

ARCHIVES

Circulation ^x
Desk

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE LIBRARIAN

1963 -- 1964

TO: The Dean of Oakland University

As the University Librarian I have the honor to submit the following report of the Oakland University Library for the year July 1, 1963 through June 30, 1964. This represents the fifth such report I have submitted, and it is with mixed emotion that I realize that, because of the very difficult decision Mrs. Wilder and I have reached to leave Oakland for an assignment with the Ford Foundation in Baghdad, it will be my last. We look forward eagerly to the adventures of the future; but I find myself remembering the summer of 1959, the four empty ranges of shelving in the middle of a well-furnished, temporary library in North Foundation Hall, and the temptation toward nostalgia is hard to resist.

One of the major problems through this entire five-year period, and one which has certainly remained a problem during the past year, is that of the development of adequate professional staff. U. S. Office of Education library statistics show nationally some five thousand positions actually budgeted but unfilled. The wonder is that Oakland has not had more vacancies and more difficulty retaining people. It is increasingly a problem for those with any kind of established reputation to resist inquiries and offers and to remain in one place; I fear that with the increase of the number and size of institutions of higher education anticipated over the next decade this can only become more difficult.

During the summer of 1963 we were able to fill all of our professional positions. In August Mr. Thomas Coppe joined us as a second cataloger so that we had a professional staff of eight and a clerical staff of six. The size of the clerical staff was one less than previously because, when Virginia Burt transferred from our Order Department to another office on the campus, we replaced her with three part-time student bibliographers. Mr. Doiron gave particular attention to this program which is an important one, both for the Library and the student workers. Until this year, our student help has been limited to Circulation Desk activities and shelving, or to work of a paste-pot nature involved in the preparation of books for the shelves. College students are over-educated for these jobs, the pay is low, and, therefore, the supervision of student help becomes a constant program of training new people into routines. In discussing this problem the Oakland librarians agreed that some form of promotion to work of a more professional nature would be desirable, and these student bibliographer jobs were established.

The experiment is successful enough so that it should by all means be continued. Care should be taken that students who are accepted in these excess-rate jobs should by all means have first worked in the Library at regular student rates, otherwise morale will be damaged rather than helped by promotion. A real effort should be made to see that a student is given book orders to verify which are in subject fields in which he is interested. This means that during the course of his work the student receives both instruction and an opportunity to work in the bibliography of his field.

In the course of the year we set up one other excess-rate job for students--a job as supervisor of functions at the Circulation Desk. We tried to so organize this that the supervision of the people remained in the hands of the full-time staff member in charge, but one student is responsible for seeing that the multifarious functions of this sensitive part of the Library are all continued. These opportunities for promotion have aided the morale of our student help and are justification of the policy we have had from the start, to use as much in the way

of student help as possible.

Mr. Coppe left us voluntarily in February. This was followed in April, at the end of the Winter Semester, by the resignation of Mr. Song, which was a real loss to the Library and the University. Tom was uniquely qualified in so many areas that in a small institution he did not have sufficient opportunity to develop himself fully in any one. He taught in the Far East program, and showed considerable promise as a bibliographer and scholar in this area. He was involved in management studies, requiring cooperation with the Business-Economics people and the CDPC, and he served faithfully and with great energy working with individual students and faculty as a reference librarian. When the opportunity came for him to combine his technical knowledge of bibliography with the use of the computer machine in a newly established documentation center at Wayne State University, he accepted.

Throughout the year, many Oakland people were interested in the development, by the American Library Association under a grant from the Council on Library Resources, of a book review journal directed specifically toward the development of undergraduate collections. Several members of the faculty were enlisted as reviewers for Choice, and the Library Committee discussed its implications as far as our book selection policies were concerned. In April a representative of Oakland was asked to serve on a panel at the Midwest Academic Librarians Conference at Notre Dame, on the development of the book collection for undergraduate college libraries. After his return to Oakland from this meeting, Mr. Doiron learned that the chairman of the panel, the Associate Editor for Reviewing of Choice, was resigning, and in June Pete left us to accept that position. We feel complimented that here was an opportunity for him to put into practice on a national scale some of the procedures and policies which have been worked out and implemented in the development of our book collection at Oakland.

Also in June, Loren Sgro, who had for a year been in charge of our Circulation Desk, resigned to accept a similar position in the library of the University of Wyoming. This year represents the only year during which we have had a trained librarian in charge of our Circulation Desk, and Mr. Sgro was able to introduce many procedures and services which had not previously been carried on. On his departure we replaced him with Mrs. Nancy Covert, who is again not a professional librarian, but who seemed to us to be thoroughly capable of building on the foundations laid by Mr. Sgro and of carrying on the routine operations of circulation, the reserve shelf, and the general care of the building as well as shelving.

Last year we applied, with the Pontiac schools, for a Knapp Foundation grant which we hoped would staff and strengthen our Curriculum Materials Center. Although we did not receive the grant, it was still necessary to have a specialist in this area on the Library staff in order to adequately support our methods courses in teacher education. We have, therefore, appointed Miss Phyllis Van Orden to a position as an assistant librarian. She is a graduate of the University of Michigan Library School who has general library experience and most recently has been in the Instructional Materials Center of the Royal Oak school system. We feel that one of the clear ways toward the turning out of better prepared and better qualified teachers is through the development of teachers who are library-minded and thoroughly oriented toward the library in their work. We would like to continue the development of our library collections and particularly the Curriculum Materials Center in order to insure this.

TABLE I
SIZE OF LIBRARY

	1959/1960		1960/1961		1961/1962		1962/1963		1963/1964	
	<u>Titles</u>	<u>Vol.</u>	<u>Titles</u>	<u>Vol.</u>	<u>Titles</u>	<u>Vol.</u>	<u>Titles</u>	<u>Vol.</u>	<u>Titles</u>	<u>Vol.</u>
Cataloged and Classified	2,772	3,275	10,435	12,470	20,115	25,536	28,521	35,987	*36,262	*45,456
Alphabetical Collections		3,658								
Completed Volumes of Periodicals		304	8,157			1,472		2,790		**4,119
Microfilm Reels		71				1,105		1,503		1,989
Book Room Uncataloged Items Curriculum Materials Center		84				157		196		195
		<u>7,392</u>		<u>20,627</u>		<u>28,270</u>		<u>40,476</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>398</u>
								<u>36,462</u>	<u>52,157</u>	
Records - Circulating Music Coll. Recordings of Plays and Poetry Recordings - Curriculum Materials		6				144	117 67	137 133	118 81	138 181 14
Serial Titles Regularly Received		176				469		697		841

*Net figure:

497 cataloged volumes including 391 titles were withdrawn as lost in June, 1964.

**Also included in this total are complete volumes on microcards.

Statistics on the size of the Library in Table I show that the growth of our collections continued at a steady pace. Miss Ruskin completed the cataloging of just under 10,000 volumes, which included all materials we purchased and a final run-through by Mr. Bruno and Mr. Doiron of the Kerschner collection and some gift items which had been added to it. Three times previously we had been through the Kerschner collection with various faculty members looking for items which should have a priority in cataloging. This winter we took everything which remained so that we now have in the basement stack room only a relatively small number of books which are duplicate to the Library or have been selected as not worth adding. It is our proposal that in the fall some of these materials can be sold to students and perhaps others exchanged for needed items by the Library. We are proud of the fact, however, that there is no backlog of books to be cataloged.

I think this happy state, rather rare in libraries, can be attributed to two things: first of all, hard work and just plain dogged determination on the part of Mary Ruskin, secondly, the general policy of accepting the subject cataloging and classification work of the Library of Congress, which we adopted at the very beginning, and which Miss Ruskin has been willing to implement to its fullest extent. This, I think, represents one of the significant procedures to have been developed at Oakland during the past five years. Lest these two reasons for our success, plus the lack of a backlog, be taken to indicate that we do not critically need to fill our vacant position in cataloging, let me hasten to comment generally on the development of the professional staff and to point out some areas where a backlog does exist.

I came to Oakland five years ago much interested in the problem of staff development and in attempting to adapt to a new situation some programs which had been suggested elsewhere. It seemed to me at that time, and it still does today, that perhaps an important reason why the Library and librarians did not play major roles in academic programs generally was because they became too involved in those aspects of the work not directly concerned with the bringing together of books and students and faculty. At the same time I have never been impressed by a necessity for specialization in anything more specific than academic library work, believing that the same combination of a sound bibliographic background and common sense is required whether one intends to catalog, bind, order books or provide reference service. Therefore, I attempted to develop a staff organization in which book selection, reference service and attempts to work with the faculty in their teaching problems were the responsibility of all librarians.

To oversimplify history, during the first year there were two librarians. While one did handle the actual ordering of books, we were both involved in their selection and the promotion of their use. No cataloging was done. In the second year we were four, with two involved in ordering and all of us in cataloging. In spite of the fact that he did some reference work and began the development of our reference collection, Louis Martin was not a reference librarian. His job was not precisely defined, but involved coordinating reference work and liaison with the faculty in their teaching programs. We learned two things: (1) we needed a reference librarian in order to free Lou to make something of his job, and (2) in spite of our dependence on L.C., the catalog needed constant supervision in order to develop consistently. Unfortunately at the time we added these two people funds were lean, and when Martin had an opportunity for advancement elsewhere, we did not replace him. Since then, therefore, everyone in the Library has had a specific job and has tended more and more to concentrate on it, while the promotion of the library program by imaginative involvement in teaching has suffered.

In spite of this, I am not yet ready to admit that my basic ideas are wrong; but I think we can point to staff shortage as an important reason why they have not worked better. It is hard, perhaps impossible, for a cataloger or an order librarian or a university librarian to pursue some necessarily vague idea for more completely involving a class in the library, when faculty are clamoring for specific services. When these people are distracted from their goal, it is very quickly forgotten all over the campus. At the present juncture, therefore, it is clear that the filling of at least one of the two vacant positions, that is Mr. Coppe's or Mr. Doiron's, and some program for the replacement of Martin is essential. It is perhaps reasonable to suggest that an Associate Librarian might be found to coordinate the technical work of the Library while the Librarian is freed as the liaison man. I would suggest that perhaps if we let slip this opportunity to involve the library more deeply in the academic programs, Oakland may not completely be living up to its potential. This is not, however, the reason for my departure; quite the reverse, the reason the decision was difficult was because of the Dean's willingness to cooperate and aid the Librarian in further attempts to approach our original goals.

There are two areas in which a backlog of materials to be cataloged does exist. Several times in the past five years various members of the faculty and administration have talked about the growing collection of records in the Music Department. Again and again the conviction has been expressed that one thing we ought to be able to do in a new university was to so organize our expensive property that knowledge of its existence was campus-wide and that its use was not restricted to any single department. To this end, therefore, it was long ago agreed that the Library would catalog this record collection. This was necessary in order to make the collection fully useable to the music faculty; and on the assumption that at some future date the Library would have facilities for broadcasting materials which were in this collection, it was also agreed that additional cards would be made which could eventually be put into the Library catalog. During the Spring, we worked out with the music faculty exactly what the procedures would be for this work, and it was started. It is going forward very slowly, but we hope to be able to continue it, while at the same time not letting uncataloged books pile up.

There is one other very minor cataloging backlog on which we also started to work--started through the back door, as it were, as a result of our increased program for the replacement of lost books. As we replaced books, especially but not entirely, studies of human sexual behavior, it was obvious that we must work out some restrictions in order to try to prevent their repeated loss. We, therefore, named the conference room next to the Librarian's office, which had previously contained a collection of special or fine books and phonograph records, the Book Room; and worked out ways for showing this location on catalog cards. The small quantity of materials listed in our statistics as being in this room, therefore, also became cataloging backlog.

The Book Room will now contain two separate collections, but the card catalog will show the location of both of them. Books which fall into the category of fine or rare and need to be protected are regularly cataloged, but no preparation work is done; that is, pockets and cards are not pasted in, and the call number is written on a strip of paper inserted in the book rather than pasted on the spine. These books may be read by anyone in the Book Room, but circulate only under very special conditions. The other collection is books for which we fear loss. By putting these in the Book Room, we do not intend to restrict their use in any way, but we do intend, when they are out of the building, to know who has them in the hope that they will be returned.

TABLE II

TOTAL LIBRARY CIRCULATION 1963/1964

	Students	Others	Faculty	Use in Library	Totals	Totals 1962/63	Totals 1961/62
General Circulation	25,810	231	3,508		29,549	26,623	15,935
Records	603		141		744	647	570
Performance Music	224	16	33		273	565	
Reserve Books	4,295		230	16,791	21,316	19,459	12,646
Bindery				1,573	1,573	2,019	1,023
MSU Extension Books	283				283	207	
Personal Copies/Reserve	109				109	364	
Periodicals	102	3	115		220	169	177
Reference	14	1	21		36	41	
Totals	31,440	251	4,048	18,364	54,103	50,094	30,351

TOTAL MONTHLY CIRCULATION

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>1963/64</u>	<u>1962/63</u>	<u>1961/62</u>
July	3,454	2,650	479
August	1,350	1,175	244
September	6,021	5,565	1,045
October	6,354	5,384	4,146
November	5,620	6,776	4,229
December	3,959	4,179	5,360
January	7,617	6,115	3,843
February	5,709	4,076	3,245
March	4,904/	4,457	2,790
April	3,311	3,688	2,430
May	3,346	3,719	2,528
June	2,448	2,310	2,012
Totals	54,103	50,094	30,351

I must say, parenthetically, that while we have never known, and have no way of finding out with any assurance, who takes the books we lose, we have some evidence that perhaps a group of high school boys are responsible for cleaning out our collections on human sexual behavior; we do know that our own students took an entirely mature attitude toward these materials during the three years they were available on open shelves. This points up one of the many hidden costs to education as well as to our budget of the use of the Library by non-Oakland people. Not only are these people at times unable to treat the property of the University with the same respect as do students and faculty, but we must adjust our programs to them. In general our librarians are prepared and have the necessary materials for the kind of assignments given by our faculty. We are unable, however, to cope with the unimaginative and overly broad topics assigned as high school term papers, and have not built a book collection capable of so doing. Recently I have been observing the expenditure of time at the Circulation Desk in chasing materials which are charged out, but for one reason or another have not come back at the end of a semester. Once again, in this area, it is primarily the non-Oakland community which is consuming the time, energy, and patience of our Library staff.

Four years ago we started a copying service by having a Premier Model Thermo-Fax at the Circulation Desk. From the beginning this has been a subsidized service because we wanted to make copying as cheap and as easy as possible in order to prevent or discourage the stealing of our materials. The Library bought this machine, charged a nickel a shot for copies. If we used a whole sheet of paper, it cost us five and a quarter cents to make a copy, exclusive of labor and amortization on the machine. Sometimes we used a half a sheet of paper, often we used two, particularly during the last year when the machine began to wear out and the quality of the reproduction was very poor. As the consumption of paper went up, so too did the investment of time from our student help at the Circulation Desk. After long investigation of Xerox and other less expensive copying devices, we finally installed a coin-operated Docustat machine. Although the Docustat was made to function at a quarter, we insisted that we could not have a machine which cost more than a dime. We are at present, therefore, subsidizing the Docustat in the amount of \$90 to \$100 a month. Because of the saving in labor, it is my opinion that this is a good long-range investment. This is an excellent copying machine, and I expect that over the next year or two the cost of making copies with it will drop markedly and our subsidy can be decreased. In the meantime, however, it has been interesting to observe the use of the machine and to realize that our subsidy is going to non-Oakland people in greater numbers than to our own students. Of course, this may be preventing some loss; but it would appear that whenever the University undertakes to subsidize a program for its students, it must also face the fact that it is subsidizing the community at large.

Throughout the last three years, we have worked out with the Library Committee methods for the budgeting of funds for the acquisition of new books. It is our opinion that the procedures which we have outlined allow for the maximum amount of responsibility to both librarians and teaching faculty while at the same time insuring some spending in all areas in which the university has a responsibility. These procedures in summary divide our acquisitions funds into:

Fund I. Subscriptions and standing orders: renewal of existing subscriptions, payments for added volumes for which the Library has deemed it more expedient to place standing orders, and new titles of the same nature. Because these represent long-range commitments, which must be supported by the faculty in years when the budget stays the same or grows smaller, new titles ordered on these funds have been approved by the Library Committee.

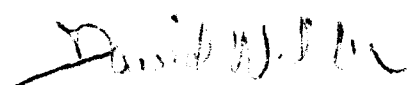
Fund II. Sets, block purchases, and research items: titles too large for funds allocated to departments, collections which can be purchased en block, and reference and bibliography items needed by librarians to support the use of our collections and to provide information for order and inter-library loan work. Decisions to purchase on this fund have been made jointly by the Librarian and Order Librarian, based on their knowledge of needs as well as recommendations and suggestions from teaching faculty and other librarians. Reports on the use of these funds are made to the Library Committee for its criticism.

Fund III. Allocations: titles are ordered against funds allocated to departments on request unless the Library feels that they should be charged to Fund I or II. It is anticipated that these will be mostly single-volume items, either in print or out-of-print, selected to fill a particular curricular need; but they are often multiple copies for use on the Reserve Shelf. If the item is op. and, therefore, likely to be costly in time or money, the initiator of the order is so informed before the order is placed.

In addition to departmental allocations, two Library projects are supported from Fund III. Our allocation for current publishing grew out of the discussions of both the Library Committee and librarians, stimulated by the development of Choice as a book selection tool. It was our feeling that too much professional time from the faculty and librarians was going into the selection of relatively obvious materials. We have, therefore, budgeted \$5,000 to be spent by one librarian during the year, using especially Choice, but any other relevant book selection aids. We estimate that this program will allow the purchase of approximately 20 percent of the items listed in Choice and hope that procedures can be worked out to materially reduce the load on faculty time. In thinking about the loss of books, I have become more and more convinced that short supply is a major cause. In the past we have tried to follow our library training and avoid duplication whenever possible. For one thing, this means waiting until we are sure missing titles will never be found before replacing them. This year we have budgeted \$3,500 which we intend to use to purchase immediately a copy of any book we cannot find. We are aware that many of these purchases will turn out to be duplicates, but we think this may be a reasonably quick and reliable way to select materials which should be duplicated. Percentage-wise we estimate our losses at less than two percent, and hope that the money allocated will both cover materials missing now and those discovered during the year.

My profound good wishes go to Oakland and its future librarians. None will have more fun and excitement in the job, or cooperation from the community, than I have. I thank one and all.

Respectfully submitted,


David Wilder
University Librarian

DW:rrs

cc: All faculty

July 23, 1964