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Public Services and Outreach in Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Libraries

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Comments

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Abstract

Rare book, manuscript, and special collections libraries remain both more difficult and more forbidding to use than any other parts of most libraries. A shift from an ethos that emphasized acquisition, cataloging, and preservation has brought into new prominence issues generally grouped together under the rubric of "promotion." This essay considers some of the ways in which this addition to the ethos of special collections has the potential to change for the better the ways such libraries are perceived and used.

Introduction

Many of the people who might otherwise use them, and even some who do, find rare book, manuscript, and special collections libraries both more difficult and more forbidding than any other part of a library. Long efforts to alter that unhappily persistent truth have met with only limited success.

First, the closed- or limited-access stacks and storage facilities inherent in the nature of rare book collections (my shorthand for "rare book, manuscript, and special collections") prohibit would-be readers from browsing shelves to locate materials of interest.[1] The larger the collection, the more troublesome this prohibition becomes. For all of the improvements, at least as librarians see them, of online access and online browsing, such restrictions on physical browsing pose problems. Our readers tend to remain astonishingly less skilled than we like to imagine them at using tools that represent books rather than books themselves.[2]

Second, the generally persistent formidability characteristic of rare book collections and their staffs does not make them seem any easier to use than their closed stacks suggest.[3] Students in particular may find them off-

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putting. A conversation with a bright and caustic sophomore who uses medieval manuscripts at several American rare book libraries, about which she has strong—and apparently reasonable—opinions, recently reminded me of this ongoing truth in no uncertain terms. But faculty may have similar opinions. I even know some who find it easier to travel to great national or research libraries, where they expect tight restrictions and rules, rather than making an effort to use similar, perhaps the same, materials at home. At any rate, so they tell me, they will undertake such travel when conditions at home seem to them inappropriately out of phase with the ways they feel able to use other parts of their own institution's library.[4]

Many librarians suppose, or hope, that a major shift in staff attitudes has produced rare book collections and librarians far more welcoming to early twenty-first-century readers than their old, out-of-date reputation implies. Anyone who works in this field must be aware that readers have long regarded staff as major constituents of the formidability and repulsiveness of many rare book collections large and small. Nonetheless, staff nowadays prefer to believe that their own attitudes are welcoming and that readers have noticed and approve of this change. Indeed, some attitudes have changed. Whether they have in fact undergone a wholesale change in this pleasing way is, however, not always easy to believe—not if one actually listens to readers, at least when they talk about other collections. My own impressions, based on the anecdotal evidence provided by readers with whom I speak—faculty as well as sophomores, antiquarian booksellers as well as independent readers and researchers—are surprisingly dispiriting.

One basic attitudinal change is noticeable, however. It seems to me to have the potential to prove in practice more than merely rhetorical and able to act as a prod to genuine change, although it is still in its early days and such a judgment may be premature. Within university research libraries, the setting from and about which I write,[5] the old, tried-and-true belief was that one's job was to get it, catalog it, and preserve it. This approach has been slightly but significantly modified. We are now expected to get it, catalog it, and *promote* it. At least in some environments, preserving it is a desideratum, too, if possible. But in some very real sense, promotion outranks preservation. A greatly escalated sense of the need for promotion is a major new element affecting rare book librarians' attitudes.

Of course, one could emphasize other factors conducive to changes of various kinds. Among them, surely, is the impact on librarians' attitudes of the persistent need for funds at a time when the amount of needed funds seems greater, and the amount of available funds smaller, than in the past. But this need represents an exacerbation of an old condition. It is not new in the way that an emphasis on promotion seems to be.

My paper, then, aims to raise some of the possibilities for positive changes that attentiveness to promotion may produce.

The Economic Basis of Promotion

If I am right about it, promotion on the scale implicit in the current climate is a relatively new element for rare book libraries and their staffs. Of course, library promotion is by no means something new under the sun. The public library sector has a long history of trying out varieties of promotional techniques. Moreover, many rare book collections already have a history, often a notable history, of self-promotion as well. Its current imperatives, however, have yet to be dealt with adequately.[6] At present, I suggest, promotional goals derive less than used to be the case from administrative and staff desires to draw attention to materials that beg to be used, to present their institution as a desirable repository for collections, or to attract donors who appear to be separable from surplus dollars. Those traditional goals have not been abandoned, obviously. But the newer emphasis on promotion tends, first, to descend as a mandate from higher administrative levels, and it reflects rather different underpinnings.

When it comes down, this mandate is clearly driven by a climate of economic scarcity. The continued existence of library departments and provision of library services seems justifiable to cost-conscious institutional administrators, to whom library administrators report, only on the basis of user statistics. Directors fear, not entirely without reason, that institutional administrators may feel that a resource not used or clearly underused in relation to the costs required to maintain it really is unnecessary.[7]

In this context, promotion involves imperatives other than publicizing new acquisitions, attracting new donations, and giving an attractive airing now and again to old holdings through exhibitions. Readers must feel invited and welcome to, and comfortable in, the rare book department. (Does this imperative suggest that senior library administrators are more aware than rare book staff themselves of the field's failure to achieve real change in this respect?) Invitations must be active, not passive—readers, that is, need to be sought. They also need to know that the resources are truly theirs for use: the welcome must be real. Materials cannot be kept from them, whether through shoddy or slow cataloging or through deliberate lack of information (in order, for instance, to "protect" an unusual acquisition from the vicissitudes of use or to reserve a cache of letters for use only by Professor Big).

Relatedly, once readers arrive and have what they need in hand, they need a reading room situation that functions for them. Rare book librarians used to think about amenities that would be nice, if one could have them, in some vaguely imagined future. They have now to plan for and find ways to fund their acquisition and addition. Retrofitting reading rooms to provide outlets for laptops or a wireless environment; functional workstations as well as reading facilities; scanning as well as reprographic facilities; speedy turnaround for all forms of copying; onsite meeting and classroom space; provision of materials and technology for instructional and student use in those non–reading room spaces—including rare books and manuscripts as well as online capabilities; quiet and pleasant surroundings: these are no longer "amenities" but necessities of doing business in a customer service–oriented environment. Rare book librarians must also perform services such as ordering materials—again, including rare books and manuscripts where they are available and affordable—for the use of specific classes and readers, a species of tailored reader services applied to a part of the library where such service has rarely been traditional.

An additional complication is that such tailored services—especially if performed on behalf of entire classes and not individuals only—may bypass or completely ignore the general circulation/restricted circulation binary. For example, by acquiring and making available rare materials for use as (in effect) classroom reserve reading, staff may expect to find in the materials so used signs of the stresses normally associated with overuse, even though such stresses are precisely what sequestration of rare materials into a separate, supervised department was originally intended to avoid.[8] The administrative boundary between general and restricted circulation may serve librarians' needs, as well as what we perceive to be the needs of the materials themselves. But it does not necessarily serve needs—which may increasingly take precedence over the others—that readers perceive themselves as having. Many other reader needs have also made themselves felt and elicited positive responses at a variety of libraries.[9]

The underlying assumption of the institutional structures within which rare book collections increasingly find themselves is, as a now somewhat creaky saying has it, "use it or lose it." A better mousetrap is a good thing to build—but it had better be advertised well, and then it had better live up to its advertising. A lot of competing mousetraps out there are just as good. If enough people don't need yours, then the parent institution doesn't need it, either. Or you.

Exhibitions

Traditionally, librarians used exhibitions and associated events to promote their collections. Normally mounted by library staff, they were based on materials already in the collections or drew upon collections an institution hoped to attract. A pedagogical purpose might be one of the benefits of such an exercise, but it was not always clear that the beneficiary of whatever pedagogy resulted was supposed to be a student.[10] Catalogues might be published in conjunction with an exhibition, but their audience too was never entirely clear. In any event, libraries, far more poorly funded than art museums, produced very few catalogues of book or manuscript exhibitions with the scholarly stature and lasting value for which art museums seem routinely to strive in producing their exhibition catalogues.

More recently, however, some librarians have found it increasingly desirable, possible, and productive to promote collections and their sponsoring institutions through exhibitions in the organization of which students or faculty are invited to participate as a form of public service and outreach. Involvement in the exhibition process brings people usually separated from collections by the user/staff divide into them on a quasi-staff basis. It enables them to become familiar with materials specifically relevant to an exhibition's topic. In a collection strong enough to support an exhibition in the first place, there ought to be more materials than they began by knowing about. As an additional dividend, they may also become familiar with staff, with procedures, with the care and handling of rare materials, and with the exigencies of explaining such materials to their peers, to their students, or to a "general audience." As a result, they should become comfortable in the collection and with its staff.[11]

The process is pedagogical in every sense. Particularly when an exhibition can become a project that functions as part of a class, the learning payoffs both with respect to subject matter and to rare books generally—for a few students or for many, and for instructors—are likely to be high. So are the payoffs in good will, interest, and increased knowledge of local holdings from relevant faculty members.[12]

The payoffs had better be high. However much such a project is class-, student-, or faculty-directed, library staff time and energy investments in it will be very great, too. This is why this kind of work needs to be thought of as part and parcel of "public service" in the current promotional environment.

Exhibitions usually involve associated publications (print, Web-based, or both, if budgets permit). Once again, involving students or faculty in the publication process presents new opportunities for outreach and perceived service to one's core constituencies where payoffs (as well as staff time and energy investments) are likely to be high.

The major downside for such activities seems to be their costs in staff time. In addition, some staff will feel that a barrier between rare book collections and the public is a good thing. It encourages proper respect for the objects in the collections while inculcating a sense of their difference from other library materials. This sense reminds readers to exercise care in using rare book collections. Its diminishment or loss will seem a cause for regret. The added security risks of allowing students or faculty behind the reading room door may also disturb some staff members.[13]

Any department that wants to make the effort to promote its use in ways here suggested will need to consider such issues, and others as well. But, I suspect that the current emphasis on use will push at least some departments to make the effort rather than not.

Classrooms

Exhibition projects offer one very useful route that rare book personnel can take toward forms of joint action not only with students but also with teaching faculty. Such actions are important forms of promotion for rare book collections. In addition, the desirability of academic situations in which library staff serve as faculty, either in jointly conducted classrooms or in their own, though not common, can hardly be overestimated.[14] In jointly taught classrooms, the setting itself requires collegial equality rather than maintenance of an implicit faculty/librarian hierarchy of deference. When the librarian is a class's sole instructor, students and faculty who might simply assume, without much thought, the naturalness of that hierarchy can see librarians as participants in the educational process in ways that do not simply relegate them to the role of "servants of the servants of God." Even with respect to apparently minor details—facilitating the ongoing use of rare materials in the daily work of a classroom, as opposed to one-time class visits to a collection—such classes become an aspect of promotion for varied useful ends.

An emphasis on the ongoing as opposed to "special" function of the materials; the demonstration of library staff's specific expertise with respect both to a class's general subject matter and also to the materials that class is using; the ways in which old cliches about form and content may be actualized when original materials are constantly on hand for examination and discussion; and familiarization of students—and faculty—with the accessibility and use of the collections and their staffs: these are benefits an ongoing classroom situation, whether exhibition-directed or otherwise, makes possible.

Such classroom ventures also have potential downsides, of course. These need consideration, too. The time investments a class demands are at least as great as those required by exhibitions and associated projects that involve rare book staff with other people's classes. Preparation, devising papers and exams, advising and counseling students, and grading: these are highly time-consuming activities, even if one is teaching alone and does not also have to negotiate with a colleague about who will do what in class each day. A semester in which the ordinary demands of trying to be a decent librarian continue while one is also teaching may turn out to be very tiring—or throw surprising (and not entirely welcome) burdens on one's library colleagues.

The Web

Usually considered as a means of "getting the word out about . . . holdings" (Abraham, 2001), the Web offers more than merely a site for advertisements and propaganda. Projects at a number of libraries—Web-based collections devoted to, for instance, Shakespeare, Renaissance emblems, American literature, or World War I—offer exemplary instances of an increasingly significant arena for librarian-faculty partnerships. Some of these projects represent library initiatives or faculty initiatives alone; others involve joint faculty-library undertakings. As showcases for both research and resources—in which materials are often presented in mediated and contextualized frameworks rather than simply scanned and mounted without explanation or interpretation of any kind—such sites offer clear advantages to all participants. They also offer added value to their users. And by demonstrating an institution's commitment to its users, through the provision of access to materials that some readers may have felt themselves to be too distant from to encounter easily in the flesh, they can be highly attractive. Some readers may eventually come to see such sites as invitations to rather than as substitutes for the materials they make available in facsimile. Distance to the contrary notwithstanding, they may decide to show up at one's door looking for more of the same or for the actual materials whose image they have already encountered.

But these are very costly ventures. Time—and lots of it—is perhaps their most obvious requisite. In order to make a manuscript or a printed book available on screen, one must invest time in the tasks of planning, choosing, organizing, and interpreting texts, as well as scanning, mounting, choosing navigation tools, and so forth. The possibility of lost user statistics from readers who do not see the images as an invitation to visit the thing itself but for whom they are an adequate substitute for the original cannot be easily measured.[15] But clearly such losses can be a cost, at least in this context. Of course, scanning and computer equipment, disk and server space, and technical expertise do not come cheap either. These projects require up-front layouts of real dollars, specialized bodies on the ground to do the work, and a real commitment to long-term growth and ongoing revision.

The major downside of such projects, otherwise so clearly beneficial to all participants, is—perhaps even more than the monetary costs they require—the possibility that those costs, the project's time demands, or even its equipment's and new staff's constant encroachments on physical space will encourage one party or the other to disengage. Bailing out *in medias res* will win no friends. Librarians and faculty both need to give such projects considerable thought—and calculation in a literally arithmetical sense—before anyone embarks on them.

In a climate of promotion, however, one major upside to such projects needs emphatic statement. They offer what can often prove to be attractive funding opportunities for donors, foundations, and other funding agencies. Combining demonstrated commitment to principles that emphasize access and preservation while also providing tangible evidence of outreach and library-institutional (or interlibrary and interinstitutional) cooperation, such projects, if well conceived, almost sell themselves.

It is, of course, also true that anyone who has written a grant application will recall that, no matter how wonderful the project, the work such applications require diminishes no demands on one's time.

Seminars and Other Discussion Groups

Forums other than classrooms or collection-based projects also exist through which library staff can come together with faculty and students to interact in ways that promote knowledge and use of rare book collections. Many academic libraries already have professional or all-staff library groups that provide regular occasions for discussion of issues or for visiting lecturers or seminars on various aspects of librarianship. These groups can and often do play useful roles in advancing librarians' ongoing professional education. But they are forums for librarians to speak with one another; far fewer libraries have similar forums that provide for librarian-faculty (or librarian-student) interactions. But where these exist or can be established, in the library or the parent institution, the potential for successful promotion of collections and "de-formidabilization" of staff can be enormous.[16]

Now that the history of books and printing has left the insular environment of the library school for the larger scholarly world of the historical humanities,[17] it is a topic that provides an obvious focus around which librarian-faculty/student groups can coalesce. The rare book library itself is an equally obvious locus for meetings of librarians, students, and faculty mutually engaged in ongoing explorations of this topic. By no means is the topic limited to historians, even though, as readers of this paper know, historians (e.g., Febvre, Martin, Eisenstein, Darnton) are largely responsible for its re-emergence into wide scholarly currency. Students and faculty in many disciplines—among them classical studies, literature, music, philosophy, and religion, in addition to history—have all begun to engage the ways in which their basic texts have been transmitted. Seminars—one-offs as well as ongoing seminars—that jointly discuss book history topics can thus engage a broad range of disciplines. Held on-site, they offer easy opportunities for libraries to show off their holdings while librarians themselves display a specific subject expertise from which faculty and students can learn.

At my own institution, a long-running seminar devoted to the history of books and printing ("material texts") is close to marking its first decade [*sic*] of weekly, noncredit, purely voluntary sessions. These are open to students, faculty, librarians, and the public—anyone who cares to show up, in fact. This seminar is so successful that its attendance has pushed it out of the intradepartmental library space in which it had its origins. Its size now requires it to meet most often in another building on campus. Even so, the rare book collection still provides original materials from the collections needed for specific discussions. Library staff and faculty participate both in individual sessions and in planning the seminar. Speakers have included librarians, faculty, students, and visitors from off campus. The benefits of such association include a strengthening of ties among librarians, their colleagues, and the institution's students, as well as a generally heightened awareness among those students and colleagues of resources—human, as well as printed or manuscript—in the local rare book collection. These are not benefits easy to quantify, but no librarian involved with the seminar has any doubt that they are significant.

The history of books and printing is surely the most obvious, but it is not the only topic around which such library-student/faculty seminars can form. A far more general university seminar at my university dealt, again from an interdisciplinary point of view, with several aspects of cultural studies. Participation by librarians in this seminar was relevant and welcome. It provided an occasion for presentation and discussion of a paper that dealt with library issues from a cultural studies perspective. This paper was later published in a collection of essays that emerged from this seminar.[18]

Many faculties provide for such seminars, some with, others without, students. Whether they are interdisciplinary or located in only one of the disciplines concerned with the transmission of its own textual bases, these seminars offer considerable opportunities for substantive library-faculty/student collaborations. They need only to be seized.

Downsides, once again, exist—and need to be considered. Planning and organizing a seminar do not happen by themselves. Library spaces do not get used by groups of people without requiring that they be cleaned afterwards. One needs to think about such annoying but basic matters as whether food and drink will or will not be permitted, because some seminars, at least, are run analogously to the way many classrooms are run these days. How presenters and discussants will use and display rare materials (with or without food and drink in a room) needs consideration, and, time consumingly, the question may require different answers on each occasion such use is allowed. And—last but by no means least—if librarians are to participate in seminars in the same ways as students and faculty, then the demands of the time they will occasionally require to research and write a paper need to be considered with real care.

Creative Writers

One other obvious arena in which collaborative relationships between rare book librarians and faculty-student colleagues can be fostered will occur at institutions with creative writing programs. Where the rare book collection is not held to a chronological limit but is also interested in, say, the papers of living writers, occasions for cooperation with colleagues in creative writing can promote the collection in several different but complementary ways. Readings, by themselves or associated with exhibitions that take a work from manuscript to printed book, can demonstrate to a colleague who is also a potential donor that the collection is interested in documenting the present as well as the past.[19] Such a demonstration may well have the additional pedagogical benefit of reminding students as well as faculty that one's collection is not simply a mortuary for the safely dead but is also engaged with the not-so-safe alive and kicking.

As this paper was in progress, my library was mounting just such an exhibition. A poet from our faculty, another local poet, and a local book artist who had published remarkable editions of poetry by both of them were all subjects of an exhibition that looked at the process of collaboration and its results.[20] Was it simply accidental that both the pedagogical and the promotional advantages of such an exhibition seemed important?

For faculty, the library's interest in the work of one of their own speaks to its interest in them. For students, a living text hot off the press and beautiful to look at may have the potential to convey other messages as well. Students intuitively understand that "the" text of the long four-part poem printed in the 2002 book must be "the same" as that printed in four parts in four poetry magazines and again in the poet's forthcoming book (2003). However, their intuition is wrong. In that forthcoming book, the poem will be printed as two sections at the beginning and two at the end, with other poems between those sections, and also because in the poetry magazines it will appear as four separate works. None of these texts is identical. The poem or poems will never appear elsewhere as it or they appear in the 2002 edition. Lineation, some words, overall presentation, in fact, the very sense that it is "one" poem (which the 2002 presentation promotes), will all change when the poem(s) appear(s) in other formats. The text(s) will elicit different responses influenced by where readers encounter it (or them). How better to realize for students in an academic library setting the singularity and particularity of every book, even a modern machine-made one?[21]

Small press publications as well as fine press or artist's books offer similar opportunities. In fact, whatever the formats of their publications, one may want one's writer colleagues to think of the rare book collection as concerned with the local and the living as well as the distant and the dead. Promotion, after all, means that librarians must be aware of the potential of creative writing colleagues as future donors of their own manuscripts and publications. It also means remembering that, as teachers, those same writers can send their students to the rare book collection to see older writers in original editions, newer writers in finely printed or artist's book editions, or the manuscript materials of any writer, so as to see what that writer's drafts actually looked like. But these writers should themselves feel welcome in the rare book collection and be familiar with its holdings.[22]

In fact, librarians can celebrate not only creative writers but also scholars, not only poets but also essayists. Librarians who wish to promote a collection will find any publication noteworthy if a publication party for it can be used to showcase materials from the collections related to the new book. Such actions have easy payoffs. The book's author will be grateful. Other faculty will attend; even faculty who never pay attention to their library may nonetheless pay attention to one another. If they do so in a library setting, they may find materials of interest they did not know about and an environment more inviting than the one they had imagined (or, worse, remembered). Bringing related materials out on such occasions can also attract at least some of a teacher's students to primary materials even while communicating to the faculty that the library does keep an interested eye on their activities.

Here again, potential problem areas need consideration. Is a library located at an institution where it is likely to have many such publication events to celebrate? Or, are there just a few? Does it matter? Can the library celebrate some publications rather than all of them without causing pain, anger, and jealousy? Can the library, as a matter of clear policy intended to avoid pain, anger, and jealousy, celebrate only those publications that concern topics heavily represented in the collections? Does the collection have resources or interests that make creative writers attractive promotional (or development) prospects? Need those writers be faculty? Or is the library also interested in students and its nonacademic neighbors? Events, like anything else, take time, money, and people to plan, organize, and run. Are those resources in long or short supply? And last—a question that might have been asked at any point in this paper—how much overtime are staff willing to accept?

One-offs

The show-and-tell event involves a class visit to the rare book collection to see older or newer materials relevant to the subject of the class. Perhaps the class also receives some elementary bibliographical instruction in the use of the collection. These sorts of one-time events probably remain the most standard method through which rare book collections and their staffs promote themselves.[23] They are usually conceived as events an instructor initiates by request and to which the librarian graciously accedes.

In truth, no laws legislate such an order of proceeding. Librarians who look for classes to which something of potential use to students (or faculty) might be found in the collections can always propose such a visit to instructors rather than waiting to be asked.[24] Some instructors will not respond at all. Others may say no, but the very appearance of interest and activity may plant a seed that comes to fruition at a later date.

For those who do respond favorably, the opportunities such classes offer—and the questions they raise—are worth thinking about. Librarians know that a class on Shakespeare might want to see a 1619 quarto or a 1623 folio. A class on the American Civil War could be interested by pro- and antislavery pamphlets or the *New York Times'* account of President Lincoln's assassination. A modern American literature class might be pleased to see a typescript of Theodore Dreiser's "The Titan" or a Cummington Press edition of Wallace Stevens. A class on the Holocaust, or modern Italian literature, or cultural anthropology, might all find first editions from the 1980s of Primo Levi's paperback translations into Italian of Claude Lévi-Strauss interesting—all for completely different reasons. Not every one of these examples is equally obvious; but, on the whole, none needs deep thought. However, that does not mean that such classes need no thought—and here is where both the opportunities these classes represent and the potential issues they raise converge.

What, after all, does it mean for a class "to see" such materials? Is the sight of a First Folio worth a thousand words about it? If a thousand words are to be spoken even as the class looks at the Folio, who will speak those words?—the librarian, the instructor, the students, or all of them? In any case, why should students be interested in the Folio? Does one emphasize its monetary, iconic, or research value? What is the research value of one copy of the First Folio? Will that value be more clear to students if a quarto can be shown alongside the Folio? If one lacks a quarto, is a facsimile useful? Or does its presence detract from the original displayed alongside? If one lacks a Folio, is the Hinman facsimile good enough?

Practical as well as intellectual questions need to be asked. Whoever speaks, what does "showing" the First Folio to a class of students mean? May members of the class touch the book? turn a leaf? look at the endpapers? examine the binding? Does each American literature student get a leaf of "The Titan" to look at? What is the point of the exercise, both from the instructor's point of view and from the librarian's? (After all, they need not be after the same point.) What kind of information is the class visit intended to convey? From the librarian's perspective, is it information about the materials? About the collections? About the staff? Or about any two of these, or all three of them?

Participation in teaching situations with faculty has already been mentioned, in a different context, as good—but all such situations require some joint discussion for a librarian to discover what an instructor's expectations are, and vice versa. Thus, it requires a librarian to give some thought to his or her own expectations. It is at least conceivable that these may have less to do with "information" than with "attitudes."

The downsides to such visits can be dramatic. I have spoken with several faculty members appalled by rare book librarians who did not permit an older printed book to go from graduate student hand to graduate student hand during a class presentation intended to introduce new graduate students to rare book resources in their discipline. (On one occasion I myself was that faculty member, teaching a class for future librarians visiting a rare book collection. What lesson did they learn?) Few readers of this paper will be appalled by such a prohibition at all. But from the faculty's perspective, the prohibition arrived out of the blue, which strongly suggests incomplete communication on both library and faculty sides. Moreover, faculty in all cases felt that it sent the wrong message to new students about the attitudes they were likely to encounter in their efforts to use rare books at that institution. It is essential that librarians and faculty consult in advance and decide not only the purpose of a class's encounter with rare materials (what should they know after the class is over?) but also the level of that encounter (what should they expect to do with the materials in class?).

When surprised by a librarian unexpectedly more protective of materials in class than had been imagined, an instructor's anger and tension will be conveyed to his or her students. A class visit is a one-time event, and student relationships are forged primarily with instructors, not librarians. An instructor's anger can produce student responses difficult to eradicate and lost readership impossible to measure. Damage may also affect librarian-faculty relationships—and not only with the classroom instructor directly involved but also with those other faculty members with whom he or she speaks. Yet such surprises are easily avoided with a small amount of preparatory discussion.

Similar preparatory discussions for use of rare materials in seminars will help prevent potential surprises (which are always difficulties) in the one situation just as in the other. But it may finally be more important for any librarian, whether looking at a classroom or seminar or any other visit (friends, tourists, the public), to think realistically about the goals of show-and-tell events. Librarians undertake these events in order to attract readers: they function as one more form of promotion. If the visits have a pedagogical benefit—and I am quite certain they have—that is certainly a plus. But before any other goal they are meant to be attractive. Failure to plan in advance about how to approach issues that may repel rather than attract readers can result in an unpleasant group experience: the very opposite of what the librarian intended.

Friends, Tourists, the Public

At least some attention needs to be paid to external visitors, inadequately lumped together by the four words in this section heading. "The public" can include a third-grade class studying the Civil War, an art history course at a neighboring secondary school where students are looking in sophisticated ways at iconological issues in Italian sixteenth-century painting, or an Elderhostel group studying Jane Austen. "The public" may be a rubric that covers instructors and classes at nearby colleges or universities, which, though perfectly respectable, are not one's own. It can include visiting book collectors' clubs, traveling alone (Rowfant; Grolier) or in combination (FABS), their members accompanied or unaccompanied by families and friends. It can include alumni gathered at homecoming or commencement or coming alone to ask about an old book or inquire about what they should say about this part of the school to students whom they interview for admissions. It can include the local person who wanders in to see an exhibition; the book- or manuscript-oriented person passing through town; the student who wants no rare materials at all but seeks only a quiet place to study.

Some institutions as a matter of policy prohibit visits from—or to—elementary or secondary schools. Some close the reading room to their own students who are not using rare materials. My own experiences include taking materials to elementary schools, accepting visits from secondary schools, allowing nonreaders to sit in spaces not occupied by readers, and, I think, all the other possibilities mentioned above, as well as some I have probably forgotten. Even the third-graders were excited. Among the things they saw were the "Awful Event" issue of the *New York Times* reporting Lincoln's assassination. They saw a copperplate of a Thomas Nast Lincoln, and a print of the illustration the copperplate produces. They did not see pro- or antislavery pamphlets, which seemed to their teacher and me to demand a level of reading and historical sophistication they were unlikely to possess. The class demanded some time and thought and conversation. It involved entrusting some uncommon materials to the vagaries of an automobile trip. Did a future scholar or librarian emerge from that class of third-graders? or a rare book reader? or—*mirabile dictu*—a donor? I will never know. I am satisfied that the pedagogical benefits of the visit were worth the effort anyway.

If promotion is a value, after all, then what is the function of saying "No"? The student excluded today who turns out to be a computer millionaire twelve years from now may well be disinclined to share her wealth with those who asked her to read elsewhere even at a time when she could see plenty of empty seats and pleasant, quiet surroundings. Elementary and high school students not welcomed when they were children are likely to have far less of a sense of having been excluded from something they did not know about, but of course will also be that much less likely to think of rare book libraries at all. Is there an advantage in their ignorance? For alumni and book collectors, library friends groups, and Elderhostel summer students, a somewhat more favorable attitude may be likely. Not only are they adults, but also each can be considered as a potential target for development efforts. Fair enough; but if what rare book libraries do is connected in significant ways to education and pedagogy, then perhaps these values ought to inflect the ways such libraries respond to all of their varied publics.

On the whole, an overall attitude of courteous welcome to general publics seems likely to have a spillover effect that will produce a positive impact on the attitudes with which staff greet more obvious publics, that is, readers. But it seems equally likely that an overall attitude of unwelcome to all but readers will negatively affect the ways in which staff greet readers, too.

Reference

The shift from traditional reference services in reference departments that are increasingly information-oriented offers rare book libraries a new potential arena for outreach and promotion. For obvious reasons, basic bibliographical skills must continue to be cultivated in rare book departments, but these skills are not reinforced for librarians who, like the growing number of students and faculty with whom they work, are image- and Web-oriented.[25] Yet certain readers require just those old-fashioned skills. Their needs are not always met well or effectively by general reference staff who, well trained in information retrieval and Web-based systems, lack more than rudimentary skills in locating information about manuscripts, archives, and older printed books.[26]

On the very day I moved the preceding paragraph from my preparatory outline to this text, another instance of what it describes crossed my desk. Neither a reader—a lifelong user (in fact, a seller) of rare books—nor reference staff could locate in our own collections a work that dates from the long ago year of 1996, written (to be completely fair) in Italian and (perhaps worst of all) part of a series. An online record seemed to indicate that we had something like it but did not reflect reality, as the reader explained to a rare book staff member with whom he later spoke. Reference staff had retrieved a book with the right call number, but it wasn't the right book. They then advised the reader to request the right one through interlibrary loan. Because his research really involved a sixteenth-century printed book that the 1996 work concerned, the reader mentioned the problem to the rare book staff member. The rare book librarian's search in online records, though not simple, eventually called up a record that did not appear to be faulty at all—and the right book was found. Most of the time the search required was spent in traveling to the book and then bringing it back to the rare book collection. A bit more time was spent discussing the incident with colleagues.

I am not alone in noticing many such experiences,[27] and they at least seem to me to have become more frequent, particularly in the past three or four years. They are not simply indicative (although they may be also indicative) of a failure of library education to teach certain older skills at the same time it teaches newer ones. They certainly indicate that the skills reference staff require are themselves increasingly—and differently—specialized. But rare book staffs continue, of necessity, to specialize in older bibliographical skills, even as they learn to deal with a few specifically relevant Web-based databases (e.g., Early English Books Online). As a result, they seem increasingly to have maintained a kind of expertise that proves utterly necessary to some kinds of readers—and which it is not entirely inappropriate to trumpet.

My experience—extensive and increasing—indicates that undergraduates as well as senior scholars, antiquarian booksellers, and the public all find numerous occasions for such expertise. Some now come regularly, because of experiences like those described above, to consult rare book staff about bibliographical questions. Even five years ago, they would automatically have directed such questions to reference staff—and they would have expected, then, expeditious and accurate responses from reference librarians. Increasingly, however, this kind of reference is simply not what reference people do. The opportunity for rare book staff to take up this slack is very real.

Potential problems—in interdepartmental staff relationships, for one obvious example—probably need little comment at this point. Yet rare book librarians who continue to provide services specifically book and manuscript oriented have significant promotional opportunities with at least some readers. By not condescending to those colleagues whose expertise necessarily takes them increasingly in other directions, some potential internal problems can be avoided while the advantages of such service are enjoyed.

Some Tentative Conclusions

The pressures rare book collections experience at present to change traditional practices and attitudes have elicited many different kinds of responses. These are as yet too many, too varied, and, in many respects, still too new and undeveloped, for useful systematic analysis. But one common denominator seems to cross institutional boundaries: an imperative to make such collections increasingly user-friendly, functional, and actively used parts of the larger library and educational institutions they serve. This does not seem an entirely unreasonable request to direct at units that, historically, have required resources disproportionate to the use they have allowed themselves to receive.

Many libraries, and not rare book collections alone, are experimenting with different approaches intended to achieve these goals. How they adapt their choice of materials—how, in fact, they adapt themselves—to heightened user expectations about contents, accessibility, and other environmental factors that influence users, are, at present, all matters in flux. Even things that once seemed basic for entire libraries, not rare book collections alone—for instance, the preservation criterion that governed rules on food in libraries—have given way before what seem to be the inexorable pressures of conflicting student demands. The reader who enters the main door to Alderman Library at the University of Virginia and looks to the left sees a food and drinks bar. Other libraries—mine, and perhaps yours, among them—are also adding or planning to add such facilities. A strict preservation perspective gives them the look of a self-inflicted and rapidly metastasizing cancer. But rightly or wrongly, preservation, though it remains a desideratum if possible, can be pushed aside quite easily to satisfy the desires of hordes of foraging undergraduates.

I grew up as an undergraduate using such a library long before its staff succeeded in moving the cafeteria—for all the right reasons—out of the building. I know far better now than I did then the costs to the library and its collections—insects and rodents, most of them fairly unpleasant—of having such a facility in the building. But I also know that the cafeteria's presence sure did pack 'em in—readers, that is, and into the library. It added a social dimension to the library that was important then and remains important now. It did not then, any more than newly established cafeterias will now, "supplant" in some mysterious way the intellectual work a library exists to promote. In what situations a library cafeteria's costs are outweighed by its benefits is not for me to say, but institutional administrators, as the return of the cafeteria indicates, seem increasingly willing to incur those costs for the parent institution. They are unlikely to be amused by units—rare book collections, for instance—unwilling to open themselves to any costs that seem likely to promote increased use.

Not only rhetorically do library directors now emphasize a rare book collection's ease of access, geniality of service, high-quality reference, and library-faculty interchanges, the latter with respect even to acquisitions. "We've always collected X" cuts increasingly less mustard in settings where X is no longer taught. Collecting for the faculty who are here, the classes that actually meet, rather than those that "should" meet, is what cuts the mustard at present. Acquisitions need programmatic justification. So do exhibitions, colloquia, symposia, publications, and other library events and activities. Increased cooperation with neighboring institutions may also be seen as a tactic to increase the rare book collection's presence and its readership, at least where off-site users matter. Whatever it takes to promote use—to give a collection the sense that it is a vibrant and active research center in which students, faculty, readers, and librarians meet easily and cooperatively over joint ventures—is what senior administrators want.

They can afford no less. These goals are mandated not by senior administrators who hate or fail to understand rare books. Rather, they arise from not entirely unjustified fears that "elite" collections of materials may easily come to seem useless to student, faculty, and public cultures—and institutional administrators—increasingly dazzled by Web-based and other alternatives to traditional, older forms. True, certain theoretical tendencies currently at work in the historical humanities impel users to an increased regard for the material object, so in some instances such fears may prove at least partially misplaced as users show up at the rare book collection's door. On the other hand, librarians fearful of "theory" may fail to notice, and thus to take advantage of, theorists' interest in the material, which offers an opportunity to increase use markedly. Simply announcing that one's got the stuff on the library Web site is no longer promotion enough, even if it remains necessary promotion, too. And, more to the point, theorists interested in the material object may still stay away from a rare book collection if they don't feel genuinely welcome to use its material resources.

When libraries generally undergo organizational and other shifts that affect their short-term as well as their long-term futures,[28] rare book collections that position themselves as part of such change—rather than as resistant or retrograde pockets of opposition to it—act wisely. Not all change is bad for rare book collections, after all. Changes in other areas of library service have already positioned rare book collections and their staffs well to provide kinds of services that can compensate for skills no longer emphasized elsewhere in the system. Seeing the changes called for as opportunities to enhance public and reference services and outreach—not difficult, since in fact they are all these things—may make them easier to initiate. For those librarians who regard rare book collections as designed for use, they may even seem beneficial.

Notes

1. I have written elsewhere about issues posed by the prospect of allowing readers to browse rare book collections (Traister, 2000, pp. 73–74). The present essay offers elaboration of and additional thoughts about themes some of which were first aired in that essay.
2. An already vast and growing professional literature approaches this topic from several complementary perspectives. For a general (nonlibrary) audience, the issue is addressed from a pedagogical perspective by Joan Mann (2002): "The percentage of unsuccessful information systems is still alarmingly high," she states as a premise (p. 253). Discussions specifically relevant to libraries are similarly skeptical. In "Revising Ready Reference Sites: Listening to Users Through Server Statistics and Query Logs," Theresa Mudrock (2002) writes: "we have created and organized our ready reference pages in our own image with little explicit acknowledgement of the user's needs and wants" (p. 155). Concerned only with ready reference tools in an online format, Mudrock need not consider the very much more complicated issue of finding printed or manuscript materials in an online environment. But here, too, well-documented problems affect readers' abilities to locate materials, even modern materials, in this environment. The observation of Dennis Halcoussis, Aniko L. Halverson, Anton D. Lowenberg, and Susan Lowenberg (2002)—"users," they write, "are normally more successful in conducting known item searches than subject searches" (p. 148) —is completely unsurprising. That observation is supported and expanded by Susan Augustine and Courtney Greene (2002). Rare book collections house materials that, hitherto largely unstudied, remain unknown. The difficulties readers experience in gaining access online to unknown items of modern vintage must be compounded when they require unknown materials of older date that are, in addition, not always written in English and may also present themselves in unfamiliar formats. Dr. Laurence Creider (Head, General Cataloging Unit, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces) informs me that "the concern of rare materials catalogers with issues of detailed description is . . . accompanied [by] . . . the realization that this [problem] entails increased intellectual access through expanded author and subject entries" (personal communication, 1 February 2003). The topic has been raised with respect to the revision of DCRB currently under way. I am grateful to Dr. Creider for making time to discuss this topic with me. In this note, my references are deliberately the most recent I can find. I am not referring to a time when library users could not reasonably be expected to be familiar with modern Web-based technologies.
3. A useful (and also a surprisingly moving) discussion of this issue, directed at European rather than American archival collections, is "A Word After: How We Found Mathias," an "epilogue" to Craig Harline and Eddy Put (2000). Their discussion ought to be better known to the rare book and manuscript community than it is.
4. To be fair, I occasionally detect the various additional attractions of New York, Paris, or other major cities as a factor in such decisions—but not always. Where those attractions really are the underlying draw, however, only a severely limited number of places (those located, for example, in New York, Paris, or other major cities, perhaps) can hope to change faculty attitudes.
5. I doubt that the same attitudes prevail—or should prevail—in all rare book, manuscript, and special collection environments, despite the obvious inconsistencies such a doubt entails. Manuscripts, *ipso facto* unique, may, as a class, require an approach with respect to public service and accessibility different from printed books. The distinctive functions of libraries that serve educational institutions, even with their older books and manuscripts, seem to me also to permit attitudes different from those at libraries with responsibilities to large scholarly, research, and reader communities attracted by the sheer strength of their collections. I write from what is now a twenty-year background in a large university rare book and manuscript library. But it is one that sees its functions as at least somewhat distinct from those of such neighbors as the Library Company of Philadelphia, the Folger Shakespeare Library, the New York Public Library, or the Library of Congress. Nor is this a university rare book library, despite the riches of its holdings, with quite the same quasi-international responsibilities of a Houghton or a Bodley. I must emphasize that my point

of view about it—and what I therefore adopt as my "subject position"—is my own. It does not necessarily reflect an institutional perspective.

6. Terry Abraham (2001) emphasizes that "what we are doing now is not a break from the past but a continuation. There has been a revolution, but like most revolutions, much is retained and carried forward." A bit later, Abraham adds: "In the last fifteen years or so, we've been increasingly exhorted to be proactive about getting the word out about our holdings (as if we weren't doing that before)." The essay's title explains clearly its major point: "An online presence will make the library and the library's collections more visible, and extend it to a broader audience." I agree, with the modification that it is not only promotion of the collections that is at issue in the current climate. It is, most emphatically, use of the collections and enhancement of all factors likely to increase that use that senior administrators hope to achieve.
7. This idea may become increasingly prevalent among institutional administrators. The current climate of opinion (or of "opinion-passing-for-knowledge," some of it of librarians' own [I think suicidal] devising) encourages administrators to believe that, really, since everything is out there on the Web somewhere, no one needs to keep it—expensively—on-site.
8. See, e.g., Lawrence Clark Powell (1949): "the very nature of rare books and manuscripts—their scarcity and their value—means that they cannot be subjected to steady and heavy use" (p. 295).
9. To some of these raised reader expectations even nonuniversity rare book collections have had to respond. Better mousetraps to keep readers beating a path to the door nowadays require a new service orientation in many library environments. Evidence of such change is found in the increasing use of fellowships to bring readers to collections and the provision of housing officers—and housing—to permit them to live in high-rent districts while doing their research. The cycle feeds itself. What used to be the practice at a few IRLA institutions is now also the practice at some university libraries. Advertisements in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and postings to specialized scholarly listservs both attest to these changes.
10. Edwin Wolf II, late librarian of the Library Company of Philadelphia, commented (at least in private) that the only real beneficiaries of an exhibition were the staff who curated it. He felt that the process of putting on exhibitions informed staff about their own institution's holdings that, before the exhibition, they knew far less intimately than afterwards. His was the point of view of an independent research librarian, but he never suggested that working in a different library setting would have altered this view of the function of exhibitions.
11. The engagement of academics, faculty, and students to work alongside curatorial staff in the preparation of exhibitions and their catalogs has long been a practice in art museums. Although the dollar figures on an item-by-item basis of works of art are ordinarily much higher than those attached to printed books or most manuscripts—which would seem to favor more restrictive practices in museums than in libraries—libraries took longer than museums to admit academics into the exhibition process. The practice is still less common than it might be.
12. Eleanor Pinkham spoke presciently about such involvement of students and faculty in rare book exhibitions at the 1982 RBMS preconference. Her paper—which has not, to my knowledge, been published—was based on her experiences as the director of a small college library (Upjohn Library, Kalamazoo College, Kalamazoo, Michigan). The library had recently been given a surprisingly rich collection of older printed materials but had no traditions, either for use or sequestration, of such materials. Pinkham thought the materials ought to be made to function in the environment to which they had come. Her paper described efforts to bring instructors and students into the library to use the materials through the mounting of exhibitions and writing of catalogues that would be related to the subjects of various classes in the historical humanities. My recollection is that its readers, following the preconference, thought her essay too institution-specific in its focus for publication, a point of view with which I did not then and still do not agree. A number of people presently in the field of rare book librarianship emerged from that small college, in part because of their experiences as students in the kinds of programs Pinkham described. Her models would have been especially useful for people who work in smaller

and nonresearch university-based collections specifically. In addition, her general intelligence with respect to both the practical issues of promoting the use and usefulness of rare book collections and the more theoretical question of the function of such collections in educational institutions would have had, then and now, broad applicability. I am grateful to Ms. Pinkham and to Paul Smithson, associate director and technical services librarian at Upjohn Library, for their assistance with this note. The breadth of Pinkham's views about the potential benefits from librarian-faculty cooperation in a variety of pedagogical contexts strikes me as more impressive than what I see as the far narrower perspective recently adumbrated by Mary Jane Scherdin (2002) in "How Well Do We Fit? Librarians and Faculty in the Academic Setting" (esp. pp. 247–252), published in *Portal: Libraries and the Academy*. An article in that journal's next issue—Schmeising & Hollis (2002)—seems to me more useful: its authors provide a brief theoretical justification for the involvement of rare book libraries in the pedagogical process, quickly review the (not very copious) extant literature, and describe their own efforts at the University of Colorado, Boulder. In 1949, Lawrence Clark Powell remarked that "rare books have small place in the undergraduate program" (p. 295). Even in 1949, this view might not have been universal. See, for one example, the reports on George Parker Winship's class on rare books for Harvard undergraduates by Boies Penrose (1959) and Michael Winship (1999). The list of students who passed through this class—or, if it were available, a list of students influenced by Chauncey Brewster Tinker at Yale—might amuse rare book librarians nowadays who wonder where the next generation of collectors will come from. Some collectors may be born. Many others are made.

13. I have written about security risks posed by students in staff areas elsewhere. See, e.g., Traister (1994), esp. p. 33.
14. Institutions where library staff do not have faculty status differ about whether library staff *can* serve as faculty and differ on this matter inconsistently. Some institutions demand that any faculty member must have a Ph.D. as a terminal degree, at least in some subject areas; for them, the M.L.S. alone does not suffice. Other institutions have no provision at all for classroom instruction by people not part of the standing faculty. Some public universities allow M.L.S.'s responsibility for a class, others do not; some Ivies do not allow classroom responsibilities to library staff with Ph.D.'s while others do. In any setting in which library staff might also be able to teach, it is likely to be easier—and may also be politically ("promotionally") more effective—to teach jointly with a member of the standing faculty. In my own institution, library staff work in a setting that does not grant faculty status to librarians. Staff may and several do teach, nonetheless, as adjunct members of various academic departments. They may do so alone, with other library colleagues, and with faculty colleagues. I know from many colleagues at other institutions that this situation remains uncommon. Personally, I am fortunate that my academic subject expertise is historical (the early modern period) and in a field (English literature) where local rare book holdings are strong.
15. My own experience is that these sites attract readers rather than offering simply a substitute means of using older materials. But that experience is not a valid basis for extrapolation. It reflects the fact that I actually meet readers who, attracted by the site, arrive at my doorstep. On the other hand, I never even hear about those readers whom it completely satisfies.
16. "De-formidabilization" processes work in both directions, of course. If we scare them, they also scare us; and it may therefore prove salutary for librarians to have occasion now and again to notice that faculty put on their pants one leg at a time, too.
17. Insular or not, library schools nurtured book and printing history studies through a very long and dry period of neglect by other academic disciplines.
18. Daniel Traister (1999), "'You Must Remember This . . . ': Or, Libraries as a Locus of Cultural Memories," originally presented at a university-wide cultural studies seminar, now appears in Ben-Amos and Weissberg's *Cultural Memory and the Construction of Identity*.
19. A good reading is performative in ways that lectures are not. This may be the moment to remark that lectures, while they obviously continue to have a place among the various kinds of events libraries sponsor, ought not to be the only events libraries sponsor. The more able a library is to program events that are performative and presentations that use variet-

ies of media, the more attractive to younger (or to jaded) audiences that library is likely to seem.

20. "Collaborations: Enid Mark and The ELM Press" opened in the University of Pennsylvania's Van Pelt-Dietrich Library in January of 2003. The exhibition focused primarily on the recent ELM Press publication of Susan Stewart's *The Elements* (Wallingford, PA: 2002). Stewart is a member of my university's department of English. It looked also at an earlier example of Mark's collaboration with a Philadelphia poet, Eleanor Wilner's *Precessional* (Wallingford, PA: 1998). See the exhibition catalogue, which bears the same title as the exhibition (2003).
21. The point is often made, e.g., by G. Thomas Tanselle (1989), *passim,* and succinctly on p. 55: "every text has been affected in one way or another by the physical means of its transmission; and . . . every copy of a text is a separate piece of documentary evidence."
22. One writer recently wrote to me about such matters, saying: "I've been taking my poetry students . . . to the rare book room to see the artists' books that present poetry. They love it. They want to know how to do it. They're hooked. It's good for them to see (since they are too young to know how it used to be) what the Internet can't do."
23. Other one-time events of many descriptions can be imagined, however. At my own institution, to offer a completely different kind of example, the retirement of a faculty member whose specialization coincided with one of the collection's great strengths was marked by a one-day conference in her honor. The retiree's former and present graduate students organized the event and constituted all but one of its speakers. The library chose to assist with funding, and some rare book collection staff participated in the event, drawing attention to resources in the subject area with then-current graduate students as well as with former ones, who now have graduate students of their own.
24. Librarians can also invite instructors teaching relevant classes to visit and investigate available resources in the collection for their courses. They can contact new faculty and offer them individualized tours within a short time of their arrival, showing them what is already present and learning what it might be useful to have available if it can be found and paid for. If they have established good relations with faculty, they may even make themselves and their collections part of the processes of recruitment of new faculty or new graduate students, providing one-on-one tours for people considering an offer of a position or admission.
25. The skills that Robert A. Seal (2001) emphasizes as most useful for reference librarians at the (more or less) present time, almost all heavily weighted towards computers and the Web, are indicative.
26. Is it necessary to say I speak about what I see as a condition of present-day reference without intending to criticize that condition? Reference staff respond, as they must, to the needs of the vast majority of their users. They have had to learn skills that focus, as those users do, on new technological and digitally based reference and research resources. They use tools rare book staff are far less at home in than they. For the reader whose needs focus on traditional books (and less traditional manuscripts), however, reference staff get far less daily reinforcement than rare book personnel.
27. Another such experience, as this paper reached completion, involved a couple researching the relationship of their 1891 second edition of a Mark Twain text to its first edition. They needed a bibliographical description of their edition. A reference librarian directed the couple to a biography of Twain, not to *BAL*—even though *BAL* (copy 1) is present in the reference collection; and even though biographical descriptions are not bibliographical descriptions. Directed to it by a rare book staff member, the couple found *BAL* (copy 2) in the rare book collection reference room, as well as the information they required.
28. The reorganization currently under way at the Brown University Library may suggest a model for other libraries, but even institutions that do not emerge with results that resemble Brown's will almost certainly undergo a similar process sooner or later: libraries are changing. For information on Brown's extensive reorganization, see http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/University_Library/MODEL/LTMG/, the library's Web site charting its progress. "Process Mapping: The User-Centered Approach to Organizational Design," a presentation by Raynna Bowlby, Dan O'Mahony, Pat Putney, and Steven Lavalee at the Living the Future 4 Conference (University of Arizona, April 2002) is also useful. I need hardly emphasize how the "user-centered" focus their title foregrounds suits my theme. The confer-

ence Web site preserves a PowerPoint runthrough of this presentation: http://www.library.arizona.edu/conference/ltf4/pres/brown_files/v3_document.htm. Bowlby is preparing an article about the Brown reorganization for print but does not expect to complete or publish it before the new plan is implemented. I am grateful to Raynna M. Bowlby (Organization & Staff Development Office) and Rosemary Cullen (head librarian, The Harris Collection), Brown University Library, for providing me with this information.

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