

The University and The Library: Interaction and Change*

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In his essay on "The New Naturalism" in the book, *Changing Values on Campus*, Daniel Yankelovich calls special attention to three themes from his study of the student movement during the past seven years: "the stress on community rather than the individual, the apparent anti-intellectualism and emphasis on the non-rational, and the search for sacredness in nature." (p. 171.) More than one commentator of the social scene has noted the neo-Rousseauvian character of the student movement in the past decade, but few elements have disturbed teaching scholars and scholar-librarians more than the emphasis upon the nonrational with its stress on sensory experience and the concomitant inarticulate nature of its expression. As scholars, we are, after all, committed to the quest for truth through logical examination of many alternatives, and for most of us the outright rejection of orderly, rational methods means the ultimate de-

struction of all that we have built, including libraries, which so well represent the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of mankind. For those of us responsible for the management of society's institutions the disdain for technique, however trivial or sterile that technique may sometimes become, can ultimately be self-defeating for a populous and complex society. And even in that element so beloved by the counter-culture, the demonstration of compassion for one's fellow man, some of our colleagues in the social sciences have pointed out that compassion without knowledge can often be devastating to both giver and recipient. So the emergence of disrespect for our cultural heritage and for the authority of established institutions troubles us for very good reasons.

Yet the emphasis upon the need for community, the realization that there is more to poetry than scanning or to philosophy than an endless discussion of words, and an appreciation of the responsibilities of power are all very much needed correctives to our society. Where we in the

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traditional university culture would disagree would be in the method of achieving such goals. The emergence of a new naturalism without a recognition that there have been return-to-nature movements before, e.g. Rousseau in France and Wordsworth and his colleagues in England, is to hold a mistaken view of the newness of contemporary society. Perhaps it will be our special function in the academic community during the seventies to remind our students and to remind citizens generally that concern for the oppressed, working for social justice, and a sense of community did not suddenly come into existence in the early nineteen-sixties. They've been around for a long time in the human race generally and this country specifically for quite a while.

How does this relate to our theme today, "The University and the Library: Interaction and Change?" and the celebration of the formal opening of this new library which we all applaud? In a highly significant way. As an educational philosophy we are saying to the community and to ourselves that libraries and librarianship are important to the future of civilization, that they are important to this academic community and this state, and that students, faculty, and non-campus users who seek answers to society's problems can interact with each other in a more meaningful way in North Carolina State's new D. H. Hill Library. We are acknowledging that new answers may be found, that new light may be shed upon a variety of questions, and that teaching may be improved by the facilities now available. Thus our panel, and the other activities of today, while focusing on the future, testify also to our faith in the importance of learning and scholarship, to our belief in the significance of orderly, rational methods in improving society, and to our hope that mankind's previous experiences can still shed light upon contemporary problems. If we do no more than testify to that faith, then this day will have been significant not only in the history of North Carolina State University but in the history of scholarship as well.

However, we have come here to do more than that. The subject of this panel is interaction and change. Certainly all of us are aware of the need for change in our society and for change in our universities. Those of us connected with universities are very much aware of the need for greater flexibility and greater adaptability on the part of curricula and students. The recent report of the Shultz Committee on Undergraduate Education at Chapel Hill is only one example among many of the reexamination of how we achieve our educational objectives. In stressing the need for a multiplicity of choices for the bachelor's degree the Committee states: "The undergraduate experience must be based on a flexible program of offerings. Not all students are alike in personality, intellect, tastes, and aspirations. Not all professors are alike in style of mind, modes of relating to students, or educational convictions. Obviously no single form of undergraduate education will be universally suitable." In its attempt to grapple with the problems raised by that assumption the Shultz Committee then proposes a series of four additional programs or concentrations for undergraduate study including Prescribed Studies, Language and Culture Major, Divisional Major, and Elected Studies. I cite this example as only one of many with implications for the use of libraries. One might as easily mention the same strain toward a more responsive professional education that comes from Professor Edgar H. Schein's book on *Professional Education* for the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education. For if we are to move to a new kind of education, both at the professional and undergraduate level, that puts more emphasis upon the students being responsible for his own education, and his development of skills independently, with guidance from his professor, then the need for library resources and services will become more important, not less important, in his education. If we are serious about such educational innovations as self-paced study, independent study, concentrated study, small-group and seminar-tutorial methods, project- or problem-centered study, practicum or clinical

courses, work-study and off-campus internships, then I don't see how these can be accomplished without heavy library involvement. That these also present problems of new services and higher costs for the university library also must be pointed out and concern for such costs will be the responsibility of a far larger group than library directors. Perhaps my colleagues will address themselves to the implications of such educational changes for the library. Certainly as a result of improved learning centers in schools and the presence of TV our students are better prepared for college than ever and are better prepared to use libraries than ever. Yet few libraries in higher education have even begun to develop the multi-media resources now prevalent in good elementary and secondary schools.

In terms of library management, the seventies are going to be a very different period from the sixties. The past decade was one of tremendous expansion of staffs, resources, buildings, enrollments, graduate and professional programs, and newer media. The seventies will likely see a leveling off in such activities. We are already meeting taxpayer resistance to funding higher education and there seems every likelihood that we will be doing more for less. Meanwhile, despite the emergence of financial problems, librarians will have to deal with new and expensive technology, the program of copyright violation in terms of the Williams and Wilkins case, the strengthening of library networks, the changing nature of information in libraries from books, journals, and printed media generally, to a host of newer media such as video tapes, micromaterials in abundance, recordings, slides, and computer tapes. All of this comes at a time when there will remain a need for a large core book collection, both for undergraduate and graduate work, and a greater commitment to open access to libraries for everyone. No library whether at a large university, like N. C. State or a small church college with a few hundred students, can exploit resources of other libraries through impressive interlibrary networks without

sizeable expenditures for reference books, bibliographies, indexes and abstracting services. To cite only one example *Chemical Abstracts*, indispensable for work in many sciences, now costs libraries \$1,900 per year, excluding the quinquennial subject indexes. Add the CAS tapes and you have yet another cost factor.

Some help may be coming from the national level, though this is not an administration very sympathetic to libraries. The final emergence of bibliographic control at the national level through Title II-C of the Higher Education Act of 1965, the prospect for a national serials lending library for less used materials, the hope (and it's not much more than that) for better sharing of resources among libraries, all have potential for making our libraries more efficient and though probably not less economical. However, in terms of my opening remarks, I think we have to recognize that while we may be interested in more efficient and economical libraries, our patrons could not care less about this technological thrust of our society. Therefore the librarian himself is going to have to live with a higher frustration ratio as he seeks both to humanize his library for his patrons and also to make better use of the newer technology in an attempt to stabilize his costs. He must also contend, as a presumed establishmentarian, with periodic outbreaks against resources, such as increased mutilation and thievery, or security problems generally along with an egalitarianism which makes regulation for the good of the entire community more difficult than ever. In some cases directors also face the problem of library staffs who increasingly want to be a part of the decision-making process. In some ways his is not an enviable task.

If this were the whole story, of course, we would be prone to despair. Fortunately, it isn't, and our presence here today, if it does nothing else, is proof that we want the university library and its community to interact more responsibly and to be reasonably perceptive to the need for change. There are indications that faculty members are once more rallying to one of the major

resources, that administrations are recognizing that deferred purchases merely lead to greater costs down the road, and that higher education boards are waking up to what has already been accomplished in coordinating library programs. Library staffs are learning again that service is an important component of library operations and students are gradually becoming aware that what diminishes resources for one person diminishes them for all. Historians sometimes wonder why every gen-

eration must reinvent the wheel, but they notice it's a fairly common phenomenon. As we discuss these ideas together, I doubt that we'll come up with revolutionary answers, but I certainly hope that by interacting together we can become aware not just of our problems, but also our opportunities that lie ahead. If we achieve this only partially, the new D. H. Hill Library will be suitably launched on another generation of service to N. C. State University.

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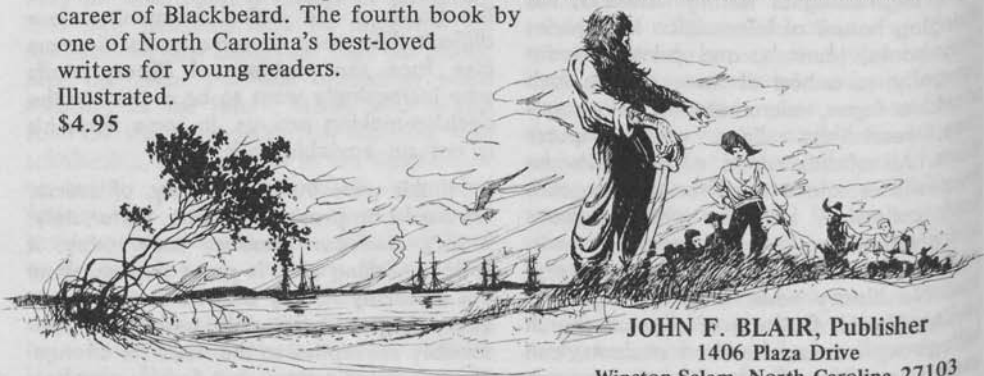
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