrees in the subject matter of the division. And in the same breath let us mention that a master's degree in librarianship is indispensable.

Theirs is not custodial work. These librarians must be competent to a high degree in the educational process. Their work requires that they be educators. In this, their professional and academic attainments must be matched with mature and pleasant personalities. Under their general supervision the housekeeping chores are delegated to clerical employees, to student pages, and to building custodians.

Into the hands of the divisional librarian and his staff flows the entire book selection process. Daily conversations with members of the faculty over the development of the collections have become a regular if not a routine activity. Assistance to students at all levels and to the faculty in the interpretation of the collections—that is, help in finding what they need—is a continuous process. Staff assignments are limited only by the boundaries of broad fields of subject matter, such as the humanities or the social sciences, and never by the format of books, or by their imprint, or by the accident of their

location in reading room, book stack, or branch library. In order to assure a careful correlation of all the book collections and related library services we have subordinated all departmental and laboratory libraries to their appropriate divisions. The chemistry, physics, botany, zoology, and geology libraries are, therefore, administratively supervised by the head of the science division. With respect to our principal branch libraries in law, medicine, and agriculture, the relationship is defined as a staff rather than a line relationship.

The public service staff in the divisional library is recruited for broad competence in librarianship and in subject matter. Similar competencies are highly desirable in the technical services, in solving difficult problems in bibliography, and in the cataloging and classification of materials. Only a few of the larger libraries can afford to duplicate such qualifications between the public and the technical services. We believe that a better solution lies in assigning the same staff to both of these areas, and this we have done at Nebraska. Our public service staff catalogs and classifies all books and assists with difficult problems in bibliography in the order department. We believe that the reference librarians become competent in bibliographical knowledge and technique through experience in cataloging. We believe also that catalogers produce a more usable catalog when they have the continuous experience of helping students and faculty to find materials.

It must be obvious by now that the staff that participates in divisional librarianship

as described in this paper must be or must become competent to a high degree in the educational process. It is our hope that their academic and professional growth are continuous. They are daily engaged in library operations of a wide variety and with student and faculty contacts of widely varying degrees of intensity and difficulty. Such a staff soon becomes an indispensable part of the academic community and academic activity tends to center in the library.

It only remains then to recognize these librarians in their true role as educators. At Nebraska all librarians are members of the faculty and all have appropriate academic rank. Some 15 or more are *bona fide* members of the University Senate. They serve on various university committees. Several have recently achieved the rank of associate professor and now have tenure.

#### CONCLUSION

The divisional plan can consist of two or three reading rooms, with books on open shelves and a staff employed to watch them and with everything else in the library as usual. On the other hand, the divisional plan can become the basis for a new and expanded plan of library service throughout the university—a new philosophy of librarianship. The ultimate implications of the divisional plan at Nebraska have led to a broad view of our individual responsibilities and have led each of us into the practice of librarianship “clear across the board.” In so doing it was inevitable that we have closed ranks with the faculty and now work together in a common cause.

By WILLIAM S. DIX

## Undergraduates Do Not Necessarily Require A Special Facility

*Dr. Dix is librarian, Princeton University.*

ALL OF THIS has a strangely familiar feeling, like one of those recurring dreams in which one walks through a haunting landscape amid reflected faces and echoing

voices. I hear my own voice coming back to me: “For the library of less than a half million volumes in the smaller institutions to adopt any system which permits students to use anything less than the total collection seems just a bit foolish.” Then I remember

that at another hot meeting in New York almost exactly three years ago we went all over this same ground. Only the faces on the platform are different—except, alas, my own.

I was then at the Rice Institute, and I described briefly how about 1,200 undergraduates were served by a collection of considerably less than a half million volumes with no special provision for undergraduates. Now I am at Princeton, trying to serve about 2,900 undergraduates with about a million and a quarter volumes. If I could just say that I had changed my opinions, I might have something to talk about. Unfortunately, I have not. If I were really honest, I should simply refer you to COLLEGE AND RESEARCH LIBRARIES, volume XIV, number 3 (July, 1953), pages 271-72, and ask you to read there what I said three years ago, multiplying as you read all of the figures by three. Then I could sit down and both of us would be better off.

Actually, I am not quite that honest, and I'll try to say the same thing in different words. My own feeling is simply that for purposes of education and for purposes of research the larger the collection the better, within reason, if it is well arranged and if other conditions are optimum. Today, based on my own experience, I'll interpret "within reason" to be less than a million and a half volumes. This is *not* the best system for quick reference, but I take it that our business in the university library is either education or research and that we shall naturally take care of the quick reference function by a careful selection of certain handy tools for some sort of reference room. I take it also that the process of undergraduate teaching—at least insofar as the library is concerned—is improved as its methods approach those of research. One may *indoctrinate* and even *train* by lecturing at large groups of students and having them memorize facts from a textbook, but one can *educate* better by turning them loose in a good library and letting them really learn under the careful guidance of mature scholars. These are my premises.

Now for the confessional aspects of the program, the feature we always seem to come to: "This is what *we* do." It is my understanding that Princeton has always

had essentially open stacks from 1756 when the library occupied a little room on the second floor of Nassau Hall—even though the whole library was open only one hour one day a week and no frivolous reading on Sunday. Similarly, it has always been first of all an undergraduate college, with 2,900 undergraduates and 500 graduate students today. Variations from the concept of the unified single collection have been in the direction of special facilities for advanced work rather than for the undergraduate. Some ten subject field collections outside the main building have developed, always because of geographical convenience and the needs of research, principally in the pure and natural sciences. Within the building are a number of other special collections housed in graduate study rooms, almost all duplicated in the main collection. A few special interdepartmental programs for undergraduates have separate collections, but here again all duplicated and designed primarily for advanced work. The process of fragmentation at Princeton has been from the top down, rather than from the bottom up.

This, I think, follows the structure of organized knowledge; as the cliché has it, "the scholar is a man who knows more and more about less and less." At least to the extent to which this is true, it seems sensible to divide, if at all, along the lines of the scholar's interests. To divide at the other end of the scale, where we aim at "general education" or whatever is the popular term at the moment, seems to me just a bit more of an expedient than a virtue. At least, I am fairly confident that the next big division at Princeton will be again at the top: the segregation of seldom-used books into some sort of compact storage area.

Does it work? I can only say that I think so, in the absence of any statistics. I know that I pick up more expressions of dissatisfaction from our graduate students than from our undergraduates, who do use the library with considerable intensity.

Having said all of this, and sounding perhaps as if my notions were absolute dogma, let me add that I am not at all sure of my conclusions. I happen to have spent all of my professional life as a librarian and a considerable part of my life as a student,

teacher, and semi-scholar in collections managed as I have indicated. I have found them satisfactory and considerably more usable than the fragmented libraries in my personal experience. Perhaps I am rationalizing.

I really suspect that the range of performance between different systems of organization—unified collection, divisional plan, special undergraduate collection, or what you will—is considerably less than the difference in performance caused by a host of other factors, and further that we are talking solemn nonsense when we pretend

that there is much science at work in the selection of any form of arrangement.

The essential thing is that the good library develop through the years to meet ever more precisely the needs of its constituents. In special situations, like the wonderfully special one at Harvard, of course a Lamont Library is a great idea. In other special situations it might be utter nonsense. I'm afraid that we don't have any coherent body of theory to argue about, only details, which are less fun but usually important.

By FREDERICK H. WAGMAN

## The Case for the Separate Undergraduate Library

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DISCUSSION of the advisability of special libraries for undergraduates occurs earlier in the literature of librarianship than is generally supposed. In 1608, when Thomas James was appointed to Bodley's Library, he proposed the establishment of an undergraduate library to help the younger students. But Sir Thomas Bodley was opposed, and wrote him:

Your devise for a Librarie for the yonguer sorte, will haue many great exceptions, & one of special force. That there must be an other keeper ordeined for that place. And where yow mention the yonguer sorte, I knowe what bookes should be bought for them, but the elder as well [as] the yonguer, may haue often occasion to looke vpon them: and if there were any suche, they can not require so great a rowme. In effect, to my understanding there is muche to be saied against it, as vndoubtedly your self will readily finde, vpon further consideration.<sup>1</sup>

Three hundred and forty-seven years later there is still "much to be said against it." Certainly, the size of the university, the educational aims of the institution, the nature of the curriculum and of existing library

facilities, the pattern of instruction followed by the faculty, the extent of the book collections, the geography of the campus, the availability of libraries in halls of residence are all considerations that must be taken into account by any institution that considers the advisability of establishing a separate undergraduate library.

Justification for the separate undergraduate library may be offered on two levels. One involves the argument of practicality. In some situations the problem of providing adequate physical facilities for library service to undergraduate students may be solved most efficiently and even economically by a separate library. The other justification is more theoretical and relates to the rôle of the library and the librarian in the education of the undergraduate student. If the latter seems to us more difficult to defend, the cause may be an unconscious diffidence on the part of librarians regarding their own importance for the educational process.

Existing patterns of library service for undergraduate students are extremely diversified. At one end of the scale are the notable libraries found at some of the small liberal arts colleges, where the collections have been highly selected and developed over a great many years with a view to serving the requirements of the college student and the needs of his instructors for materials

<sup>1</sup> *Letters of Sir Thomas Bodley to Thomas James*, edited by G. W. Wheeler (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1926), p. 183.



to support the work of instruction. Here, in the best examples, the library is an important adjunct to the teaching program. The reference staff devotes considerable effort to helping the individual student find his way to books that will relate to his course work and broaden his interests. The student is conscious of few barriers between him and the books. The faculty members are aware of the library's educational potential and take it into account in planning their courses, frequently consulting with the librarian, whom they regard as a member of the teaching staff. The emphasis at such institutions is on teaching rather than on research. The liberal arts, humanistic tradition is strong here and stresses the importance of books and reading in the process of education.

At the other end of the scale is the library of the behemoth university which developed during the past century under the influence of the German university pattern. Here the emphasis is on research and publication to a far greater extent. The faculty is interested for the most part in its advanced courses. As far as the undergraduates are concerned, the library often is not closely integrated with their instruction and is usually not well adapted to their needs. The functions of such a library are diversified since it must serve students in the professional schools, the faculty, graduate students, and staff members of research institutes. The undergraduates comprise a heterogeneous group, ranging from the student who hopes to acquire a liberal education in four years to the student who is training himself to manage his uncle's drug store and is impatient with the general education requirements of his curriculum. Here, also, the liberal arts tradition is cherished within the literary college but that college is, to a certain extent, the servant of the professional schools and must adapt some of its courses to the special requirements of those schools.

The reputation of such a university usually rests less upon the quality of its instructional program for college students than it does on the international renown achieved by its scholars and research staff. The faculties of such universities usually demand that the library maintain the quality of its research collections, even when this

limits expenditures for multiple copies of books that might be useful in undergraduate instruction. As a consequence, the teaching of undergraduates frequently relies, to a far greater extent than is wise, on textbooks and canned material. The collections of such a library are huge and its catalogs are complex. The books are usually shelved compactly in stack areas to which it is unfeasible to admit the thousands of undergraduates. Moreover, large segments of the collections are dispersed among divisional and departmental libraries, which exist to make the use of books and journals more convenient to research workers, and some parts of the collections are usually in storage.

Apart from these inherent disadvantages of the very large university libraries, it must be remembered that the tax-supported universities which cannot fully control their enrollments are facing the prospect of a tremendous increase in their campus populations within the next 15 years. Relatively few of the larger universities are blessed with library facilities adequate to meet the demands of present student bodies and the problem of providing meaningful service to undergraduate students is likely to yield, ten years from now, to the more pressing problem of how to provide any service at all for the entire group.

Despite the handicaps just enumerated, the large university must try to offer the benefits of the good small college library for its undergraduate students. It may never succeed fully in this aim since reading and study are not mass activities. They flourish in solitude, not in concert, and it is difficult to make books and library services available to thousands of students in an atmosphere conducive to study and reflection. But the university's obligations with respect to the general education of the undergraduates as well as their specific course work compel it to rely heavily on the library. For the humanities and the social sciences, the library serves as laboratory. The course work in these fields should be planned in terms of extensive reading. Textbooks, anthologies, and syllabi have serious shortcomings as a substitute for the original full-length works on which they are based. Lectures are extremely useful in organizing and outlining

information and in stimulating the student to read and investigate on his own, but in all subject fields other than the sciences, mathematics, and elementary language training the undergraduate curriculum must depend heavily on good books.

With respect to the general liberal education of the undergraduates, the university must make a determined effort to counteract the frightening phenomenon of our age that Clifton Fadiman calls "the decline of attention." It must try to resist the displacement of the students' faculty of attention "away from ideas and abstractions toward things and techniques"; to offset the constant indoctrination of the student by society "with the virtues of . . . attentiveness to things, techniques, machines, spectator sports, and mass amusement."<sup>2</sup> The job of the university teacher is to start the student on the process of self-education through attentive reading of the works that represent the best expression of our wisdom and creative imagination. The aim of the college education should be "to provide all students with a broad intellectual experience in the major fields of knowledge and to insure that every graduate has a personal experience with the content, methods, and system of values of the various disciplines by which men try to understand themselves and their environment."<sup>3</sup> For this the right books must be available, and the students must be induced to read them. I say "induced" advisedly, for the majority of undergraduates are not motivated to read.

The problems encountered in educating undergraduates at our largest universities do not derive solely from the great size of these institutions. Some of these universities maintain as high a ratio of teachers to students as do very small colleges. If the educational experience of the average undergraduate at a large university is inferior to that enjoyed by his counterpart at the small liberal arts college, the reason may be sought partially in the fact that the larger institutions seem to find it difficult to influence their students to read. To some extent this may be the fault of the library, which at

some institutions has been relatively passive as regards its profound obligations to the undergraduate.

In order to stimulate or induce the undergraduate to read books that require attention and mental effort on his part, it is essential that such books be made attractive and easily available to him. How shall this be done?

It has been suggested that every student be required to buy himself a private library. This is an excellent idea but we cannot expect most students to buy any significant number of the books that they should read, become familiar with, or examine in the course of their four years at college.

Another solution often mentioned is the dormitory or house library. These have the virtues of smallness and of convenience. At a large university it is questionable how many such dormitory libraries the institution can afford to maintain if any of them are to be adequately stocked and managed.

A third solution is the absorption and distribution of undergraduate library services within the whole service complex provided by the main generalized library and its subject-specialized branches—the existing pattern at most universities. The defects of this arrangement for the very large university are exemplified by the present situation in which the University of Michigan finds itself.

The University of Michigan has an enrollment of 10,500 undergraduates, and more than 7,000 graduate students. There are, in addition, several thousand staff members with library privileges. The general library building book stacks are crowded by approximately 1,200,000 volumes and the same number of volumes are dispersed among 22 divisional and departmental libraries, four study halls for undergraduates, and three graduate reading rooms. The Literary College has 6,000 undergraduates for whom specifically there are provided far less than a thousand library seats and one open-shelf collection of approximately 3,000 volumes. All but a few of the divisional libraries are required to serve undergraduates as well as graduate students and faculty. Audio facilities for students of music literature and music appreciation, and for listening to recorded drama and poetry, are inadequate. There is

<sup>2</sup> Clifton Fadiman. *Party of One* (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1955), p. 355.

<sup>3</sup> University of Michigan. *General Register*, Section II, 1954, p. 24.

little exhibit space. In order to maintain the qualitative level of the research collections, the library committee of the Literary College has ruled against the purchase of more than three copies of any one book at the request of any one department. The existing study halls discourage reading because of their uninviting character and the paucity of their collections. Over 4,500 graduate students and staff members have stack passes in the main building, and it is impossible to admit undergraduates to the stacks except on Sunday, or in unusual cases.

Because it has not been possible to buy multiple copies of books, nor to give them shelf space, nor to provide adequate reading space for the students, the faculty has been relying more and more heavily on textbooks for the course work. This situation, the dean of the Literary College and a considerable percentage of the faculty find deplorable. It is quite possible at present for a student to spend four years as an undergraduate at the University of Michigan without once entering the general library building.

The inadequacies of existing library facilities have a serious effect also on the service provided for the graduate students and faculty. Since the undergraduates must make use of the divisional, specialized libraries, these have a divided function. Their staffs must spend a high percentage of their time serving the needs of the undergraduates and are free to develop relatively few services for advanced students.

The administration of the University of Michigan has been aware, for some time, that its library has not been contributing as it should to the intellectual development of the undergraduate student. It has realized for some time also that by 1970 there might be 20,000 undergraduates enrolled at the University of Michigan and that expansion of library facilities is a matter of extreme urgency. As a consequence, it has given the program of library development a high priority and has been strongly supported by the Board of Regents and by the State Legislature.

In planning for the future, it soon became evident that modification of the existing pattern of library services would be necessary. The general library building is so situated that no significant expansion of it

is feasible. On the other hand, many of the colleges of the university are scheduled to have new and larger buildings in which it will be possible to provide spacious divisional libraries. A number of these colleges are to be removed to a new campus four miles from the original 40 acres. The principle is firmly established at Michigan that campus expansion will not be inhibited in order to keep library services centralized. The library system simply must provide service where it is needed.

These various considerations led to decisions that transform necessity into virtue. The divisional libraries are being strengthened and given full custodial responsibility for the materials in their disciplines. They will become almost exclusively graduate research libraries. The general library building will remain the administrative and technical services center for the university library system and also the graduate research center for the humanities and for most of the social sciences. Little-used material is already being drawn off from the general library and the divisional libraries to a stack building on the new campus.

It was clear by 1951 that additional new facilities would have to be developed for the undergraduates. The idea of providing scattered study halls for the undergraduates to supplement those already in existence was promptly rejected. Such study halls have been unsuccessful at Michigan in the past. No one of them contains an adequate library collection or sufficiently diversified services. Moreover, the cost of providing enough seating space in such rooms would go far toward paying for a much better library for undergraduate use.

The possibility of furnishing libraries within halls of residence also was rejected because of the rather staggering fact that the undergraduates already reside in 19 residence halls (three of which are enormous and comprise 20 houses), in 64 undergraduate fraternities and sororities, and 13 "league houses." This excludes the many private rooming houses and cooperative houses and does not take into account the men and women who live at home or commute.

There seemed to be no hope of caring for both present and future undergraduate library needs without erecting a new and sepa-

rate library building. At the same time, it seemed likely that by concentrating the books and other materials needed by the undergraduates in one building, by providing as many copies of each book as are needed, and by employing an energetic staff to work intelligently with both faculty and students, it should be possible to relate the library more closely to the students' course work and to the interests stimulated in the classroom, and to induce the student to give more attention to books that exercise the intellect and the imagination.

Planning of such a separate library began in 1953 and the working drawings are now being prepared. The separate undergraduate library seems to me the most practical answer to Michigan's pressing problem but it has an even more profound justification in educational terms. The new library will give the faculty members much greater freedom to shape their courses as they should. At the same time it will serve as an intellectual center for the undergraduates. The building will be designed, frankly and unashamedly, to induce the students to enter it and read. It will offer a collection of the best books produced by our civilization, exhibits of various kinds, facilities for listening to music, recorded drama, and poetry, facilities for viewing documentary films and for student participation in discussion groups. It will provide, we hope, a quiet, inviting atmosphere for study and reflection. It will, if we succeed, give the undergraduate student a proprietary feeling toward it, the impression that the staff, the collections, and the facilities are all adjusted to serve him specifically and to enable him to make the most of his educational opportunities. The books he needs, as well as all those his teachers think he should be exposed to, will all be convenient and accessible in open shelves rather than dispersed over the campus, and there will be an adequate number of copies to support assignments made by his teachers, either as required or suggested reading.

This library will seat approximately 2,500 students with ease, ample space for the present undergraduate population. For the time being, and probably for the next ten years, an engineering library will occupy two floors. Within the next 15 years, the School of Engineering and several of the other pro-

fessional schools will move to the new campus. By that time there may be 12,000 undergraduates in the Literary College alone and the two floors of the undergraduate library building initially devoted to the engineering library will become available for the increased number of undergraduates in the Literary College.

Administratively, this library will be under the direction of the University Library, whose technical services departments will acquire and catalog the books for it. The staff of the undergraduate library will be concerned exclusively with book selection and custodial and reference services. We hope to persuade the teaching faculty to work closely with the staff in terms of developing reading lists and exhibits, and in encouraging use of the library through classroom stimulation, and assigned and suggested reading.

The most difficult problem that we face, of course, is the question of book selection. For this the help of almost the entire teaching staff of the Literary College has been solicited. Funds have been provided to pay part of the salaries of approximately seven members of the Literary College faculty who will work with their colleagues and the library staff to elicit and coordinate recommendations for inclusions in the collection. Each department of the Literary College has begun checking the catalog of the Lamont Library, the catalogs of various publishers, and the reading lists presently used by the departments. This is being done also by the staffs of all the other colleges that have an undergraduate enrollment, since their students also will use this library, at least until they move to the new campus. Each member of the faculty is being asked to re-think his method of instruction in terms of making the best possible use of the future undergraduate library and to suggest the books and periodicals that he feels should be available in the collections, including not only those that he will require his students to read but any others in which he would like to interest them. Several departmental libraries which exist chiefly to serve undergraduates are also being carefully weeded by the departments concerned, and existing print and phonorecord collections used in the instruction of undergradu-

ates will eventually be moved, after weeding, to the new building. It is likely that, apart from the engineering collection, the content of the undergraduate library will total between 100,000 and 150,000 volumes.

The plans do not include a separate reserve book room despite the fact that all required reading material for courses which include undergraduates will be kept in this library. Provision is being made for a limited, controlled collection of reserve books against the possibility that some required reading may simply not be available in an adequate number of copies. For the most part, however, required or collateral reading which must be provided in multiple copies will be kept in its proper place on the open shelves, the spines of the books marked to indicate that they may be charged out only overnight.

Final arrangement of the books has not yet been settled. The site for the building and the space requirements have governed its shape and the number of stories, but it is completely flexible and it should lend itself to arrangement of the books in a divisional pattern.

We have not planned for a separate browsing collection. In a broad sense, the entire collection will be a browsing collection for the whole campus. The library will contain not only the best books of the past but those of the present, since it is our firm belief that the students' education not only should give them a sense of history but should make them aware of the best current thinking on the issues and life of our times.

It is not intended that the undergraduates be restricted to this building. On the contrary, it is hoped that their experience in the undergraduate library will stimulate them to make advantageous use of the research collections. They will be welcomed at all branches of the library system when they have a serious purpose in using them.

The solution that we have adopted may not be viable on many other campuses. I am certain, however, that it will help the library share in importance and effectiveness with the inspiration of good teaching in educating the undergraduate students at the University of Michigan.

## The Map Information Office

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can be obtained on specific request if copies are still available. Also, as you have probably observed, new editions of the state indexes are being issued much more frequently than in previous years. It is suggested that a careful check of your collections be made to assure that they are up to date, especially in regard to maps of your local area.

Whatever your most perplexing map problems are, whether they concern map acquisition, the maintenance of your collections, or the supplying of specific map data for professional and technical requirements, our office is always glad to be of assistance. Although we do not attempt to maintain file copies of all

maps and related publications issued by government and private groups, we can generally advise what coverage is available for a specific area and where it can be obtained. Often, too, we can supply, or direct you to the source of the information required to answer, many of the seemingly intricate requests for map data. This service is available to all who wish to take advantage of it.

The Map Information Office is always eager to learn about appropriate material that may have been overlooked, and we welcome any suggestions that you wish to make as to how we can improve our service to you and to the users of libraries.