

The Liberal Arts Woman's College Library in the Present Emergency

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In replying to the questionnaire sent out by the A.C.R.L. Committee on National Defense Services each of the woman's college librarians pointed out the obvious fact that Parts I and II concerning industrial mobilization do not concern them directly, but each pointed out that the defense program and the condition of international affairs had stimulated an increased interest which evidenced itself no less certainly on the campus of the woman's college than in technological schools.

The idea chiefly in the minds of faculty, administration, and students is concerned with knowing the facts about the current crisis and interpreting the meaning of events, on the basis of such knowledge determining the place of the college woman in the present crisis, and providing the necessary facilities for training her to fill this place. To this end several colleges are cooperating with such Federal agencies as the National Conference on Defense, and are taking an active part with such agencies by becoming members of various boards. The results of such experience and investigation are stated very adequately by Miss McCrum of Wellesley and seem to be quite representative of the prevailing attitude: "Lines of procedure have been suggested to us by those who have a right to speak with

authority. They tell us that regular study, investigation of source material of a contemporary kind, and the promotion of a campus atmosphere which helps students to live simply, think quietly, and behave tolerantly are the best preparations our students can have for meeting the emergency as it increases." The dean of women at the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina, as a member of the defense commission, is leading the thought there to the idea that "Women in defense of home democracy must buy more intelligently, must budget the home garden for health, must produce more food in their kitchens, must have less waste in cookery, must use more whole grain, must provide more recreation in the home, and more hobbies for building home morale."

Naturally as these specific ideas take greater hold on each campus, there devolves upon the library the task of increasing the speed, efficiency, and enthusiasm of its service and in keeping the latest information available for the students, both for their personal reading and for courses which are being added to the curriculum along these new lines of interest, as well as to care for the shift of emphasis in already established courses.

In most cases, however, the librarian points out that, while it is essential that the library staff be constantly alert to current interests, always informed about

them, and provided with up-to-date materials on them, the position of the library and the interest of the staff must of necessity merely supplement the general interest and activity of the campus as a whole. It is the opinion of Mrs. Little of Mills College on this point that "We can do little more than choose the best material we can find and display it to catch the attention of the public. Those interested will read. We cannot force the others."

Aggressive Leadership Needed

While this is a more negative attitude than most of the librarians indicated, it, nevertheless, is the consistent idea that the definite aggressive leadership must be assumed by the faculty and student body. If and when the students have forum discussions of foreign affairs and aims and methods of the totalitarian powers, when the faculty members add new courses on trade relations, then the library staff should cooperative to the limit of its ability. This cooperation has taken various forms. In some cases the leaders of the student groups consult with the librarians about reading lists on the subjects in which they are interested; on some campuses there is a student library committee which conducts a column in the weekly newspaper. Libraries have had attractive displays of books on current international problems; they have devised individual methods of making the new books more interesting.

However, the contributions which the library staff is either called upon or permitted to make are in direct proportion to the enthusiasm on the campus. Stephens and Mills college reports indicate no particularly organized defense program or widespread interest as compared with Russell Sage, where extracurricular activities

have been supplanted by an organized civilian defense movement, which includes the entire student body as well as the local townspeople who are interested in attending the special training classes. Courses are given in clothing, emergency feeding and nutrition, emergency nursing and everyday mechanics, in civilian activities, in censorship and military intelligence, forum leadership, science techniques, and teaching cooking and sewing skills. Forums are held for special community groups—the Junior League, women's clubs, etc. The college supplies each group with leadership, books, discussion outlines, and illustrative materials. The local radio station broadcasts town meeting and round table discussions, sketches dramatizing the historic role of women in the defense of democracy.

At Stephens and Mills the librarians report very little increased or diverted activity along defense lines, while at Russell Sage the library staff has become the focal point of their outlined program. Special literature of all kinds has to be provided, as well as pamphlets and textbooks for the new extracurricular courses. Radio program material and lists for speakers are in constant demand. The nonstudent participators in the local project are also supplied with materials from the Russell Sage library, and the services of the reference department are at the disposal of the entire community.

Summary of Answers to Questions in Part III

In reporting directly on the answers made on the questionnaire the simplest method appears to be to give a composite statement which includes the prevailing views expressed on each, as well as any interesting side remarks and opinions.

The following table shows in what proportion the interest in the subjects has increased or remained static:

TABLE I
Demands for Material on Current Problems

	Number of Libraries Reporting No Increase	Number of Libraries Reporting Some Increase	Number of Libraries Reporting Great Increase
1. Aims and character of the totalitarian powers		5	4
2. International co-operation		7	2
3. Military and economic problems	1	6	2
4. Propaganda methods	1	6	2
5. Trade relations		9	1
6. Unemployment	2	6	1
7. Youth problems	2	4	2

The comments given on these various subjects prove more interesting than the figures of the table.

1. Aims and character of the totalitarian powers seem to have been the basis for numerous new courses. Mt. Holyoke has new courses on the modern history of Russia, the modern history of France; Harvard and Radcliffe are collaborating to offer a new course on the present emergency. However, material on this subject more than any other mentioned is in demand because of general interest and background material for further study on the present situation. It is also the most talked about subject at forums and discussion groups.

2 and 5. The emphasis on international cooperation and on trade relations has shifted definitely to South and Central America. Wellesley offers a new course in "Social Systems in Latin America" and is adding to its collection of texts on the subject the publications of the Pan American Union, U.S. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, and the U.S. Traffic Commission. Stephens is planning to offer

a survey course on Latin America. At Mills' summer session for adults there are workshops in Hispanic-American and Far Eastern problems.

3. The economic problems prevail in interest over the essentially military. Mt. Holyoke offers new courses on economic and social history of modern Europe, and economics of war, along with Europe 1914 to the present. Agnes Scott continues to give a year course on modern European history.

4. In dealing with propaganda the college student is anxious to discriminate between true and false reports and is demanding skilled courses in propaganda analysis, as well as all available reading material to illustrate types of propaganda being issued from any source today. Wellesley during the past year borrowed from Harvard its collection of French newspapers published since the fall of France. The library of Wellesley is now in the process of collecting propaganda leaflets, pamphlets issued mainly just now by the British and German libraries of information in this country, the object being not only to give information now, but to "furnish grist at some future date for an analysis of propaganda used in the second world war."

6. The problems of labor and unemployment, which have developed an economic importance in recent months in connection with defense, have increased the interest of the student in a marked manner. Mt. Holyoke indicates 100 per cent increase in enrolment in courses in labor problems.

7. Various phases of the "youth problem" are being considered on different campuses, from different viewpoints and out of varying backgrounds. At Radcliffe the presence of a refugee student has

aroused the interest of the students there in the problems of students in countries now at war. Mt. Holyoke reports 5 per cent of the student body enrolled in a new course on "Youth and Social Change." The library of the Woman's College at the University of North Carolina is having increased demands for survey material on North Carolina children and youth problems, housing, nutrition, and related subjects.

Other Lines of Interest

In addition to the subjects listed on the questionnaire, other lines of interest are indicated by courses to fill a need not evidenced before. Mt. Holyoke has three new courses of particular interest. One is concerned with the geological history of the immediate vicinity of South Hadley. Students working with faculty members under the auspices of the United States Geological Survey are mapping the local area. The department of physics offers a course in photographic principles and methods and one in radio communication and television. Simmons is offering a new course in public welfare.

With regard to the need for additional books for new subjects, most libraries found that the added courses and interests of the students demanded the purchase of specialized and up-to-date material. Only one reported no particularly new courses and no need for specific buying because of new events beyond what ordinarily would have been thought adequate. On the other campuses the library buying was handled through the ordinary channels for new course material, the amount varying in most cases with the amount of money at the disposal of the library for the purposes. Although this cannot be taken as a general indication of purchases on the average

campus, Wellesley has added four hundred volumes to its special "War Shelf" in the last sixteen months.

The majority of librarians stated a definite value in pamphlet material and a definite effort to build up collections. The chief value in these to most is in their contemporaneous quality. Wellesley has added 350 publications of various government (American, British, French) agencies in the last year, in addition to continuations.

The handling of pamphlet material varies. Some libraries make no particular effort to display it. Others have special displays, bulletin board notices, etc. In those places where pamphlet material is particularly useful, duplicates are frequently made, especially for reserve use. Some libraries even have their pamphlets bound. Wellesley has a more complete system of cataloging for pamphlets than most libraries find necessary so that their students may have greater facility in using the material.

In reply to the committee request that any problems be stated which are hindering individual libraries in their efforts to cooperate most effectively with local defense programs only two were forthcoming.

Mt. Holyoke is very much interested in collecting pamphlets, and finds government publications of particular value. Miss Ludington, the librarian, finds, however, that such documents are increasingly difficult to secure. Many are being issued in too small editions and are not available either for free distribution through the congressmen or by purchase through the Superintendent of Documents. She suggests that the A.L.A. committee would be doing a real service to nondepository libraries if the present methods of distri-

buting government documents could be liberalized and improved.

The Woman's College of the University of North Carolina would like to do more toward helping with the reading, research, and reference needs of the surrounding community, which at present is inadequately served by the small public library, but finds it impossible because the

student body of 2200 more than fills its present building.

In addition, its reference staff is not large enough to permit the preparation of bibliographical reading lists which individuals, clubs, and organizations need, and which the librarian would like very much to put at the disposal of the community.

Aid to Libraries in War Areas

THE A.L.A. Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas is currently being concerned with broken sets of American scholarly and scientific periodicals in foreign institutions. The problem presented by canceled subscriptions will be at least partially solved in the future by the purchase and storage of current issues. Through the use of this stock, gaps of a year or more in the files of important research institutions will be filled.

The problems created by mail difficulties and loss of shipments are also being considered. The following brief selected list of missing numbers from one English library furnishes some indication of the future size of this problem:

	1940	1941
American Chemical Society, <i>Journal</i>	Nov.	Mar., June
<i>American Journal of Botany</i>		May
<i>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures</i>	Oct.	
<i>Annals of the American Academy</i>		May

<i>Experiment Station Record</i>	Oct.	Mar.
<i>Geographical Review</i>		April
<i>Industrial and Engineering Chemistry</i>	Nov.	April, June
<i>Journal of the History of Ideas</i>	Dec.	
<i>Library Journal</i>		April
National Academy of Sciences, <i>Proceedings</i>	Nov.	
<i>P.M.L.A.</i>		Mar.
<i>U.S. Government Publications, Monthly Catalog</i>	Jan.	

The committee believes that a statement now will aid in the eventual solution.

With the imminent paper shortage there is the very good possibility that valuable back numbers of scholarly journals will be sold for pulp. Anything librarians can do to attempt to prevent this action will contribute to the success of our program for the aid of foreign libraries.

The committee will eventually attempt to collect the wartime issues of American scholarly journals, and if faculty men are notified of that future purpose now, the opportunities to acquire an adequate supply should be greater.