

# MIDDLEMANSHIP: Library New Careers

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Between the Professional and the Clerical is a Someone's land of library opportunity. We used to call those who work there, Library Technicians. The tasks they perform we now describe as paraprofessional, or semi-professional; but never, any more, I hope, as non-professional. What educational literature now labels as "new careers," represented in hospitals by *medical technicians*, in classrooms by *teacher aides*, and in media centers by *media aides*, find their library counterparts in whom the ALA committee has now christened the Library Technical Assistant.

## TOO MANY PROFESSIONALS DISSIPATE THEIR TALENTS

The resistance to this middle level, in our profession, I believe, is declining. That there was any opposition, ever, to this new library career is certainly understandable. All of us who have been in this good profession of ours for any length of time have experienced the inclination of those who control the purse strings to cut library corners. I have personally experienced attempts here, and abroad, to economize by employing clericals, or semi-professionals to perform professional tasks. But I have, also, witnessed too many professionals, often with post-master preparation, dissipating their talents on routines and mechanics that others could accomplish at least as well, and certainly more economically. That is why libraries cry out for a new career; for a middlemanship that will release professional effort to meet challenges and opportunities librarianship has never had before.

You may not agree with my philosophy of librarianship. After a half century in library work, I am convinced, more than ever, that we are the profession of destiny. I have written this many times in the nearly two million words of my published writings, which brought me the questionable distinction, according to that C&RL article on the writing habits of librarians, of leading in *quantity* those with subject doctorates. If there is any *quality* at all in this quantity, I believe it is in the writings related to my twelve professional crusades, ranging from my basic reference concept through my shotgun marriage of librarians and audio-visualists; from library history and its oral-visual dimensions through comparative librarianship; and from library education levels which *articulate lay library education* with professional *education for librarianship*, to the present, decade-long struggle to gain recognition for a middle level. In all of this professional evangelization, I suppose, I have suffered most from the accusations by the pragmatists that I am too theoretical; and by the failure of some of the sophisticates in our profession to discover any philosophy at all in my crusades.

## WE ARE NOT AN ANCILLARY PROFESSION

I love philosophy. Because of that, my writings are full of theories. My lecture for the Library Association of the United Kingdom, for example, redefined Reference, as I have tried continuously since. The genesis of the new AASL-DAVI Media Standards can be found in the Florida concept which began in 1946, and even before that, when I introduced the first audiovisual course for librarians at Peabody, as early as 1935. It took the *Wall Street Journal* to recognize, first, the new dimensions I had introduced into the Oral History concept; the *Library Journal* was second. And the other day, the *New Yorker* recognized the philosophy of the Library-College idea, at a time when one of our library journals thought the profession needed a counterpart for the theological "God is Dead" protest.

So I have the temerity to devote this paragraph to a philosophy of librarianship. I am amplifying in an essay and a book. Our professional effort is concerned with the only evidence of existence—the Generic Book. (The *Saturday Review* recognized my essay as philosophy, and made it the editorial for the first National Library Week.) We are not an ancillary profession as some of us contend. We can become primary if we will release ourselves from the housekeeping we have overcelebrated. To do what? For example, in education, lead the trend to independent study with a new and better kind of education; Library-College, and Medium School. In town and gown society, guide reform away from the negative, so-called non-violence on the streets and campuses to documented dialogue in our public and academic libraries. In science and technology, meet the so-called information explosion with a Special Libraries *implosion* that neither the Information Scientists nor the traditional Reference Librarians have yet attempted. Telegraphically, these are a few of the challenges and opportunities in my philosophy of librarianship.

I have welcomed automation and technology, primarily, as a release of professional time for professional challenges and opportunities. But I see even more help for the professional librarian in the growing acceptance of the middle level. Let me begin by recapping *Tex-Tec*. Forgive me, since I was one of the authors of this course of study for the education of the Library Technical Assistant in Texas junior colleges, and in the lower divisions, too, of senior colleges.

I stand by the *Tex-Tec* definition of the LTA:

*Library Technical Assistant. A para-professional library worker whose duties require knowledge and skill based on a minimum of two college years, including what is academically referred to as 'General education,' plus formal and informal library instruction.*

The only reservation I have ever had about this definition is the adoption of the professional term para-professional. You see, I am an old time admirer of Dr. Rhine, ESP, and Parapsychology. I believe in "para" as something beyond our present knowledge. What we mean, however, is the subsumed Webster definition: "associated in a subsidiary or accessory capacity." (New Collegiate, 1963, p. 610) You will note in *Tex-Tec* how meticulously we labeled our courses "Library Technical Assistance," "Library Public Assistance," Library Media Assistance."

For any one who will take the trouble to read *Tex-Tec*, with what Count Keyserling called "Creative Understanding," there is a whole new philosophy of LTA practice and education. In my notes, I have listed no fewer than 33 innovative approaches to library education and to library practice. I'd like to dialogue with you, about every one of them. But let me select a few that will represent our concept of this new career and the preparation for it.

First, you will discover (p. 5) a perspective of articulated library education, with an exhibit of four levels. These are an education counterpart for the Practice career ladder which we have exhibited on the opposite page. In both exhibits, we have articulated the paraprofessional and the clerical. Because we do not believe in a caste system, there are overlappings. We want no Berlin walls among them. Yet we have tried to make a distinction between Clerical and Para-professional practice and education, as between professional and paraprofessional.

In the case of practice, our exhibit shows grades from one through 15; salaries from \$3000 clerical through \$25,000 professional, based on 1967-68 schedules. The differentiations of duties were detailed in something we called Task Tallies, which were not, unfortunately, included in the book. Good articulation calls for some overlappings, and they do occur on the clerical-paraprofessional as well as on the paraprofessional-professional borders. These overlappings have always been present in library practice.

### LIBRARY EDUCATION HAS BEEN MORE LIBERAL THAN LIBRARY PRACTICE

I am sorry to say, however, that we have not overlapped quite as tolerantly in library education as in library practice. Generally speaking, I have contended, Library Education has been a little more liberal than library practice. The practitioner is more of a pragmatist. He likes to keep his feet on the ground. He is, more frequently than the library educator, a parrot of the cliché, "Tell it like it is." Usually, the library school teacher is more likely to quote the line from *La Mancha*: "It takes more courage to dream it like it should be." But in the case of overlappings it has been the practitioner, perhaps because of budget, who has been willing to let three levels cross the boundaries freely.

In education for librarianship, for example, in which I have headed an ALA accredited school longer, probably, than any one in the business, we've placed strong barriers between undergraduate and graduate programs. How many tearful young women have I had to console, these four decades, when they were confronted with the necessity of repeating the reference course they had as an undergraduate when they entered an ALA accredited graduate school. In 1941, at Peabody, I held the first conference, ever, on articulation. And although, since, we have had some guidelines set up—the so-called NCATE-ALA undergraduate program—there is still some heartbreak deciding later to acquire an ALA Master's on top of an NCATE bachelor's.

I see another cross to bear in the preparation of the LTA. Except this time it can be a double laceration. I hope not. I wouldn't blame the NCATE senior colleges if they put up a Berlin wall between their program and the

new junior college one. But *Tex-Tec* has dared to imply, if not suggest outright, an articulation throughout. In this plan there is a device called "catch-up," not related to Heinz in any way. It proposes that all of the techniques which have made graduate school deans raise eyebrows about the graduate quality of library school curricula be allocated to the junior college LTA program. NCATE undergraduates and ALA graduates who enter their respective programs without these techniques should be given a non-academic credit catchup in something we call a skills laboratory.

Telegraphically, here are some highlights of the other 32 innovations in the *Tex-Tec* concept of the middle level. There are other articulations as well as the one within library practice and library education. For example, two

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## Link Between Classroom, Library Offered By New Research Program

A NEW SOCIAL studies program which links classroom work with library research through student examination of developing national and social concerns is now available to high schools from University Microfilms, a Xerox Company, located in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Titled "Bridges to Inquiry," the new program for students, teachers, and librarians combines microfilm with printed materials. Six study topics are offered at present, each covering a social concern at the beginning of the century which continues unresolved today.

Topics include the effects of the automobile on society and the beginning of the conservation movement. Others deal with the impact of psychology, urban problems, social reforms and their causes, and changes in the aims of public education. Costs for each series range from \$113 to \$133.

In announcing "Bridges to Inquiry," University Microfilms' president Robert Asleson said, "All too often educational publishers produce materials which present a wealth of factual knowledge but fail to guide students in the inquiry process."

"Our program," he continued, "seeks to develop thinking skills—not simply memory skills—by combining independent study and research with group discussions, simulations, and role-playing."

Reference support of "Bridges to Inquiry" is provided by a library of periodicals on microfilm selected as valuable source material for independent study. To motivate classroom discussions, printed guides for students, teachers, and librarians accompany the periodicals. Techniques such as simulation and role-playing are incorporated to better involve students in the process of inquiry and problem-solving.

Because complete issues of periodicals are selected for the program, the microfilm can also be used to study other facets of American life during the period spanned by each periodical. Publication dates range from 1895 to 1925.

An illustrated folder with complete information about "Bridges to Inquiry" can be obtained by writing University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106.

usefulness however, will be in proportion to the support it receives in the future, and to the active interest and participation of libraries—academic, special, and public—throughout the state.

- 1—The North Carolina Union Catalog is a card catalog of main entries indicating the location of holdings, partial or complete, of over 100 public, academic and special libraries throughout the state of North Carolina, using National Union Catalog symbols.
- 2—Of these libraries, 18 were public libraries, 19 college libraries, and 5 were special libraries. The libraries which currently contribute cards to the center on a regular basis include:

North Carolina State Library, Raleigh  
 Pack Memorial Public, Asheville  
 Randolph County Library, Asheboro  
 Mitchell County Public, Bakersville  
 Appalachian State University, Boone  
 May Memorial Library, Burlington  
 Charlotte Public Library, Charlotte  
 Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte  
 Queens College Library, Charlotte  
 UNC at Charlotte, Charlotte  
 Western Carolina University, Cullowhee  
 Duke University, Durham  
 American Enka Corporation, Enka  
 Cumberland County Public Lib., Fayetteville  
 Greensboro Public Library, Greensboro  
 A & T College, Greensboro  
 Bennett College Library, Greensboro  
 Sheppard Memorial Library, Greenville  
 UNC at Greensboro, Greensboro  
 Guilford College Library, Greensboro  
 High Point Public Library, High Point

High Point College, High Point  
 Lenoir-Rhyne College, Hickory  
 Kinston Public Library, Kinston  
 Montreat College Library, Montreat  
 Pfeiffer College, Misenheimer, N. C.  
 Mount Olive Junior College, Mt. Olive  
 Olivia Rancey Library, Raleigh  
 N. C. Museum of Art, Raleigh  
 Richard B. Harrison Library, Raleigh  
 N. C. State University, Raleigh  
 Rowan Public Library, Salisbury  
 Catawba College Library, Salisbury  
 Wilmington Public Library, Wilmington  
 Wilson County Public Library, Wilson  
 Winston-Salem Public Library, Winston-Salem  
 Reynolds Tobacco Company, Winston-Salem  
 Wake Forest College Library, Winston-Salem  
 Duke University Med. Center Lib., Durham  
 Davidson College Library, Davidson  
 Durham Public Library, Durham  
 Gaston County Public Library, Gastonia

- 3—Funds made available by the Federal Government under Title III of the Library Services and Construction Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-511).
- 4—That is, a single center would be established rather than having functions shared by the State Library in Raleigh and the Center in Chapel Hill.
- 5—The North Carolina Libraries Services Network: A Preliminary Report of a Feasibility Study Sponsored by the State Board of Education, North Carolina Board of Higher Education, North Carolina Library Association, and North Carolina State Library. Raleigh, North Carolina, May 12, 1970.

## MIDDLEMANSHIP—Library New Careers

(Continued)

peripheries have caused librarianship some earthquakes in the last two decades, or more. One of these is the audiovisual movement; the other the Information Science explosion. Although the rabids in these two rebellions will not admit it, there are many parallels in these two peripheries. I have been deeply involved in both, since Florida State was the first library school in the world to require its graduates to be audiovisually educated; and we were one of six universities represented on the cover of ADI (before it became ASIS) journal, with programs in Information Science. Consequently, *Tex-Tec* has articulated throughout with these peripheries.

Other articulations are also anticipated in *Tex-Tec*. One of the toughest is with vocational education. All of my academic life I have rebelled against the authoritarian definition of the term "liberal" as applied to education. Our disciplines hierarchy has always impressed me as being the antagonist of true liberalism. Often their contention has boiled down to "my subject is more substantive than yours." In the middle ages, theology was tops. Today, the natural sciences are. Some of the Humanities are given the respect that goes to the aging. Sociology is still a little less respectable than some other disciplines; education is on the other side of the railroad tracks. And as for vocational education, no elite liberal would be caught dead in it.



## ALL SUBJECTS HAVE ELEMENTS OF LIBERAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Philosophically, I believe all subjects have elements of both liberal and vocational education within them. The Library discipline, and believe me we have a discipline as substantive as any, is a good example. Because of this, however, our articulation with vocational education presented an exciting challenge and opportunity; especially as we worked with two understanding vocational education leaders in the Texas Education Agency. Perhaps you will understand better than some of our reviewers just what we accomplished.

After these articulations, *Tex-Tec*, better in my opinion than ever before, sees a clear-cut middlemanship. It does not confuse the LTA and the clerical, as so many do, especially among the reluctant in our profession. The basic difference is that the LTA has a book involvement that the clerical never has. And that book involvement requires that general education the junior collegier, or the student in the lower division of the senior college, gets; and the high school graduate does not get, at least as part of his secondary schooling. I refer you to the *Tex-Tec* syllabi for Technical Assistance, for Public Assistance, for Media Assistance, in particular, for illustration. But never forget, that in the *Tex-Tec* concept of articulation, the middle level is based on the clerical just as the professional is on the paraprofessional.

As the next *Tex-Tec* innovation, I point to the new dimensions suggested for the differentiated "In-Service" and "On-the-Job" trainings. Recommended is that some libraries of all four types—academic, public, school, special—readjust some staff shortages by releasing professional time now devoted to semi-professional and even clerical tasks to create some prototype paraprofessional positions. Working directly with the nearest junior college offering an LTA program, or proposing to start one, activates a work-study arrangement which would fill staff vacancies immediately. Either work-study plan could be adopted.

Under one plan two students team up to fill a library staff position. One term, *student A* studies in the morning, works in the afternoon; *Student B* does the opposite. The library has a full-time vacancy filled by two people for a contracted period of three years, paying each of the two students half the budgeted salary, with increases provided for increasing competence. At the end of that period the library may have two full-time paraprofessionals, or potential professionals who could be encouraged to further professional preparation. This plan works well where the library and the education agency are closely located. The other plan alternates the co-ops every term, each team member working full time every other term.

Perhaps these half dozen or more examples of *Tex-Tec* innovations are of greater interest to library practice. Now let me parade a few dimensions in the *Tex-Tec* concept of LTA education. The first course, titled simply *Library Use* is an innovative effort in an area that has frustrated most of us at one time or another. I have taught library use in school and college for four decades. This has included periods in third, fourth and sixth grades; junior and senior high; college freshman orientation, English course units; one-hour

courses, both elective and required; and trail-blazing with a required course for all graduate students on Library Search and Research. I wrote a text for *Scholastic* as early as 1928; a pioneer one on encyclopedia use for *Compton's*; co-authored one for Barnes & Noble; prototyped another for graduate students' search course in *Collier's*; and I have forgotten how many more.

In *Tex-Tec* I drew the assignment for that course. I wanted to do something better than anything I knew in the vast literature on library use. This course had to serve both as a required for *all* junior college freshmen, and as a gateway for those whom we hoped to recruit for LTA, first, and perhaps ultimately for librarianship, professional. Look at what we came out with. And I say *we* because the whole *Tex-Tec* team, and the advisory committee, too, breathed life into my work, again and again.

If I bubble about some of the 15 units more than about others, it is only because time forces me to select. Unit one, titled "Library Orientation" tries to overcome staff and student frustrations caused by the customary Cook's tour during Freshman Orientation week. You may not think much of the exercises; but try them once. Note that from the start I eliminate the term that has always been anathema to me—"nonbook materials." We teach the Generic Book from the beginning; a film, a transparency overlay, a videotape, a remote computer console, all are as much a book as some print bound in hard covers.

What do you think of Unit VIII, "Sources for the Courses" aside from the corny title? Or Unit IX, the *Good Books*, in which the seeds for a lifetime reading habit, and private library collecting are hopefully planted by comparing the Five-Foot Shelf of Harvard President Elliot's *Classics* with Chicago President Hutchins' Western World, only, *Classics*.

The two last units aim to prepare freshmen for college and career life. Unit XIV re-orientes library use to the independent study trend in American Colleges. Gateways to librarianship are opened, both on the paraprofessional and professional levels in Unit XV. How many freshmen will be recruited to the new career of middlemanship from this required library use course remains to be seen. But the freshmen who select librarianship over such other junior college new career opportunities as medicine, aviation, teaching, etc. will embark, I believe on a curriculum of intrigue, and excitement.

The first LTA course is titled *The Library Technical Assistant*, and overviews middlemanship, relating it to all levels of library work. Then the student settles down to the routines and techniques of library assistance. Course two, developed by Tom Wilkinson of El Centro Junior College, reveals the experience of one who has taught the junior college program. His use of audiovisual media and his organization of acquisitions, classifications, and cataloging assistance deserve comparative, examination by any one who contemplates teaching junior college students. Note, particularly, the exercises Tom has devised. The tools he introduces, especially bibliographic, underwrite the desirability of Junior College general education.

What follows in the sequence is Mayrelee Newman's course on Public Services Assistance. Middlemanship in circulation and reference highlights the instruction. In the former, changing systems are re-enforced with skills in such

hardware as photocopying, automatic systems, including computer applications. Sensitivity, the LTA student is introduced to the Library's information function, his role in relation to that of the professional; and to the use of such accessories as microforms and teaching machines.

The last course, by Richard Smith and William Tucker concentrates on the library media we have called audiovisual. From graphics, through projections and transmissions, the student learns to operate and maintain equipment related to films, filmstrips, slides, transparencies, opaques; to discs and tapes. There is considerable attention to data processing, to the organization of a media center, and to media production.

In overview, these are some of the dimensions of the *Tex-Tec* syllabi. I believe any junior college, undertaking LTA education needs to begin with something like this program. Suggestions for practice, field work, observation are described throughout, and innovated in the work-study and skills laboratory ideas.

*Tex-Tec* has, besides, placed the LTA program in the Junior College educational climate. Any one who has worked in this movement that began at Joliet, Illinois some years ago is caught up by the courage of the community College prospect. I happen to believe in College for all, philosophically, historically, educationally. Repeatedly I have written and spoken my dissent with the elitism position of the Ivy League. The Junior College is boldly designing a post-secondary program that believes all high school graduates are higher educable.

## LIBRARY EDUCATION BELONGS IN THE JUNIOR COLLEGE

If for no other reason, library education belongs in the community junior college. It is the faith of our profession that learning of all mankind should be continuous from birth to death. In what other setting in our entire educational system is the climate more appropriate for the beginning of a library career. The someone's land of library opportunity is the American junior college. And the someone who will spur our profession to its rendezvous with destiny could well be the new generation of Library Technical Assistants.

(Note: This speech was delivered by Dr. Shores at the Library Technical Assistant Workshop sponsored by Appalachian State University, North Carolina Department of Community Colleges, North Carolina Library Association, and Central Piedmont Community College which was held on the Central Piedmont Community College campus on May 11, 1970.)

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## CONFERENCE ON AGING

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"Each of the nine Committees dealing with needs also will consider ways of meetings needs, which are called *Needs Meeting Mechanisms*. The mechanisms will be the subjects as well for separate and overall study." Five of the Technical Committees will deal specifically with these studies.

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|---------------------------------------|--|
| (1) Planning                          | (4) Training                                   |
| (2) Facilities, Programs and Services | (5) Government and Non-Government Organization |
| (3) Research and Demonstration        | (Continued)                                    |