

Research at American Library Schools

米国図書館学校における研究

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ルシール・M・ワート

要 旨

米国における図書館学研究センター発展の歴史的背景や、親機関との関係、行なっている調査のタイプ、管理・運営上の問題点についてイリノイ大学の図書館学研究センターを例に取上げ述べている。

図書館学研究センターは、日本にはまだ存在しないが、米国においては既に幾つか存在し、それぞれ活発な活動をしている。元来は、米国の図書館界においても伝統的に弱かった研究活動を補うものとして設立され、初期には主として公共図書館についての応用研究を行なっていたが、現在は、学校図書館、学術図書館、図書館システム、その他の情報科学の分野の応用研究を行なっている。

母体は大学の図書館学校であるが、センターの所長が図書館学校の教員であることと、業務遂行上図書館学校や大学内のいろいろな部局や機関のスタッフの助言・助力を得られる以外は、運営資金、スタッフ、スペース、設備はすべて独力で確保しなければならない。

受託金を得て調査研究を行なうためには、センターに調査研究を依頼してきそうな図書館や各種団体と、センターが調査研究を依頼できる図書館や団体を知り、常にセンターの存在や仕事の内容を知らせる努力をしなければならない。

スタッフとスペースは業務量に応じて増減できなければならない。受託金とこれらの要素のバランスをとることは、センターの所長にとって最大の問題である。

センターの仕事の副産物として、図書館員の教育や調査職員への訓練の利益が考えられる。センターのスタッフは、毎年、図書館学校や大学院の学生の教育・訓練に携わっている。

センターはこのように大学や図書館学校と相互に寄与し合っており、これからも存在し、発展していくであろう。
(S. K.)

During the fall of 1973, this author had the privilege of spending some time in Japan. She had the pleasure of visiting a number of university libraries, several special libraries, one

public library, and the library schools of Keio University and the National College for Librarianship. The visit gave her the opportunity of comparing libraries and the library

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education programs of Japan with those of the United States. The library education programs in Japan did not differ significantly from those of America. The one difference, which was observed, was the lack of centers or institutes which have been established within the last twenty years by some American library schools as the research arm of the school.

It is the purpose of this paper to discuss these research centers or institutes by giving the historical background of their development, showing their relationship to their parent organization, discussing the type of research that is being conducted, and discussing the administrative problems which are peculiar to these centers. To accomplish this purpose the author will use the Library Research Center of the University of Illinois as an example. It has been selected because the author is more familiar with that Center and because it has been in existence for a longer period of time than most of the centers.

Historical Development of Research as a Part of American Library Education

Research, traditionally, has not played a large role in the library profession in the United States. One needs only to consider the history of American education for librarianship to understand this fact.

The first library school in a college or university setting in the United States was established by Melville Dewey at Columbia University in 1887. The school at Columbia was designed to prepare students to perform the practices necessary for library operation. The emphasis was upon practical work rather than theoretical. By the turn of the century three additional library schools had been established at Pratt Institute, Drexel Institute of Technology and the University of Illinois. All three followed the pattern originated by Dewey at Columbia.

American library schools continued to follow this pattern for educating librarians until the late 1920's. Dr. C. C. Williamson explained the paucity of research in librarianship in his report, *Training for Library Service*, published in

1923.¹⁾ He noted that librarians are empiricists by nature, untrained in research and the scientific method and he perceived a deep-rooted prejudice among librarians against subjecting their activities to scientific scrutiny. The profession felt that the librarian means to do good, and by dint of self-sacrifice and hard work he does what he means to do, and therefore that which he does is good. This attitude still exists to some extent in the profession today. It is understandable, research in the social sciences can be emotionally disquieting, it questions old beliefs and sweeps aside traditions and leaves in its wake disbelief, uncertainty, and shattered ideals.

In spite of the antipathy for research generally held by American librarians in the 1920's, the need for research into the fundamental problems of librarianship was frequently and increasingly voiced in the United States and in Canada. The time had come when decisions could no longer be made by guess-work or intuition, but required basic information resulting from sound research. In the late 1920's the Graduate Library School at the University of Chicago was established. From its beginning it was concerned with advanced study and research. The school remained the center for library research in the United States until World War II when its faculty was dispersed.

The program at Chicago was the beginning of a new pattern of library education. Those who graduated from that program established courses in research methodology at the major library schools in the United States and Canada. A new generation of librarians was prepared to use the results of research and some to produce it.

World War II had an additional influence upon library research. The war raised research in general to such a high level of prestige, and rewarded its practitioners so well, that American librarianship was forced into a form of activity which was foreign to it and for which many librarians were unprepared. It was necessary for the profession to develop a more sophisticated understanding of the nature of research and what research could accom-

plish. This research needed people, money and facilities. These needs raised questions of where researchers were to be trained and where library research could be conducted, as well as who could do it and who should foot the bill.

For numerous reasons, the established graduate library schools of the United States were recognized as the proper location for this activity. The parent universities of these schools not only were geared toward research activities but had library and technical resources to support them. The schools' faculties included librarians trained to do research and a number of them already were participating in research projects. Some of the schools (Chicago, Illinois, Michigan) had programs of doctoral level study leading to a research oriented degree. Also, the federal government, business organizations, and charitable foundations discovered that universities were agencies which could conduct research in an efficient manner.

Between 1955 and 1965 four graduate library schools established separate research centers:

1955—Center for Documentation and Communication Research—Western Reserve University (now Case Western Reserve University)

1961—Library Research Center—University of Illinois

1962—Center for Library and Educational Media Studies—University of Pittsburgh (In 1968 this became the Center for Library Research in Communications)

1965—Institute for Library Research—University of California at Berkeley.

Other graduate library schools announced their intentions to establish such centers, but to date few have reached fruition.

In 1965, Sarah Reed, commenting on the establishment of these centers, wrote

“Despite the fact that of all the research funds reported in *Library Research in Progress* only 12 percent goes to library school research projects, the establishment of university library research centers is the first major development in library school research

programs since the days of Louis Round Wilson's deanship at the University of Chicago. The research operation which supported Dean Wilson's *Geography of Reading* and the series of faculty reading studies has now been joined by research centers at Western Reserve University, the University of Illinois, the University of Pittsburgh, and, recently, the University of California at Berkeley. There are two justifications for locating such a center on a university campus—the educational advantages its facilities offer faculty and students and its function to support the university's objectives of extending the bounds of knowledge and disseminating that knowledge. So long as the university offers a program of graduate professional library education, the university has a responsibility for encouraging and supporting insightful investigations concerning the elements that make up librarianship.”²⁾

Relationship of the Library Research Center to the Graduate School of Library Science and the University

The Library Research Center at the University of Illinois had its beginnings in a grant in 1961 from the Illinois State Library to the Graduate School of Library Science. The grant was for the purpose of establishing an experimental center for research related to public library development. The original goals of the Center were twofold:

- 1) to demonstrate on a small scale the values which organized applied research can have for the public library field; and
- 2) to serve as a link between faculty members with research skills and outside agencies or organizations which have funds for research in the library field.

At the present time the latter purpose remains the same but the former has been broadened and expanded. The Center not only does research in the area of public libraries, but conducts studies dealing with academic libraries, school libraries, library systems and information science programs.

The Center was organized under the direc-

tion of Dr. Mary Lee Bundy who served as director until October 1961. Dr. Guy Garrison was appointed director of the Center in June 1962 and remained in that position until August 1968. Dr. Terence Crowley served as director from February 1969 through August 1971. His successor was Dr. Lucille M. Wert who continues in that position.

The director of the Library Research Center also serves as a member of the faculty of the Graduate School of Library Science. In that capacity the director teaches a class, serves on faculty committees, advises students, and chairs doctoral committees. The director is also a member of the faculty of the Graduate College of the University and serves on several University-wide committees.

One of the natural by-products of the work of the Center is an interest in the education of librarians generally and in the training of library research workers in particular. One or more members of the Center staff teach courses each year in the Graduate School of Library Science. The Center staff also engages in informal instruction in library research by providing assistantships and research experience for a number of students in both the master's and doctoral programs of the Library School. In addition, the Center staff works closely with various faculty members and doctoral students in their research. To date nine doctoral students have completed dissertations which were a part of sponsored research projects of the Center. Three dissertations are currently in progress.

In addition to the director, the current staff of the Center consists of fourteen full-time and part-time academic and non-academic personnel. The twelve academic persons include nine at the research associate level and three at the research assistant level. Persons who are employed at the research associate level have a master's degree in library science, a master's degree in a subject field, and/or library experience. For research assistants, preference is given to persons who have a master's degree in a subject field and are currently working on a degree in library science. With the

exception of the director, the salaries of all the Center staff are paid from contract funds.

The Center is not limited to its own staff and facilities for conducting research but has access to all the resources of the university. Primarily, these include the Graduate School of Library Science, the Survey Research Laboratory and the Digital Computer Laboratory. The expertise of the Library School faculty covers all the main types of activities in all types of libraries. The Survey Research Laboratory is a university-wide agency organized to conduct public opinion studies by mail questionnaires or by interview. The Digital Computer Laboratory maintains one of the world's largest and most powerful computer installations with extensive peripheral equipment and technical support personnel.

The Center can and does call on assistance from the staff of almost one-hundred other academic departments and research institutes within the University. It is not unusual for the Center staff to write joint proposals for research projects with staff members of other departments and research institutes.

One can see from this discussion that the Center both gains from and contributes to the University. This is also true of other library research institutes or centers on other university campuses in the United States.

Research Conducted at the Library Research Center

Librarians have long had a difficult time in defining research in librarianship. If one views research as a continuum from non-research at one end to pure research at the other, the Center's research on this continuum is in the area between surveys of current library practice and pure research. Its place is the middle ground of applied research which provides information for improving and extending library service, not in terms of a specialized local situation, but in more generally applicable terms. In the early years of the Center's history, the focus of research was in the area of public libraries. In recent years its concerns have broadened to include school and academic

libraries and many diverse types of problems.

The bibliography of the Center projects at the end of the paper demonstrates the wide diversity of topics which have been studied at the Center and the number of different funding agencies. Mention should also be made of some of the studies which are currently in progress. Among these is an evaluation of an information center established in a Spanish speaking neighborhood by the Chicago Public Library, a study of the educational programs to train library technical assistants in Illinois, and an evaluation of the experimental children's book review centers which are located in the regional library systems in Illinois. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has two funded projects at the Center: one to design an information system for environmental laws, and the other to design an environmental habitability data system.

Each of the research institutes or centers established by graduate library schools in the United States has developed its own unique research program. However, the studies conducted at each reflects the interests of their funding sources.

Administrative Problems of a Library Research Center

The director or administrator of a research unit totally dependent on contract funds is involved in a constant juggling act to keep contract funds, adequate staff, and adequate space and equipment in constant balance. This is true in any research area, including library science.

To acquire contract funds for conducting research, a director must know the various funding agencies, the types of research which each agency funds, the priorities and parameters each has for its research funds, and the agency's guidelines and deadlines for writing and submitting research proposals. Obtaining this information require a lot of travel to talk with the personnel of the various funding agencies.

Since an administrator not only submits proposals to agencies for funding but has agen-

cies and libraries requesting research, a part of the administration of a center is public relations. It is necessary that agencies, institutions and libraries are aware of a Center's existence and its work to request and fund a research study. Therefore, an administrator of a research unit must constantly be doing two things: learning about sources of funding and making them aware of the research unit and its work. It should be pointed out that many proposals for funding of research studies are written and submitted to funding agencies and only a part of them are approved.

Since different research projects demand different types of expertise, it is essential that a research unit be located in an institution where such expertise is available. It should be noted that the duration of projects varies from a period of six months to three years. Therefore the Center employs some staff for short periods of time. The Center tends not to use the staff of the Graduate School of Library Science or other departments of the University as sources of supply for personnel to work on research projects. The School's teaching obligations cannot easily be met if it is considered as a source of supply for the Center staff. Members of the Center staff are employed to work on specific projects. Every effort is made to match an individual's area of expertise to the demands of the project. The faculty of the Library School and of other departments are used in an advisory capacity and as consultants to the projects.

The problems of space and equipment are similar to those of staff. The Library School cannot be expected to give up space which is needed for its instructional program to house the research facility. During its history, the Center has been located in rented facilities outside the University and in several different University buildings at one time. It now is housed within one University building. This location has the disadvantage of being separate from the University Library and the Library School. However it has the advantage of flexibility to meet the Center's constant increasing or decreasing demands for space. Equipment

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for the Center has been purchased from the overhead costs which are charged to each contract.

As one can see a library research unit must obtain contract funds to support research, must have available potential employees to work on research projects and, must have space which meets the ever increasing and decreasing demands of research projects. If one of these elements is out of balance, the unit will have problems.

Conclusions

While all the ills that beset a research unit totally dependent on project funds have been with the Library Research Center in the past and will be with the Center in the future, it is hoped that the Center and other similar centers will continue. The centers contribute to the education of librarians and are resources to which any library, organization, or agency can turn to for assistance with a research need.

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- 2) Reed, Sarah R. "Library research needs more miracles," *D.C. Libraries*, vol. 36, Apr. 1965, p. 19.

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