

Letters

To the Editor:

In the January 1972 *CRL* Brigitte Kenney of Drexel University volunteers to send me a list of "money-saving automated library operations." This implies that she has studied and approved detailed cost analyses of these operations. Let her present just one such analysis in these pages so we can see exactly what she takes to be valid cost analyses. Frankly, I think she is talking through her professorial hat.

*Ellsworth Mason
Director of Libraries
University of Colorado,
Boulder, Colorado*

To the Editor:

Three cheers for Roger Horn's "Think Big: The Evolution of Bureaucracy" (*CRL*, Jan. 1972). It is a devastatingly accurate exposure of the "numbers game" as it is currently played in the research libraries and their would-be imitators. There will unquestionably be howls of protest from the establishment. The truth hurts.

*Paul DuBois
Assistant Director
Kent State University Libraries
Kent, Ohio*

To the Editor:

I suspect *CRL*'s January editorial, "Libraries for Decision-Makers"—with which I agree wholeheartedly—was prompted in part by Herbert M. E. Pastan's depressing letter published in the same issue. The point is that usually the library has not demonstrated that it is essential to the op-

eration of a business organization or an educational institution.

As a librarian, I don't like to admit it, but it seems that, in general, libraries and librarians are not as important as we'd like them to be. When money is tight, library budgets—which typically amount to less than 5 percent of total institutional expenditures—are often among the first to be cut. Currently, the principal mode of teaching/learning, i.e., the lecture-textbook method, makes minimal use of academic libraries. If space is needed for additional classrooms, library reading areas are frequently appropriated by the decision makers. And when library buildings are being planned, campus librarians are not always consulted.

Perusing L. Carroll DeWeese's article on status and professionalism in the same issue of *CRL* has caused me to reexamine my ideas. While I have been an ardent supporter of faculty status for librarians—and continue to be—I now feel that we have generally been "placing the cart before the horse." It is unrealistic for most librarians to expect higher standing for themselves while the library is not of greater importance on campus. Only when library service is commonly considered the equal of teaching will academic librarians throughout the country achieve the status they are seeking.

To be judged a high-priority concern, the library must prove that it is vital to the existence of the institution—that an organization will fail without one. Campus leaders must be shown that academic libraries can supply them with the information they require—even before the need for information is fully perceived—at a reasonable cost. Through such current-awareness services as selective dissemination of information, librarians can bring new material to the attention of decision-makers before the desire for the specific items arises.

We must be more successful as a profession in reaching the campus leaders. As

Pastan puts it, "We certainly won't sell the case for librarianship talking to each other at ALA meetings."

Leonard Grundt
Director
Nassau Community College Library
Garden City, New York

To the Editor:

It was with some consternation that I read your little editorial in the March 1972 issue.

I suppose at this stage in life I should not be surprised at the continued examples of administrative and budgetary theft that are so often at hand. I do not know how else to describe the failure to use fees for their implied purpose. You ask for reader response. I would be most unhappy if *CRL* was to cease or be curtailed. While I would like *CRL News* to continue, I would not miss it to the same degree.

I would think that in this day and age when we are faced with so many separate and separated library organizations to which we feel we should belong, but from whose number most of us must choose a few, that the central authorities of ALA will not increase the temptation to not renew membership in ALA by removing from our hands *CRL*. I think the issue is that specific, and should be brought to the attention of the ALA authorities in as vigorous a manner as is possible.

R. G. Bracewell
Emmanuel College
Librarian and Library Coordinator
Toronto School of Theology
Toronto, Canada

Ed. note: Mr. Bracewell's letter appears to refer to the editorial in the March 1971 issue of CRL, rather than the issue indicated.

To the Editor:

I enjoyed reading Mr. McInnis' article (May 1972, p. 190-198) describing his use of regression techniques to investigate de-

terminants of library size; it seems that library science can only profit from the introduction of tools that have proven themselves so valuable for the other social sciences. Because of this, however, it is important that these techniques be presented as clearly and accurately as possible. Without commenting on substantive issues, such as the propriety of using a predictive equation based on the nation's finest research libraries as a norm for college libraries in general, I do wish to clarify one technical point that recurs in Mr. McInnis' article and that may be confusing to readers.

Mr. McInnis, referring to an earlier treatment of this problem by Reichard and Orsagh, states that their conclusions are effectively invalidated since the "size variables are patently not (statistically) independent of each other." This statement, and others about the problem of multicollinearity, can be misleading. Linear regression equations of the form $y = a + bx + cx^2$, for example, often appear in the literature, although the "size variables" x and x^2 are "patently not independent of each other." It is true that if the variables on the right side are statistically uncorrelated, the analyses may be simpler, but there is nothing in the theory that prevents one from using correlated variables. If two of these variables are perfectly correlated in the sense that one completely determines the other, an investigator will not get incorrect results, but will rather find he gets no solution at all; that is, he won't be able to solve the equations. If the variables are strongly, but not perfectly, correlated he will get a solution, but will find that the confidence intervals (or better, confidence ellipsoids) for the coefficients are larger than he might otherwise have expected. These statements are not the same, however, as saying that the conclusions reached are invalid.

Mr. McInnis introduced the discussion of correlated size variables in an attempt to explain the negative coefficients of the Reichard and Orsagh paper. One can obtain an alternative explanation of these negative regression coefficients by carefully considering what a regression coefficient is. A regression coefficient indicates how much the dependent variable will increase if a *particular* dependent variable increases while the other dependent variables remain

constant. For the case at hand, if faculty size is fixed, an increase in the size of the student body probably represents a reduction in the quality of the college; the "worse" a school, the fewer books its library will own, and hence the negative coefficient. Thus student body may, in this instance, be more a measure of quality than size. This effect is eliminated in Mr. McNis' treatment since his sample includes *only* excellent schools.

I would finally like to note that the equation given is a linear approximation, in an

extreme region, of what is most likely a nonlinear equation. This should be considered if one wishes to apply this equation to schools of small or medium size. The negative constant term may be explained by this observation.

Abraham Bookstein
Professor
Graduate Library School
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois