

## Extended College Library Service to Teachers

*The generous utilization of nonbook teaching materials at the New Jersey State Teachers College, at Montclair, justifies the description here given jointly by Miss Cook, the college librarian, and Miss Heimers, director of the teaching aids service in the library.*

THE COLLEGE LIBRARIAN derives much pleasure from hearing his library referred to as "the heart of the college." In particular, the librarian of a teachers' college or school of education points with pride to a per capita circulation of books four or five times that of the liberal arts college, as reported by Branscomb in *Teaching With Books*. But as teaching methods change it has become more and more necessary that the college library which has a part in the preparation of teachers provide not only the traditional library materials, *i.e.*, books, pamphlets, magazines, and pictures, but every sort of teaching aid, with the equipment necessary for its use.

In the course of this paper the expression "teaching aid" will be used frequently. The collection at the New Jersey State Teachers College, at Montclair, amassed and administered by one of the authors of this article, includes charts, exhibits, slides and film slides, educational games, graphs, pictures, posters, maps, models, radio scripts, motion picture stills and scenarios, records and recordings, and various illustrated pamphlets and other publications.

Units of work, lesson plans, the newest editions of textbooks, and files of state and local courses of study may well be considered a part of such a collection. The many weekly and monthly periodical services available for classroom use (*World News of the Week*, *Current Events*, *Le Petit Journal*, *Science News-Letter*, are familiar examples) deserve a place. The student teacher will also use globes, sand tables, relief maps made of all sorts of easily secured materials, dolls and puppets, and many other things which she and her pupils will be stimulated to make by the materials available to her. Films, omitted here, are discussed later in this article.

The collection of teaching aids built up at Montclair during the past six years has been made available to students and former students of the college, and selected lists for teachers in many subject fields have been published. Believing that the principles and procedures developed there may be of interest and value to librarians in similar institutions, the following summary has been prepared, with suggestions for the establishment of similar departments in other teachers' college libraries.

### *Newer Teaching Methods*

In recent months a great deal has been said and written about "learning the G.I. way." Both educational periodicals and daily papers have been full of articles describing the Army and Navy methods of

training, with sand tables, demonstrations, film slides, motion pictures, etc. It is deplorable that training for war was needed to remind teachers that the most effective methods have always included the use of multisensory aids. The fundamental idea of "learning by doing" has been foremost in the manual training and vocational school and in the kindergarten and primary grades. Unfortunately, as the subject matter to be taught becomes more diversified and more complex, the teacher is apt to lose sight of the child's natural ways of learning and tries to get along, too often, with textbook and recitation, and even with the lecture, in the high school grades.

There are many reasons for unimaginative methods of teaching. Probably the most nearly universal is that the teachers find difficulty in laying their hands on inspirational materials which lead to creative activity for both teacher and pupil and away from imitation and verbal reproduction. Perhaps the teacher has fallen a prey to the common misconception of the term "visual aids," believes that motion pictures are the only materials to which the term may be applied, and is unable to use them for lack of equipment. After the war probably few schools will be without at least one sound projector, but even if no more are available teachers need not be handicapped in their use of multisensory aids.

The art teacher has never attempted to get along without paper and crayons. Perhaps the music teacher may have had to do without a piano, a radio, and even a phonograph and records, but she has always had a pitch pipe, her own voice, and the voices of her pupils for demonstration. Most of us learned geometry without ever going out to compute the height of the school building by measuring its shadow. Also, we read laboriously in Latin about a day in a Roman house, looked apatheti-

cally at a blurred picture in the textbook, and were denied the joy of making a model of clay, salt, and flour, or plasticine, and peopling it with a family of dolls in toga and tunic.

### *Responsibilities of the College Library*

The library of a college preparing teachers has a great responsibility. It should provide not only the stimulus of books and of the information embodied in the printed word but also the actual materials with which the prospective teacher will work. Many teachers' college libraries have exhibit collections of textbooks, largely through the generosity and vision of the publishers. But these collections have now become almost static because of restrictions on paper. The collection of teaching aids is under no such restrictions. The sources from which one may secure pictures, graphs and charts, pamphlets, models, blueprints, film slides, maps, etc., are practically unlimited. And the resources of the human imagination, when stimulated to creative effort by all these riches, are unlimited also.

It is, then, the belief of the authors of this paper that the library in a college preparing teachers should include a department which might be termed a laboratory for teaching methods. This department should contain samples of all the types of teaching aids which have been enumerated, and many more. It should contain materials for every subject field in which the students of the college are preparing to teach and, if possible, for every phase of those fields. It should have, for demonstration purposes, slides of all sorts, records, and recordings. It should have full charge of all the equipment for the use of these materials. A member of the library staff should be responsible not only for scheduling the use of this equipment and keeping it in good condition but he should be able to instruct the college students in its use.

The centralization of these materials and this equipment in the college library has many advantages. It gives the librarian the opportunity to extend his services into every phase of the curriculum and keeps the library constantly within the attention of every instructor and every student. It makes every member of the library staff more acutely aware of the actual needs of teachers and prospective teachers, less inclined to the academic isolationism into which many librarians are apt to fall, more flexible in his use of the technical processes of librarianship, and more imaginative in his response to calls for assistance and in his approach to those who try to teach without the library's resources.

The interrelationships among the departments of the college are already evident in the correlation of instruction in art, music, literature, geography, and history, on the one hand, and in mathematics, science, and geography, on the other. The materials collected at Montclair as teaching aids indicate that equally close relationships exist between subjects previously considered alien to one another. We are learning that a student may want material on rhythm without having any thought of a song, a poem, or a dance. He wants a bridge, a landscape, or a geometrical pattern. Again, the importance of harmonics to the violinist is obvious, but the student of physics, mathematics, or physiology may be interested in them, too. The concentration of these materials in the college library, therefore, is just as necessary as the centralization in the library of books which pertain to two or many fields, and the cataloging of them just as rewarding as making of subject entries for useful books.

The assembling in one place of the equipment necessary for the fullest use of many of the teaching aids is similarly important. First, it makes expensive duplication almost unnecessary. By scheduling its use through

one agency, every piece can be utilized to the fullest extent, instead of being allowed to lie idle for weeks in one teacher's closet. A few rooms may be furnished with a screen and dark shades and made acoustically acceptable for all classes, and thus there can be avoided the great expense of darkening and equipping the classroom of every teacher who intends to make occasional use of films, slides, or opaque projection.

Experience shows, of course, that duplication of some machines is necessary. The music department needs a phonograph and records in each music classroom. But the "listening room" for the use of students should be attached to and administered by the library, which will provide the records.

#### *Centralization of Control*

Second, the centralization of control places the responsibility for the condition of equipment upon the one person who administers it. If this person is also responsible for training students and faculty members to use the machines and schedules these trained operators whenever the machines are in use, the possibility of damage and costly repairs is minimized.

Third, the fact that excessive duplication of equipment is avoided means that it is possible to have a sample of every type of audio-visual equipment without unreasonable expenditure. A student graduating from a teacher-training institution should be familiar with the operation of the following: sound motion picture projector, opaque projector with 3 by 4 inch slide attachment, overhead slide projector, projector for 2 by 2 inch slides and film slides, microfilm reader, phonograph, radio, and playback for using radio transcriptions and speech recordings played at thirty-three and one-third revolutions per minute.

The development of a teaching aids laboratory involves procedures on five levels:

planning, acquisition, indexing or cataloging, physical preparation of materials, and use. Experience during the past six years has shown the methods which will be described to be, in the language of the mathematician, both necessary and sufficient. Procedures which experience proved valueless have been discarded and others which seemed indispensable have been introduced. Many standard library practices have been violated.

### *Planning*

It may be assumed that the librarian who has decided to add a teaching aids department will find a way to house it. There may be, in a crowded library, sufficient empty shelves so that, by shifting books, a section of stacks can be devoted to these materials. There may be a small classroom or office next to the library or across the hall. One attic or basement room, if properly arranged, will do for the nuclear collection, and another for the equipment. As its usefulness is demonstrated, the administrative officers of the college may be persuaded of the need for an accessible room, special cases, vertical and card files, display cases, and bulletin boards. If a college is so fortunate as to have a library building, the problem is reduced to that of procuring equipment and deciding where to locate it.

No doubt the college already owns many materials which should be collected in a central place. The arguments given above soon convince the administration that the centralization of equipment is both economical and efficient. The members of the departments of instruction respond to other arguments. The budget of the science department must cover chemicals, electrical equipment, living and preserved specimens, as well as test tubes and laboratory tables. If those concerned can be assured of the availability of projectors and screens, they

will be glad to dispense with expenditure of their own funds for them. Also, a department which has had the exclusive use of certain equipment may be persuaded to give it up when its members find that it will be used by trained operators so that they need no longer be responsible for its operation and repair. Finally, instructors soon learn that the librarians have access to many more sources of films, slides, records, etc., than they have, and discover with delight the pleasures of using this material when it is borrowed, rented, or, in extreme cases, purchased through the library as a clearinghouse, when a room is prepared and an operator assigned, and when they are notified of materials secured for the use of others which will have value for them as well.

Though the conviction cannot be emphasized too strongly that films and film slides are not by any means the only important media for audio-visual instruction, the establishment in the college library of a central bureau for their acquisition and distribution is without doubt the most effective method of persuading the whole college that the library is the best source of *all* teaching materials.

### *Equipment and Furniture*

It was suggested earlier that a portion of the stacks might be cleared to house the initial collection of teaching aids. This is fairly satisfactory, in the beginning, for units which may be filed in envelopes or small boxes and for sets of pamphlets in pamphlet cases. However, as the collection grows and larger and more bulky or awkward materials are added, it is necessary to have closets or cabinets built especially to house them. These would include cabinets of odd sizes and shapes, many of which are not available from library or school supply houses and which would therefore have to be made to order.

However, it should be pointed out that glass display cases, both wall and table models, should be added to the equipment as early as possible. The display of materials is not only a constant reminder to students and faculty that the service is available, but it should be a frequent task of students to prepare exhibits under the direction of the teaching aids specialist or of other members of the instructional staff.

### *Staff*

The third step in planning a teaching aids laboratory involves personnel. From what has already been written here, it is evident that the staff member in charge of this service must have had a liberal education in the broadest sense. Some knowledge of library techniques is useful, but it is not so important as teaching experience or as an experience in a teachers' college library long enough to make one aware of the problems which teachers face. Briefly, the administrator of this department must combine the qualities of teacher, reference librarian, cataloger, and collector, with persuasiveness, tact, accuracy, interest in detail, and imagination. A member of the reference staff with teaching experience would probably be the best choice. It is of the utmost importance that every member of the staff be convinced that the materials to be handled are at least as important as books and should be treated with the same regard.

The physical preparation of the materials and the typing and filing of catalog and other cards may be handled by members of the cataloging or acquisitions department or, better, by student assistants or apprentices who, while rendering service to the library, are at the same time preparing themselves to take charge of teaching aids collections in their own schools.

When the teaching aids department has been provided with a home, a minimum of equipment, and the services of a staff, the

final step in planning for its development is reached. It is at this point that a detailed study of the curriculum is necessary. In order to be able to choose teaching materials one must be fully acquainted with every course in the college curriculum and with the courses of study for the grades and subjects which the students of the college are preparing to teach. The members of the reference staff will be most helpful at this stage. They can contribute a great deal from their experience with the students who come to them for help in preparing lesson plans, units of work, reports, etc.

### *Possibilities for service*

However, the requests of students are necessarily much narrower than the possibilities for service. These may be explored in a number of ways. This research should begin with examination of the catalog descriptions of the courses given at the college and include a study of the outlines used by the instructors, if these are available. An alert library staff will be fairly well aware of the contents of most of the courses before this enquiry is made.

While courses of study used in various parts of the country may vary in details, the actual body of knowledge to be covered lies within certain limits and examination of one or two courses in each field will yield a fairly comprehensive picture of the information to be acquired by pupils of any grade. By adding to this information that derived from examination of two or three widely used textbooks for each grade and subject, the teaching aids librarian is able to judge with considerable accuracy whether or not any given piece of information or graphic presentation will fit into the curriculum of the college or fit the grades and subjects in which its graduates will teach.

When the subject matter to be covered is clearly in mind, it is simple to decide

which materials to acquire and to find where to get them. A number of agencies are distributing such information. The *A.L.A. Booklist*, the *Library Journal*, and the Wilson Company publish lists of "free and inexpensive materials." With the exception of the Wilson Company's *Educational Film Catalog*, however, these are not directed specifically toward education. The Teaching Aids Service of the library of the New Jersey State Teachers College, at Montclair, has, since 1938, published lists of teaching aids in sixteen subject fields. These represent extensive research in most of the subjects covered by the secondary curriculum and in many sections of the elementary curriculum as well. A price list of these publications will be sent to enquirers upon request. In addition, the service is glad to give information from its files on subjects not covered by the printed lists and to supplement the lists with up-to-date information received since their publication. The work done by the *Educational Film Catalog*, however, is not duplicated.

#### *Acquisition*

In beginning to collect teaching materials, it is wise to choose some items for each department of instruction. The advantages of such impartiality outweigh the disadvantages. While an embryonic collection of fifty items offers little for any one course, it does give to everyone a foretaste of riches to come and a sense of impartiality in service which the library, of course, fosters at all cost.

The publications of the Montclair Teaching Aids Service list many items which cost as little as five, ten, and twenty-five cents. It is recommended that libraries begin with these: their low cost is no index of their value, and a large collection may be acquired in a short time, with little effort and small expense. A form postal

card may be made up and mimeographed in lots of two hundred or more. A printed or typed form with the name of the college as heading carries much more weight with manufacturers and publishers than a handwritten card, and many things for which a low charge is usually made may be sent free if the card brings out clearly the purposes for which the material will be used. A warning should be given here against permitting students to write for materials. They are careless and their wording is ineffective, in most cases. In any event, each card should be dated and should bear the signature of a library official.

There need be no hesitation about using, in the classroom, materials supplied by manufacturers. Very few contain advertising other than the name and address of the firm. Frequently these materials are written by educational departments and are intended to give consumers (including school children) accurate information upon the sources, manufacturing processes, and uses of their products. Naturally the manufacturer is the best source of such information and the persons who prepare the material are recognized as experts.

It will be noted that films have not been mentioned as a part of these collections. The authors believe that no attempt should be made to purchase an adequate collection of sound films for this department. Those desired for classroom use in the college may be borrowed or rented, and it need not be a function of this service to provide them for use in other schools. There are several arguments in favor of such a policy: (1) many films become obsolete in a year or two under present conditions; (2) the cost of original purchase, plus replacement footage, is further increased by the necessity for staff to examine, repair, and handle the stock; and (3) provision must be made for safe storage in a cool dry room. It has been found quite feasible to borrow and rent

films from various parts of the country, and infinitely cheaper.

### *Classification*

The scheme of classification for a collection of teaching aids should be similar to that commonly used in a vertical file or information file, *i.e.*, an alphabetical arrangement by subjects. However, to be practical, the scheme should correspond as closely as possible to the departments of instruction. For that reason an arrangement by subject which has some of the flexibility and expansibility of a numerical system seems advisable. Much material falls into such large groups as "Science," "History," "Mathematics," with such subdivisions as "Science—Chemistry," "Science—Physics," "History—France," and "Mathematics—Algebra." Specific headings, such as "Electricity," may be used because the materials under them are applicable to many fields.

### *Cataloging and Physical Preparation of Units*

Details of these routines have no place in a paper of this nature. It may be stated, however, that certain variations of standard library methods have been found necessary. Specifically, there are two types of entries which have been found indispensable. The first is in a correspondence file, in which letters and postals requesting materials are recorded, together with the replies. Each item is dated. These entries, made in longhand at the time of sending or receiving mail, are filed alphabetically under the names of the firms or institutions addressed. They make it unnecessary to keep a file of letters and carbons and render it possible to see at a glance the extent of dealing with each correspondent.

The second entry is in the information cards. These are subject entries filed in the subject catalog of teaching aids. In-

stead of describing units actually in the teaching aids collection, however, they give information on available films and on expensive materials (such as globes, wall-maps, screens, and other projection equipment), as well as references to individual pamphlets, illustrated books, sets of pictures, etc., which are elsewhere in the library's collection. Many of these entries result from careful analysis of picture and film catalogs and again, as in the case of the correspondence cards, obviate the necessity of keeping on file a bulky collection of catalogs which are themselves poorly classified and inadequately indexed.

### *Use of Materials*

The most important function of the teaching aids laboratory is to stimulate teachers and pupils to create. For example, the teacher of fifth and sixth grade social studies in a New Jersey school borrowed materials for a Pan American Day exhibit. The pupils, stimulated by these materials, made geography and nature study slides relating to their study of Latin America. They built a scale model of the Panama Canal. Then they dressed dolls in the costumes of Latin American countries, using books showing how to make and dress dolls and studying pictures in the *National Geographic Magazine* for authenticity. The aid of the sewing teacher was enlisted, and the activities of four departments (social studies, science, mathematics, and sewing) were correlated. The work could have been expanded still further by making puppets instead of dolls; and, with the help of English, music, and physical education teachers, a play might have been written and produced, with songs and dances in costume by members of the class as well as by puppets.

This is merely one example of the use to which the teaching aids laboratory can be

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provide no general criteria for the housing of "an ideal growing collection." It seems hardly possible that useful estimates could be devised.

For many years the National Association of State Libraries has discussed the feasibility of central clearinghouses in states or regions to receive and distribute printed matter for appropriate participating members. Such a clearinghouse for local imprints has the approval of thirteen of the libraries in the present group (including two colleges), and it is worth considering whether state libraries and academic institutions could not join forces in one common agency in each designated area. Some

of the librarians here consulted (two of them at colleges) are lukewarm about a clearinghouse; two, both at colleges, are against it; and three of those at universities express no opinion.

A wide variation of figures and estimates, both exact and indefinite, was returned in answer to an itemized enquiry into the strength of local imprints collections. Rather than to generalize and summarize here as in the foregoing paragraphs, a presentation of the answers in tabular form may be more effective. In a dozen instances no statistics were given or available. With one exception, all of these were cases at state institutions.

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put for the enrichment of teaching. Instances could be multiplied indefinitely but one is sufficient to show how the services of the library in a teacher-training institution

can be extended, not only beyond the campus, but beyond the intangible bounds of the actual curriculum of the institution.