

Letters

To the Editor:

I have just read with interest your and Mary Jo Rudd's article on "Coping with information load" in the July 1986 issue of *College & Research Libraries*.

My disagreement is not with the thrust of your article but with a statement that you twice make as an example. On page 318 you mention Stephen Stoan's (Stephen K. Stoan, "Research and library skills: an analysis and interpretation", *College & Research Libraries*, 45:99-109 (March 1984) discussion of "several library classification and storage policies that have unintended consequences for user information, information acquisition, and processing efficiency." The next sentence reads: "The classification of journals, for example, makes browsing of related journals for information a much more time-consuming task." [Emphasis mine]

Related in what way? If by similarity of content, then surely a classification scheme which brings history journals together and separates them from physics journals will do more to facilitate browsing of related journals than will the chance collocation of titles imposed by the alphabet. My own library, that of the State University of New York at Buffalo, arranges its periodicals in alphabetical order so that the following journals are shelved together: *The American Journal of Computational Linguistics*, *The American Journal of Correction*, *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, *The American Journal of Education*, and *The American Journal of Human Genetics*. While it is possible that the penologist and the sociologist might find matter of interest in each other's journal, the probability of a community of interest is somewhat lower for the linguist and the penologist, not to mention the geneticist.

How are browsers served when a journal changes its title (a habit that too many are prone to have) so that different volumes are separated on the shelves? With classification, all volumes would be brought together no matter how much the name changed.

Later in the article you re-iterate your point, again using it as an example: "Librarians must be cautious, Stoan warns, to avoid making changes in library policy that might hinder the research process; e.g., arranging journals by classification largely eliminates browsing." This time the implication is very clear that the example comes from the Stoan article, as in fact it does although Stoan does not refer to "related" journals. His words are: "A related and less obvious library policy that can arouse resentment is the classification of journals, which substantially eliminates browsing on the assumption that no one would look at a journal without first consulting an index." (Stoan, p.108)

It is the idea, not its source, with which I disagree, though I think that your insertion of the word 'related' weakens your point that classification of journals hinders browsing.

I recently surveyed the ARL libraries to determine their arrangement of periodicals. Some 85% of those responding classified either their entire or at least the larger part of their collection of periodicals. None of them planned to declassify while some of the non-classifiers were considering classifying all or parts of their collections. The mere fact that so many libraries classify periodicals does not, of course, make it a good policy; however, it does raise the possibility that such an approach does have value, either for efficient management of the library as an institution or for the users it serves or both.

JUDITH HOPKINS
University at Buffalo, New York

To the Editor:

This letter is a response to Judith B. Barnett's recent letter regarding the article "T is for Temporary" which appeared in the July 1986 issue of *College and Research Libraries*. Ms. Barnett states the AAUP, American Association of University Professors, "publishes detailed statistics on academic personnel, including part-time and temporary positions." My co-author, Cecilia Rothschild, and I did examine articles from the AAUP journal *Academe* during our research, but, while the articles did mention figures on temporary or part-time teaching faculty, statistics on librarians—the point we addressed in our discussion—were not provided. In fact, "librarians have specifically been excluded for the purpose of the survey (Annual AAUP Survey of Faculty Compensation) which is to collect information on instructional staff," according to Maryse Eymonerie, an AAUP consultant who has compiled the survey since it began in 1958/59. Iris Molotski of the AAUP Washington office also stated the AAUP keeps no statistics by discipline for any faculty group.

Ms. Rothschild and I are presently investigating the content of the "National Faculty Survey" compiled by Appalachian State University and Oklahoma State University's "Faculty Salary Survey by Discipline" for any pertinent statistics. We are not, however, optimistic that these sources will contain data on academic librarians whether employed in permanent or temporary positions. We reassert our conclusion that temporary librarians "constitute an unrecognized segment of the professional library workforce." As stated in our article, we are pursuing the topic; our survey of all California college and university libraries will be distributed this fall.

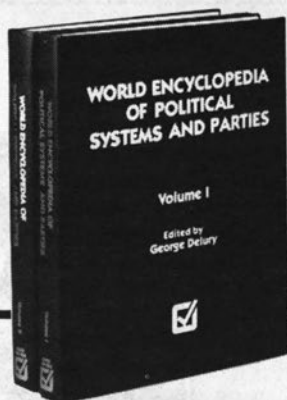
DONNA ZUFAN PONTAU
San Jose State University

To the Editor:

The recent exchange of correspondence between Mssrs. Hill and Hamptman and Ms. List (July 1986) reminds many librarians of the faculty status debate that virtually raged about a dozen years ago. While this issue had somewhat disappeared from the literature, the fact that the exchange took place demands a response. In none of the definitions I could locate did the term librarian appear in defining faculty. Interestingly enough, neither did historian, biologist, or engineer. Historically, the term means one who teaches. My concern is not whether the librarian does nor does not have faculty status, nor what faculty status entails. My point is that being a faculty member ignores your academic discipline—a faculty member is just that. What's more, at more and more institutions the decision on faculty status rests with university, not library administrators. So the idea of "real faculty" is often not an issue at all. After all, when I see a faculty member I fail to see signage which designates chemist or economist or librarian.

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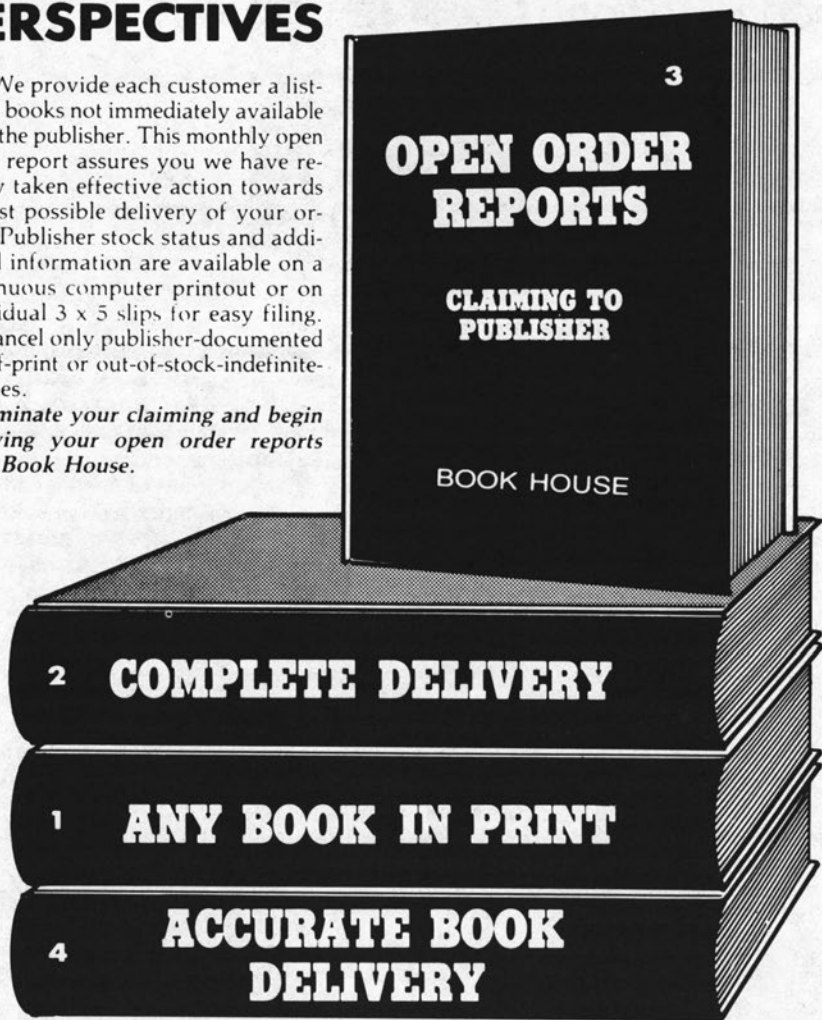


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