AN ATTITUDE SURVEY OF A SELECTED GROUP OF LIBRARIANS
WORKING WITH DISADVANTAGED YOUNG ADULTS IN
METROPOLITAN AREAS

A Thesis

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The decline of public libraries in the heart of the
Nation's metropolitan areas has become a problem of growing
concern to many librarians. Because of a shift of the
population from the large cities to the suburbs, public
libraries in the inner city no longer have an elite clientele
of middle-class city dwellers. Instead, many of the people
living in the cities are not familiar with libraries and do
not find the traditional library of value or interest.
Public libraries in the major urban areas are attempting
to develop programs that will serve this clientele, but
these programs are few in proportion to the number of people
who are not being provided library service suited to their
needs.

There are many problems involved in establishing
library service for the disadvantaged. One of the major
problems in attempting to organize library service for these
people is finding the right kinds of persons with whom to
staff the library. Most of the residents of the inner city
community are disadvantaged culturally, economically, and
socially. Many administrative librarians believe, as
Meredith Bloss does, that traditional librarians are not
the kind of people who can work successfully with the dis-
advantaged:

The profession suffers from incompatible
functions. Librarians run a data bank, a collection
of information. It is their traditional function
to assemble such information and become its custodian.
This requires a certain kind of person. That person
cannot be asked to take on a third role—that of a
social-service worker.[1]

Little is known about the kind of person who can

work effectively with the disadvantaged. It is hoped that

this study provides some information about the people

currently working with the disadvantaged and that it will

be a basis for further research on this subject.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The purposes of this

study were to identify the attitudes concerning library

service to the disadvantaged of a selected group of li-

brarians working with disadvantaged young adults, and to

determine the characteristics considered most important

by both librarians and administrators in providing library

service to disadvantaged young people.

Importance of the study. Traditional library service

is completely irrelevant to people in the inner city.[2]

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[1]Priscilla Dunhill, "Dust Gathers on the Public
Library," The Reporter, XXXVIII (June 13, 1968), 36.

[2]Ibid., p. 35.

The city public library must change if it is to become relevant and be able to serve the people of its community. The findings of this study may be significant in the selection of librarians to work with the disadvantaged. Also, it may have implications for library education programs and in-service training workshops.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Disadvantaged young adults. Persons between the ages of 12 and 20 living in metropolitan areas who are from families whose annual income is less than $3,000.

Librarian. A public library staff member who works directly with disadvantaged young adults, although not necessarily exclusively with that age group.

Library supervisor. A public library staff member in an administrative position who does not work directly with the disadvantaged.

Personality characteristics and attitudes. Beliefs held by librarians concerning library service to disadvantaged young adults as expressed in answers to questionnaires and in personal interviews.

Traditional library service. Public library service
designed primarily for middle-class, educated persons who
consider the library an important source of information.

III. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

In this study librarians and library supervisors
were questioned in order to determine what personal attitudes
or characteristics they consider important for working
with disadvantaged young adults and to identify attitudes
of librarians actually working with disadvantaged young
adults. Questionnaires and interviews were the tools used.

Although a few rural libraries offer library
service to the disadvantaged, most of the library programs
for the disadvantaged are in urban areas. These programs
are fairly new, and a relatively small number of librarians
are working full time with the disadvantaged. The librarians
questioned for this study include the recognized leaders in
the field of library service for the disadvantaged.

A list of names of librarians and library supervisors
offering library service to disadvantaged young adults was
compiled from all available sources: the current literature,
the roll of attendance at the High John Workshop, Neigh-
borhood Library Centers and Services[3] by the National Book
Committee, and names suggested by Miss Pauline Winnick,

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[3]National Book Committee, Neighborhood Library Centers
and Services (New York: The National Book Committee, 1967).

Public Library Specialist, Department of Health, Education,
and Welfare.

Two questionnaires were developed, pre-tested, and
revised. One was sent to librarians on the list, the other
sent to supervisors. The question asked of the supervisors
(see Appendix A) was open-ended and designed to determine
what personality characteristics of librarians working with
disadvantaged young adults are considered essential for this
type of library service.

The questions asked of librarians (see Appendix B)
were also open-ended and designed to determine which
characteristics librarians considered essential for pro-
viding effective library service to disadvantaged young
adults and to identify the librarians' personal attitudes
toward library service for the disadvantaged.

A total of 45 questionnaires was sent, 22 to li-
brary supervisors and 23 to librarians. Twelve were
returned from librarians. Two of the 12 were discarded
because the librarian did not actually have experience
working with disadvantaged young adults. Two librarians
received and completed the questionnaire designed for
library supervisors. Three additional librarians who had
not mailed back the questionnaire were interviewed, and they
answered the questions at that time. Five of the librarians
who had returned the questionnaire were interviewed. Data

were used from a total of 15 librarians working with
disadvantaged young adults.

TABLE I

SOURCES OF DATA

	Librarians	Library Supervisors
No. questionnaires sent	23	22
No. questionnaires returned	12	11
No. questionnaires discarded	2	2
No. people interviewed after completing questionnaire	5	2
No. people interviewed who did not receive a questionnaire	3	0
Total no. of people from whom data were used	15	9

Note:
    The total number of librarians from whom data were
used includes two librarians who were not interviewed and
who did not receive a questionnaire designed for the
librarians. They answered the questionnaire sent to their
supervisors.

Questionnaires from 11 library supervisors were
returned. Two were discarded because the administrators
did not actually supervise programs for disadvantaged young
adults. Two of the supervisors who returned the questionnaire
were interviewed. Data from a total of nine supervisors were
used.

The response to each question was analyzed.
Since the questions were open-ended, librarians and library
supervisors used many different terms in answering them.
These terms were grouped according to similarity of meaning.

Characteristics considered important by librarians
were compared to those considered important by supervisors.
The comparison was made by converting the data to percentages
of the total number of librarians or supervisors listing
a particular characteristic.

Finally, each questionnaire completed by librarians
was analyzed in its entirety. In addition to the librarians'
attitudes or beliefs which were evident in answers to
individual questions, librarians expressed several similar
beliefs at different points on the questionnaire or in the
interview. That is, one librarian would indicate a certain
attitude toward library service for the disadvantaged in
his discussion pertaining to one question, while another
librarian would indicate the same attitude in his discussion
of a different question. Therefore, an analysis of the
total data was made as well as an analysis of individual
questions.

IV. PLAN OF THE STUDY

Chapter I of this study presents the problem and
a brief background of the problem. Definitions of terms
and an explanation of the research procedures are presented.

Chapter II includes a review of the literature relating
to this problem. The problems of offering library service
to disadvantaged young adults are outlined. Characteristics
thought to be desirable for young adult librarians and for
teachers working with disadvantaged young adults are
discussed. This chapter also contains a brief review of
four programs of library service for the disadvantaged.
Chapter III describes the data collected. Chapter IV
contains a summary, a statement of limitations, the
conclusions and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

I. INTRODUCTION

As Shera explained in his study, public library
service in the United States has always followed social
change and needs.[1] In recent years the library needs of a
special segment of the population have become apparent to a
great many people. Previously, most Americans were unaware
of the great number of people in this country who were
economically and culturally deprived. Disadvantaged young
adults had been especially handicapped by a lack of attention
to their condition.

Several factors are responsible for the fact that
people are now becoming aware of many Americans who are
not a part of the affluent society. The Negro protest
movement and books such as John Kenneth Galbraith's The
Affluent Society[2] and Michael Harrington's The Other
America: Poverty in the United States[3] have helped to

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[1] Jesse H. Shera, Foundations of the Public Library
(Chicago: Shoe String Press, Inc., 1965), p. 248.

[2] John Kenneth Galbraith, The Affluent Society
(Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1958).

[3] Michael Harrington, The Other America: Poverty
in the United States (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963).

focus attention on the poor. President Kennedy's task force reported an "unduly high rate of rejections on Army induction tests for mental and physical deficiencies,"[4] thus illustrating the fact that for many young adults, minimum educational needs are not being met. Studies have indicated that between 1960 and 1970, five and two tenths million young people entering the labor market will not have completed high school, and that by 1970 only five per cent of available jobs will be open to unskilled persons.[5]

Reports such as these have focused attention on the problem of poverty and helped make it easier for Congress to pass much needed social legislation called for by President Johnson in his State of the Union message on January 8, 1964, when he declared "an unconditional war on poverty."

In spite of efforts by the staff of the Office of Economic Opportunity which was created by the passage of the Anti-Poverty Bill, clearly, the problem of meeting educational needs of disadvantaged young adults still exists.

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[4]Franklin Parker, "Salvaging School Failures: the Job Corps Acts," Phi Delta Kappan, XLIX (March, 1968), 364.

[5]Loc. cit.

It is well known that the poor—as all of us—
will accept help from those who treat them as per-
sons of worth and will resist the worker who acts
"as one having authority." Thus, there is need for
an educational institution with an informal atmos-
phere which will meet the poor on their home ground
and whose workers will give individual help on a
basis of mutual acceptance.[6]

The disadvantaged are no longer invisible. Society
is now recognizing a responsibility toward them, and since
the "objectives of the public library are directly dependent
upon the objectives of society itself,"[7] libraries, too,
are beginning to become aware of a role they will be called
upon to play if educational needs of disadvantaged young
people are to be met. The public library has its founda-
tions in educational objectives, yet only a few libraries
are currently trying to make a significant contribution to
the educational advancement of disadvantaged young people.

II. PROBLEMS OF SERVICE TO THE DISADVANTAGED

There are several problems involved in offering
services to disadvantaged young adults: the disadvantaged
young adult is not familiar with the library; there are
few materials designed specifically for the disadvantaged;

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[6]National Book Committee, op. cit., p. 1.

[7]Shera, op. cit., p. 248.

traditional concepts of library programs are limited to those areas of interest to middle class citizens. One of the major problems, however, is discovering the type of person needed to work effectively with disadvantaged young adults. Little is known about this type of person. A review of the literature indexed in Library Literature from 1955 to 1968 revealed no research dealing with personality characteristics or attitudes of librarians working with disadvantaged young adults. Few studies have been done on characteristics of librarians in general. Douglass, in 1957, found that librarians tended to be characterized by order-liness, conscientiousness, conservatism and conformity. Furthermore, they tended to be apathetic, introspective and lacking in strong convictions, and free from anxiety.[8] It is not known if any or all of these characteristics are typical of librarians working with disadvantaged young adults.

III. DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUNG ADULT LIBRARIANS

It has been suggested that the key to effective library service to young adults is a qualified staff, and, though there is little research in the area, in the opinion of many librarians, some characteristics listed by

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[8]Robert Raymond Douglass, "The Personality of the Librarian" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1957), pp. 122 ff.

Douglass are not the most desirable for working with young

adults. Winnick says the young adult librarian must be

sincere, flexible, consistent, and mature.[9] Scoggin says

he must be wise, patient, courteous, understanding, and

really believe that the readers are more important than

routines.[10] Edwards says he must be emotionally balanced,

not self-centered, and interested in young adults.[11]

Winnick, Scoggin, and Edwards state that the young adult

librarian must have a sense of humor, must know books,

actually read them, and enjoy talking about the books

young adults like.[12]

But the needs of the disadvantaged are not

necessarily the same as the needs of ordinary young adults.

Disadvantaged young people are apt to be even more sensitive

than ordinary teenagers. The library environment is often

strange to them. They will not feel secure unless the

librarian is one who can minimize their awareness of their

[9]Pauline Winnick, "You—the Librarian Working with Young Adults," Bookmark, XXIV (March, 1965), 179-180.

[10]Margaret Scoggin, "First Catch Your Hare," ALA Bulletin, LIII (June, 1959), 57.

[11]Margaret A. Edwards, "The Fair Garden and the Swarm of Beasts," Library Journal, XC (September, 1965), 3382.

[12]Winnick, op. cit. p. 179; Scoggin, op. cit., p. 57; Edwards, op. cit., p. 3382.

disadvantages;[13] thus, the librarian working with dis-
advantaged young adults must be aware of the fact that the
similarities between the disadvantaged and other teen-
agers are more important than their differences.[14] The
disadvantaged "basically have the values, aspirations,
and goals of other American teenagers."[15]

The librarian must be able to communicate with
the disadvantaged. He must be able to accept differences,
shift "attitudes toward those of another culture," and
learn "techniques for bridging social distances."[16] To
communicate, the librarian must recognize that the indi-
vidual teenager is important. He must be willing to
accept him as a worthwhile human being and be willing to
work on a one to one basis. "These people who come in
/to work as librarians7 trying to improve the masses are
just jiving themselves," states Donald Roberts of the
Venice Library.[17]

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[13]Bessie Bullock, "Case Two," in Library Service for
the Undereducated, ed. by Dorothy Bendix (Philadelphia:
Drexel Press, 1966), p. 33.

[14]Richard Moses, "Working with Neighborhood Centers,"
Top of the News, XXIII (January, 1967), 142.

[15]Ann Littlejohn, "In Bedford-Stuyvesant," Top of
the News, XXIII (January, 1967), 146.

[16]Jean L. Conner, "A Study of Four Library Programs
for Disadvantaged Persons; A Summary," Bookmark, XXVII
(April, 1968), 256.

[17]Evelyn Geller, "This Is My Beat," Library Journal,
XCIII (January 15, 1968), 263.

People are important, and effective work means work with individuals, thus, change may come about slowly. Working with teenagers in disadvantaged communities calls for "dedication and patience and the long view."[18]

IV. CHARACTERISTICS OF TEACHERS OF DISADVANTAGED

Although relatively little has been written about desirable characteristics for librarians working with disadvantaged young people, there are several recent articles and books about teachers of these youngsters. To be effective, librarians, like teachers, will need to relate to disadvantaged young people, thus, characteristics deemed desirable for effective teachers may also be desirable for librarians.

Those teachers judged successful in their work with disadvantaged young adults were those who were truly concerned with each individual, were susceptible to change, patient, excited, dedicated, eager, and "warm." They were not necessarily free from "fears and apprehension,"[19] but they did acquire "wholesome attitudes about and perceptions of underprivileged children."[20]

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[18]Margaret A. Edwards, "A Long Way to Tipperary," in The Library Reaches Out, ed. by Kate Coplan and Edwin Castagna (Dobbs Ferry, New York: Oceana Publications, 1965), p. 156.

[19]Jack Epstein, Cecilia H. Fink, and Billy D. Hauserman, "Teachers for the Disadvantaged—Project Mission," National Elementary Principal, XLVI (January, 1967), 14.

[20]Ibid., p. 16.

Many teachers contend that teachers' attitudes
have an effect on pupil achievement, among them Jonathan
Kozol and Herbert Kohl who have documented their contentions
in Death at an Early Age[21] and 36 Children[22] respectively.
Both of these books present case histories showing how
children react to teachers who truly love and accept them
and to teachers who think the youngsters should be different
than they are.

Teachers are beginning to realize that measuring
a child's ability by predetermined standards is probably
not the most effective method of education, and that a
more open minded acceptance may be a better way. As Fader
states, "The child is. We've never managed to find out who
or what he is because we've been so fatally distracted by
who we are and what we want him to be."[23]

V. CURRENT PROGRAMS OF LIBRARY SERVICE TO DISADVANTAGED

The need for organizing programs of library service
for the disadvantaged is most acute in large cities where the

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[21] Jonathan Kozol, Death at an Early Age (Boston:
Houghton-Mifflin, 1967).

[22] Herbert Kohl, 36 Children (New York: The New
American Library, 1967).

[23] Daniel N. Fader and Elton B. McNeil, Hooked on
Books: Program and Proof (New York: Berkley Publishing
Corporation, 1968), p. 2.

disadvantaged are concentrated. In 1967, Baltimore library patrons were primarily students and suburbanites, yet the community served contained a large number of disadvantaged.[24]

Several public libraries in urban areas, including Baltimore, are now using aggressive means to provide service to the disadvantaged. But since so little is known about effective service to the disadvantaged, these programs are necessarily experimental in nature. Also, most of these programs of library service to the disadvantaged are of recent origin since federal funds became available after the Library Services and Construction Act of 1964. Consequently, many of these programs are so new that a meaningful evaluation of their effect on their communities may not be possible. Nevertheless, programs do exist, and some insight into the problem may be gained by a brief analysis of some of these programs.

A few cities established service to the disadvantaged without federal funds. The Library Reaches Out[25] describes a variety of such service programs which were available to people in some areas as far back as the middle 1950's. However, most of the projects aimed at providing library

[24]Lowell A. Martin, Baltimore Reaches Out; Library Service to the Disadvantaged (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1967), p. 40.

[25]Kate Coplan and Edwin Castagna, ed., The Library Reaches Out (Dobbs Ferry, New York: Oceana Publication, 1965).

service for the disadvantaged are a result of the use of
federal funds and are not an integral part of the public
library system through which they are administered.
Following are brief reviews of four special projects that,
together, describe most of the current aspects of library
service to the disadvantaged.

New Haven Library Neighborhood Center. The New
Haven, Connecticut, demonstration Library Neighborhood
Center is not typical of many other projects in that it
was not financed initially by federal funds. The city of
New Haven and the Ford Foundation financed it for three
years as a demonstration project. The New Haven Public
Library now receives federal funds for three additional
centers.[26] Emphasis at New Haven has been placed on "reach-
ing out" activities. Librarians and workers visit regularly
in the community with "at least one community contact re-
quired each month."[27] The Library Center cooperates
closely with other agencies in the community.[28] The first
center was housed in a store in the neighborhood and
attracted patrons from that neighborhood principally be-
cause of its familiar surroundings.

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[26]National Book Committee, op. cit., p. 36.

[27]Ibid., p. 37.

[28]Ibid., p. 38.

Brooklyn Public Library. The work with the dis-
advantaged in the Brooklyn library centers was begun by
volunteers from the regular library staff who acted as
liaison workers between the library and the people of the
community.[29] Through these librarians, the library was
shown to be a source of information and aid. With federal
assistance, these volunteer librarians were relieved of
regular library duties and were allowed to go directly to
the people. Their objective was to involve the people in
planning community activities and library services.[30]

Brooklyn has experimented with many new approaches
to community library service. Books have been taken to
the people in disadvantaged areas by putting shelves of
books in bars and barbershops and by setting up sidewalk
displays.[31] Immediate and friendly service is offered to
patrons coming into the library building. However, John
Frantz, Director of the Brooklyn Public Library, states
that "librarians too frequently lack the ability or the
background" to offer friendly service to disadvantaged

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[29]Ibid., p. 42.

[30]Loc. cit.

[31]John C. Frantz, "Big City Libraries: Strategy
and Tactics for Change," Library Journal, XCIII (May 15,
1968), 1970.

patrons. Thus, a person from the area which the library serves is often used as a "host" in the library.[32]

High John Project. High John is the name used for an experimental library in Fairmount Heights, Maryland. The title of the project is "A New Approach to Education Preparation for Public Library Service: an Experiemntal Program in Library Education for Work with a Specialized Clientele." The program is operated by the School of Library and Information Services at the University of Maryland and is funded by federal funds.[33]

The High John Library is housed in a remodeled neighborhood house that blends with the rest of the area. The rooms are crowded and purposely cluttered.[34] Richard Moses, director of the project, states that "the Library has no mission, no moral imperative, it is not on a literary crusade."[35] It is an experiment designed to "find ways to initiate change in the library field."[36] The students from the Maryland Library School do most of the library's work with the disadvantaged. One of the students' greatest

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[32]Loc. cit.

[33]"High John," Library Journal, XCIII (January 15, 1968), 147.

[34]Ibid., p. 149.

[35]Ibid., p. 150.

[36]Ibid., p. 147.

problems has been "adjustment both to the flexibility initiated by Moses and to a community that wasn't just dying to take books off the shelves."[37] They are full of "doubts, fears, and frustrations" as well as "hope and desire" that the program will succeed.[38]

Books and materials are selected at the High John Library on the basis of what the community wants. Rules and regulations are kept to a minimum. The persons directing the project, Richard Moses and Geraldine Hall, are "people oriented."[39]

Venice Library. The Venice branch of the Los Angeles Public Library is another federally funded project offering library services to the disadvantaged. Emphasis of the program is on "outreach" on a person-to-person basis. "Publicity and even programming rank second to intuition and personality when it comes to pulling people into the library."[40]

The Venice Branch serves a specific area, and the librarians are able to spend a great deal of time on the streets, or talking to individuals or groups.

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[37] Ibid., p. 152.

[38] Ibid., p. 153.

[39] Ibid., p. 155.

[40] Geller, op. cit., p. 260.

Donald Roberts, federal projects librarian, insists that
librarians must know the community. The Venice branch
concentrates on providing information the community wants,
and the community supports it heartily.[41] It is not likely
that the Venice project will be dropped if federal funds
are withdrawn.[42]

VI. SUMMARY

Public libraries, with the assistance of federal
funds in many instances, are beginning to offer service to
disadvantaged persons concentrated in urban areas. These
special programs are characterized, in part, by librarians
taking the initiative in meeting the people of the community
and determining their needs. The following methods are
most often used to interest people in the library: op-
erating branches in low income neighborhoods, taking
materials to existing shops or areas, visiting personally
with people on the streets, and talking to organized
groups of people. The programs are flexible and, in most
instances, experimental. Also, there are as yet no criteria
for measuring personality traits of the librarians working
with the disadvantaged, but there appears to be agreement
that they should have some special skills and abilities

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[41]Ibid., p. 264.

[42]Loc. cit.

in order to provide effective library service. On the basis of an examination of library literature, covering the period from 1955 to 1968, no data are available concerning the characteristics these librarians actually possess.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION OF DATA

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study has been to identify attitudes of librarians working with disadvantaged young adults. This information was obtained from questionnaires completed by librarians and library supervisors and from personal interviews. A summary of the data is presented in this chapter.

Tables II through IX are compilations of data reported in answers, either written or spoken, to specific questions. A summary of information obtained from an analysis of the entire questionnaire and from interviews is presented in Table XI. Information was grouped according to similarities in answers and an explanation of the meaning of the terms used in the tables is included in the discussion of each table.

II. THE DATA

Librarians working with disadvantaged young adults appeared cordial, communicative and eager to help. Eight of the 15 librarians, from whom questionnaire data were obtained, were interviewed. Without exception, these eight librarians met the interviewer with a smile and the

assurance that they were eager to help with this study in any way they could. Of the seven who were not interviewed, one stated specifically he hoped his answers would be helpful. Four answered in detail with personal comments to the writer; their desire to be helpful could not be mistaken. The other two librarians had not received the questionnaire sent to librarians (Appendix B) but had received the questionnaire sent to library supervisors (Appendix A). They answered briefly. The 13 librarians who either returned the questionnaire sent to librarians or were interviewed were able to communicate effectively.

The Library as an Agency for Change

Most of the librarians expressed a belief that the library can be an effective agency for social change and that the programs of library service to the disadvantaged can bring about changes in the traditional concept of library service.

Table II is a summary of the data obtained from the question concerning the library as an agency for social change. Ten of the 12 librarians who answered the question considered the library to be an effective agency for social change and were quite definite in this belief. They used exclamation marks or forceful terms such as "definitely" or "indeed" in answering the questionnaire. In the interviews, without exception, they expressed a firm belief in

the effectiveness of the library in bringing about social change even though they cautioned against over optimism in expecting any such change to come about rapidly.

Table II indicates, in terms of broad categories, the ways in which the librarians thought that the library could become an effective agency for social change.

TABLE II

THE LIBRARY AS AN EFFECTIVE AGENCY FOR SOCIAL CHANGE
(Librarians Reporting—12; Strong Convictions—10)

	Number of times listed
Know the community	7
Become a center	6
Make available resource media	6
Influence other agencies	5
Evaluate and change	3
Uncertain of effect	2

Only two librarians indicated they were uncertain of the library's effect, but they were not in any way discouraged. One of these two stated he was simply too inexperienced as yet to be sure. The other indicated that he was uncertain because of the slowness of change. Both, however, stated in the interview that they believed in the potential of the library as an effective agency for change

or they would not have chosen to be librarians. They were

not, however, as certain in their belief as the other ten.

Seven of the 12 librarians indicated in some way

that in order for the library to be an effective agency

for social change, the librarian must go into the community

and get to know the people. As one person put it, it is

"necessary to get out of the ivory tower and circulate."

Others indicated the librarian must become involved with

individuals as well as groups in order to discover the

needs of the community. The most common responses in

this area were simply: go into the community and work

with people.

Six librarians thought the library should become

a community center. Individuals explained what they meant

by suggesting ideas for programs (film shows, record

parties, dances, etc.), stating a philosophy of librarian-

ship (assume a role as "catalyst, intermediary, provider

of opportunity" by "opening wide its meeting rooms, inviting

the controversial, etc."), and making statements to the

effect that the library facilities and resources should

get maximum use by the taxpayers by becoming, as one person

said, "a great place to hang out."

Six librarians emphasized the importance of making

available resource media of all kinds, including books

(both hard back and paper back) and "electric media," that
the disadvantaged teenagers want rather than what a li-
brarian thinks they should have. At the same time, pro-
viding information that is necessary for the individual
teenager to gain new insight, learn new skills, or solve
problems was considered extremely important. As one
respondent said, the information needed may not be what
the conventional library stocks. He emphasized that the
media must "relate to social change," that there be "no
punches barred, no moralizing." Material on such subjects
as "dope, VD, consumer education, how to put a baby up for
adoption" must be made available to disadvantaged young
adults. Media supplied by the library must reflect the
needs and wants of the disadvantaged young adult, and it
must be understandable to him. This feeling was typical
of all the librarians and is discussed more in relation to
characteristics or beliefs evident from an analysis of the
total data.

Five librarians stated the library was one type of
agency that could bring about change, but that cooperation
with all agencies was one method the library could utilize
in meeting the needs of the community. By promoting and
advertising the resources it has to offer, the library may
influence other agencies. Librarians believed the example
of change in an agency such as the library could be effective
in bringing about change in other institutions and agencies

that are currently operating much the same way they have
operated for years and are not actually serving the community
they were created to serve.

While only three librarians stated that the li-
brary must change, this contention is implied in the kind
of nontraditional service these librarians described. One
librarian's response was typical: "/The library/ must give
up its stance as a pillar of morality, an uplifter (what-
ever that is)." Another indicated that the library is
not doing in the community what it should be doing and that
librarians must be willing to appraise their position
honestly, accept criticism, and build an institution
based on social change. This conviction that the traditional
system must be changed is discussed further with respect to
the characteristics that were apparent from an analysis of
the total data.

Each librarian who was asked whether or not he
thought traditional library service might be influenced by
library programs to disadvantaged young adults stated that
programs for disadvantaged young adults can bring about
changes in the traditional concept and practice of library
service. Only three mentioned specifically that they were
not optimistic about the chances of any rapid change, but
the prevailing attitude was guarded in this respect. While

each believed in his work, most indicated a realistic
appraisal of the limitations of present programs in
bringing about rapid change. The recurring term they
used was "Hope."

TABLE III

CHANGE IN TRADITIONAL LIBRARY SERVICE
(Librarians Reporting—12; No. Believing in Impact—12)

	Number of times listed
By serving all of the community	7
By setting an example	4
By experimenting	3

The categories in Table III are reflections of
explicit statements, but "experimenting" and "serving all
the community" were spoken of in terms of ways of setting
examples. Therefore, all the librarians believed that the
programs in disadvantaged areas could have an impact on
traditional library service by showing what could be done
or by setting an example. The seven who mentioned serving
all the community indicated the methods being developed
in service to the disadvantaged could also be effective in
serving any type of community. One person stated the library
could show that service need not be offered in the same
routine way just because "we've always done it that way."
Another indicated library programs could set examples for

other agencies such as schools. And several mentioned
that traditional ways of selecting and handling media can
be questioned and changes brought about by experimentation.
One person stated a belief that these programs will affect
education programs in library schools, because, as he
explained, libraries in large cities simply are going to
disappear if they do not begin to serve their communities.
He believed that since the library no longer interests
most of the people living in the inner city, "the jig is
up with traditional library service." If libraries in the
inner city are not used, financial support will probably be
withdrawn. Therefore, "desperate administrators" will
probably demand librarians who have been trained to work
with the disadvantaged in order to, as the respondent put
it, "save their bag."

Goals of Programs Serving Disadvantaged Young Adults

Table IV is a summary of the data obtained from
the question dealing with personal goals in working with
disadvantaged young adults. Two of the 11 librarians who
answered this question stated they had no particular
goals except to serve disadvantaged young adults in what-
ever way they could. It was evident, however, from the
answers these two librarians gave to other questions that
they had definite ideas of what that service should be.

TABLE IV

GOALS OF LIBRARY PROGRAMS OF SERVICE TO
DISADVANTAGED YOUNG ADULTS
(Librarians Reporting—11)

	Number of times listed
Bring about self awareness	6
Provide media aimed at community needs	3
Help DYA explore ideas	2
Involve DYA	2
Change concept of traditional service	2
Other goals	3
No particular goals	2

Of the nine librarians listing particular goals,
six indicated that a primary objective is to help the
disadvantaged young adult become aware of himself as a
worthwhile member of his society as well as society as a
whole. Emphasis was placed on helping him to gain a sense
of his own integrity and dignity as well as to relate to
"the things of benefit and culture which surround him."

Providing media aimed at community needs could be
thought of as a method for achieving goals, but three of
the librarians listed this as a goal of their library. One
included providing facilities for activities. Emphasis
was placed on nonbook media or materials that "make sense

to the young adult." Specifically mentioned was a "rock collection," a collection of tapes or records of the music young adults deem essential.

The two librarians who listed helping young adults explore ideas and become acquainted with the "world of language" also mentioned as one of their goals helping the young adult become aware of himself as a member of a broader society. "Exploring ideas" could be, again, a means to a goal, but it was stated as a goal by two librarians.

The two librarians who listed involving disadvantaged young adults in library activities explained that they encourage young adults to offer advice on programs. They said they welcome participation in the library processes by all people of all races. Here again, involvement might be considered a means to a goal.

Although only two librarians stated explicitly their goal was to change the traditional concept of library service, the idea is implicit in the goals suggested by the other librarians.

Three more goals were listed, once each: to "curb the cycle of poverty," to "back young adults in community activities," and to "be there."

Reasons for Working with Disadvantaged Young Adults

Table V presents a summary of the information obtained from answers to the question relating to the

reasons librarians were working with disadvantaged young

adults. Of the four librarians whose answers were counted

in the category "likes young people," two indicated a personal

interest in disadvantaged young people because they were

more "volatile, intellectually curious," and interesting

than ordinary young adults. The other two librarians

indicated their interest in young adults stemmed from the

fact that young adults are the key to the future.

TABLE V

REASONS FOR WORKING WITH DISADVANTAGED
YOUNG ADULTS
(Librarians Reporting—11)

	Number of times listed
Likes young people	4
Society's need	4
Ability to relate to people	3
Unstructured activity	3
Assignment	2

Four librarians stated a conviction that there is

a need for someone to do something to help people and

society. They felt they should.

In relation to society's need for help, two other

librarians indicated they were aware of their own special

ability and/or desire to relate to people. One person

who listed society's need also indicated he felt he was able to help.

Three librarians stated they preferred an unstructured activity such as library work with, as opposed to teaching, the disadvantaged.

Two librarians indicated they had been assigned work with the disadvantaged.

Library Aid to Disadvantaged Young Adults

Table VI is a summary of information gathered from answers to the question pertaining to the ways the library can bring about desirable changes in disadvantaged young adults.

TABLE VI

WAYS THE LIBRARY CAN HELP THE DISADVANTAGED
YOUNG ADULT
(Librarians Reporting—13; Strong Convictions—13)

	Number of times listed
Provide opportunity for change	12
Build self esteem	6

All of the librarians who explained ways in which the library could help disadvantaged youth were emphatic in their statements of belief that the library could help. None indicated change in the situation of the disadvantaged would be very rapid.

Twelve of the librarians responding to this question indicated the best way the library could help disadvantaged young adults is simply by providing an opportunity for change by making information available which the young adult wants or needs. Three librarians made positive statements that it is not the job of the library to decide what kind of change should be expected. As one librarian said, "If they are a dropout from society, it's not for us to tell them to drop back in."

Six librarians indicated the library could help the disadvantaged young adult build his self esteem by showing concern for him and being available for whatever help the youth needed.

Characteristics of Disadvantaged Young Adults

Table VII presents a summary of the information obtained from the question concerning the ways disadvantaged young adults differ from other young adults.

TABLE VII

WAYS DISADVANTAGED YOUNG ADULTS DIFFER
(Librarians Reporting—13)

	Number of times listed
No basic difference	12
Feel left out of society	9
Impatient	4
Distrustful	2

Of the 13 librarians answering this question, all but one prefaced or concluded his remarks with the statement that, basically, there is no difference between disadvantaged young adults and other young adults. As one person said, "Kids are kids." Others indicated any differences were a matter of degree.

Nine librarians indicated disadvantaged young adults felt they, as individuals, were not able to be a part of the rest of society. They lacked self confidence, felt "hopeless," or that there was no way they could ever become a part of society. One librarian explained that the young adult felt he had to conform or make himself over in order to become a part of society.

Four librarians stated that disadvantaged young adults were impatient, that is, they had no ability to work for deferred goals, felt only those things that granted immediate satisfaction were worthwhile, and that the library was of no use to them.

Two librarians said disadvantaged young adults were distrustful. One librarian, the one who did not indicate he believed there was no basic difference, said this distrust was understandable. This librarian was not interviewed.

Characteristics of Librarians Working with
Disadvantaged Young Adults

Over 55 terms were used by librarians in describing
the characteristics they believed desirable in people
working with disadvantaged young adults. Through thorough
analysis, clarification in interviews, and interpretation,
the terms have been grouped into the fifteen different
categories summarized in Table VIII. Nine of the 15
librarians who responded to this question on the question-
naire stated that characteristics needed to work with
disadvantaged young adults were no different from those
needed to work with any group of people.

Librarians did not use the term "ability to relate
to people." It was chosen for use in Table VIII to summarize
and group words and terms they did use such as "appreciation,"
"liking," "love," "acceptance," "identification," "empathy,"
"not patronizing," "not condescending," "concern," "be
there," "eager to listen," "dedicated," "dependable,"
"sensitive," "desire for understanding," "humility,"
"willing to learn from young adults," etc.

Only two of the 15 librarians answering the
question did not state in some manner that the quality of
relating to people is a characteristic necessary for
effective work with disadvantaged young adults. One of
these librarians was interviewed and implicit in the dis-
cussion was the fact that he did consider this trait an

important quality to possess. The other librarian who did
not mention it answered only this one question on the
questionnaire and did so in a very brief manner giving no
explanations or illustrations of the meaning of the terms
he used.

TABLE VIII

CHARACTERISTICS LIBRARIANS CONSIDER IMPORTANT IN
WORKING WITH DISADVANTAGED YOUNG ADULTS
(Librarians Reporting—15)

	Number of times listed
Ability to relate to people	13
Flexibility	11
Honesty	9
Knowledge of DYA problems	6
Sense of humor	6
Ability to communicate	5
Calmness	4
Race	4
Optimism	3
Knowledge of materials	2
Enthusiasm	2
Patience	2
Age	2
Energy	1
Curiosity	1
Self confidence	1

"Flexibility," as used by the librarians, includes characteristics such as the ability to do things differently from traditional ways, an openness to different ideas and cultures, creativity, and a willingness to suspend any or all rules and regulations that could interfere with service to people. Eleven librarians mentioned this quality in unmistakeable terms.

The characteristic "honesty" was mentioned specifically by nine of the librarians. It includes the idea of being honest with the young adults and with oneself. Librarians said that one should not over promise, not pretend understanding, and admit freely the probability that prejudice exists. Significantly, two Negro librarians admitted prejudice within themselves and felt everyone had some prejudices but that, in the words of one of them, "An honest acknowledgement of prejudice can allow one to work above it." One white librarian also stated he was sure he had to deal with his own prejudice, and another implied it. The writer did not initiate a discussion of prejudices.

Six of the librarians believed a knowledge of the problems of the disadvantaged young adult was necessary. Some felt the problems of the disadvantaged in general should be familiar to the librarian; some felt that the problems of young people in general should be known and understood, and one person included the life or "world"

of disadvantaged young people, not just the problems.

Six librarians felt that a sense of humor was an absolute essential in working with disadvantaged young adults. Terms used in describing this characteristic were more emphatic than those used for any other characteristic except "ability to relate to people." Having a sense of humor could be part of relating to people, but six people mentioned it in addition to terms interpreted as meaning an ability to relate to people. One librarian stated that an ability to laugh at his own mistakes helped to establish rapport. Another indicated a sense of humor enabled him to stand the frustrations of his work.

The "ability to communicate" was listed by five of the same librarians who listed an "ability to relate to people." One used the term "'hipp' ness"; another explained the importance of speaking the language of the disadvantaged young adult.

Four librarians indicated calmness is a desirable characteristic although it was not a term used by any of the librarians. Their terms were much more definitive, such as "keep your cool," "not up tight," "relaxed attitude," and "unshockability." The implication in their explanations seemed to be that the young adults may attempt to shock or try the librarian, and that the librarian should not react in a way to indicate disapproval.

Four librarians made a point of stating that race made no difference in serving disadvantaged young adults. Two of these librarians were Negro. Three put no qualifications whatsoever on their contention. The fourth, a white librarian, believed a Negro had an initial advantage, but that it soon disappeared.

Three librarians mentioned the characteristic "optimism" which includes the stronger statements that the librarian must have a conviction that injustices can be righted, and that libraries can be of help to the disadvantaged.

Only two librarians indicated a knowledge of materials was important. Materials include all media as well as all sources of information and knowledge itself.

The term "enthusiasm" was not defined by either of the two librarians using it.

One librarian called the characteristic interpreted as "patience," "unbugability." The other stated the librarian working with disadvantaged young adults must be able to take frustration.

One librarian said youth was a necessary characteristic. Another said age was not important.

Energy, curiosity, and self confidence were mentioned once each. Energy referred to physical stamina; curiosity was not explained; the librarian using the term "self

confidence" explained it as a knowing or awareness of self identity. He called it "security." For that reason it was not tabulated as "honesty."

Table IX is based on data from interviews of library supervisors and answers to questionnaires sent to them. All of the library supervisors indicated they did believe a special type of librarian was necessary in order to offer library service to disadvantaged young adults. Several supervisors gave examples of librarians who could not work well in a disadvantaged area but who performed well when transferred to another area.

The terms used to tabulate characteristics listed by the supervisors mean the same as those used to tabulate characteristics listed by the librarians with the exception of "patient," "self confidence," and "flexibility." Four of the six supervisors who used the term "patient" explained it as meaning an ability to work in a system that could not effect rapid change. The two other supervisors used it with respect to working with individual young adults.

The term "self confidence" as used by the supervisors meant a stable person, sure of his ability. One supervisor cautioned that too much confidence could be detrimental.

The word "flexibility" as used by the supervisors meant adapting to different situations rather than the more specific meaning of doing different things in different ways.

TABLE IX

CHARACTERISTICS SUPERVISORS CONSIDER IMPORTANT IN
WORKING WITH DISADVANTAGED YOUNG ADULTS
(Supervisors Reporting—9)

	Number of times listed
Ability to relate to people	8
Honesty	7
Flexibility	6
Patience	6
Ability to communicate	5
Knowledge of materials	4
Calmness	3
Optimism	3
Self confidence	3
Knowledge of DYA problems	2
Energy	2
Sense of humor	1

Table X shows the percentage of the librarians and the percentage of the library supervisors who listed each characteristic. An explanation of each characteristic appears in discussions relating to Tables VIII and IX.

TABLE X

COMPARISON OF CHARACTERISTICS LISTED BY
LIBRARIANS AND LIBRARY SUPERVISORS
(Librarians Reporting—15; Supervisors Reporting—9)

	Librarians	Supervisors
Ability to relate to people	86% (13)	88% (8)
Flexibility	73% (11)	66% (6)
Honesty	60% (9)	77% (7)
Knowledge of problems	40% (6)	22% (2)
Sense of humor	40% (6)	.11% (1)
Ability to communicate	33% (5)	55% (5)
Calmness	26% (4)	33% (3)
Race	26% (4)	0% (0)
Optimism	20% (3)	33% (3)
Knowledge of materials	13% (2)	44% (4)
Enthusiasm	13% (2)	0% (0)
Patience	13% (2)	66% (6)
Age	13% (2)	0% (0)
Energy	7% (1)	22% (2)
Curiosity	7% (1)	0% (0)
Self confidence	7% (1)	33% (3)

Table XI shows characteristics of librarians
based on an analysis of all the data. Tables II through
X present summaries of data from individual questions. The
information summarized in Table XI was scattered throughout
the questionnaires and the interviews.

TABLE XI

CHARACTERISTICS APPARENT FROM AN ANALYSIS
OF ALL THE DATA
(Librarians Reporting—13)

	Number of librarians who expressed attitude
Belief in use of aggressive methods	13
Belief in use of all resources	12
Awareness of needs of disadvantaged young adults	11
Conviction of need for change	10
Belief in being available	7
Belief in youth participation	6

Thirteen librarians explained the importance of
using aggressive or dynamic methods in offering library
service to disadvantaged young adults. They believed in
taking what the library has to offer to the people of the
community. They indicated several specific ways to contact
these persons, and all were in favor of going into the
community and meeting people on a face-to-face basis.

In answering the specific question concerning characteristics they believed to be important, only two librarians expressed a belief in the importance of knowing materials. But 12 librarians made specific statements about sources of information at various points in the interview or on the questionnaire. They mentioned the necessity for using all types of media and knowing other agencies, people, institutions, etc. that could provide any information disadvantaged young adults wanted or needed.

Eleven librarians made clear their awareness of the needs of disadvantaged young adults. They stated that disadvantaged young adults need to gain self respect and a sense of their own dignity. Each of these eleven librarians either stated or implied that they felt they, personally, could help in this respect.

Ten librarians expressed unmistakeably their conviction of the need for a change in or impatience with traditional library service and the slowness with which any change was being brought about.

Seven librarians emphasized the importance of being approachable and available to young adults for any kind of help the young adult needed or wanted. Three librarians used the expression "be there." The librarians expressing this attitude also emphasized the complete acceptance of whatever direction the disadvantaged young adult was taking.

None implied in any way a passiveness on the part of the
library or librarian was acceptable to him, but simply that
it was not the librarian's duty to decide what it was the
young adult should want.

Only six librarians specifically mentioned the
importance of involving the young people in the library
processes. Only two librarians mentioned involving them
in planning.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

I. SUMMARY

The purpose of this study has been to identify
attitudes and characteristics of librarians working with
disadvantaged young adults and to determine what charac-
teristics librarians and library supervisors considered
essential for effective library service to disadvantaged
young adults.

Data were gathered by an open-ended questionnaire
and personal interview. The meanings of the terms used
to tabulate specific characteristics were defined and
explained, in part, by quoting typical responses. Data
from each question on the questionnaire were analyzed and
presented separately. Characteristics considered important
by librarians and by library supervisors were compared.
Results of an analysis of the total data were presented in
a separate table.

II. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations of this study are as follows.
The programs for disadvantaged young adults are new, and
not enough time has elapsed for proper evaluation.

Although 25 of the 45 questionnaires were answered, the sample may not have been large enough to yield significant data concerning personality characteristics of librarians now working with disadvantaged young adults.

III. CONCLUSIONS

Attitudes Apparent from Data

Several similar characteristics or attitudes were evident in most of the librarians taking part in this study. Without exception the librarians who were interviewed or who answered the questionnaire were cordial and indicated an eagerness to help in this study. They communicated effectively in conversation and in writing. Those librarians interviewed were outgoing and articulate.

Most of the librarians were inclined to be optimistic about the potential of the public library to become an effective agency for social change. They appeared confident that programs of library service to the disadvantaged could serve as effective examples for traditional libraries.

The librarians did not appear to be tradition bound. They expressed a strong conviction that the library should try any method, use any medium, resort to any source of information in order to serve the disadvantaged young adult. This library service should be, they believed,

primarily aimed at providing opportunities for change, not determining what that change should be.

The librarians said that they were eager to help people. In addition to the warmth and cordiality shown to the writer, librarians expressed their desire to help disadvantaged young adults gain a greater understanding of their own worth and dignity. They recognized that the disadvantaged young adult is basically no different from all young adults. Moreover, they expressed an awareness of the problems facing those young adults living in disadvantaged areas. They appeared to feel a personal responsibility toward people.

They believed firmly in taking library activities to the community rather than working behind a desk.

The librarians expressed definite impatience with bureaucratic library systems.

Characteristics Considered Important by Librarians and by Library Supervisors for Librarians Working with Disadvantaged Young Adults

The library supervisors tended to be more emphatic than the librarians in stating that special personal characteristics are necessary for librarians working with disadvantaged young adults. Librarians, on the other hand, seemed to think the same characteristics were necessary to provide library service to any group of people. In

other words, they did not see themselves as needing
attitudes different from those of other librarians.
Supervisors did.

Librarians and supervisors agreed that librarians
working with disadvantaged young adults should be able to
relate to people, be flexible, and honest. More librarians
than supervisors stated that they considered a knowledge
of the problems of disadvantaged young adults and a sense
of humor important. More supervisors than librarians
stated that they considered the ability to communicate,
self confidence, a knowledge of materials, and patience
important. It can not be concluded, however, that librarians
did not consider these characteristics important.

Only 33 per cent of the librarians, as opposed to
55 per cent of the supervisors, stated they believed the
ability to communicate was an important characteristic.
It can not be concluded, however, that the librarians did
not think it important.

Supervisors mentioned "self confidence" more times
than did the librarians, but their explanations of the
meaning of the term were so varied and so qualified that
no conclusion could be drawn.

Few of the librarians mentioned a knowledge of
materials as an important characteristic, but they believed
in using all materials. The implication is they possessed
or would obtain a knowledge of them.

The greatest difference between the number of times a characteristic was mentioned by librarians and the number of times supervisors mentioned it was with respect to "patience." Only 13 per cent of the librarians (two in number) mentioned "patience" in any manner. Only one of the two meant "patience" with a situation in contrast to "patience" with an individual. Yet 66 per cent of the supervisors (six in number) mentioned "patience." Four of these six explained what they meant by the term, indicating that a librarian should be able to work within the limitations of the bureaucracy of the library system.

Perhaps it is significant that there is a slight difference in the number of times "flexibility" was mentioned by supervisors and librarians. Supervisors tended to explain "flexibility" in terms of adjusting to situations, while librarians tended to mean doing nontraditional things in nontraditional ways.

In general, supervisors and librarians agreed on important characteristics with the exception of "patience" with the library bureaucracy. The librarians who participated in this study were not "patient" with the bureaucratic system.

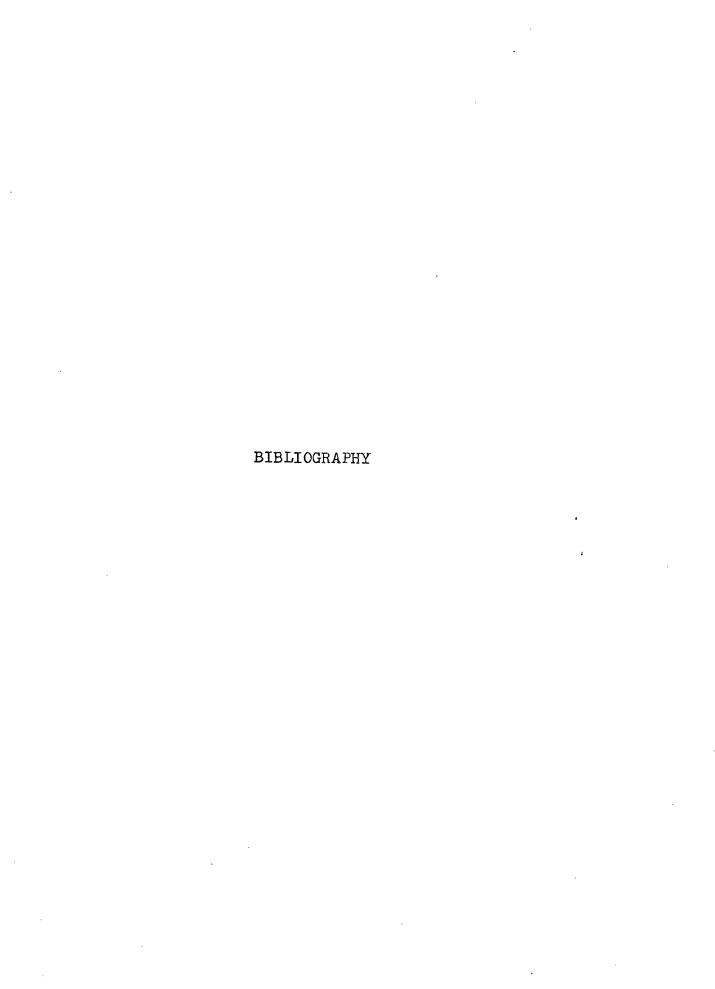## IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study was based on a small sample. Research on this subject based on a larger sample is needed to de-

termine what characteristics librarians working with disadvantaged young adults possess.

Research is also needed to determine any correlation between characteristics of librarians and programs proven effective in serving disadvantaged young adults.

Librarians considered in this study all worked at least part of the time with young adults. Research is needed to determine any differences between these librarians and other librarians.

Research is needed to determine whether the antibureaucratic attitude possessed by the librarians in this study is an essential trait or is coincidental.

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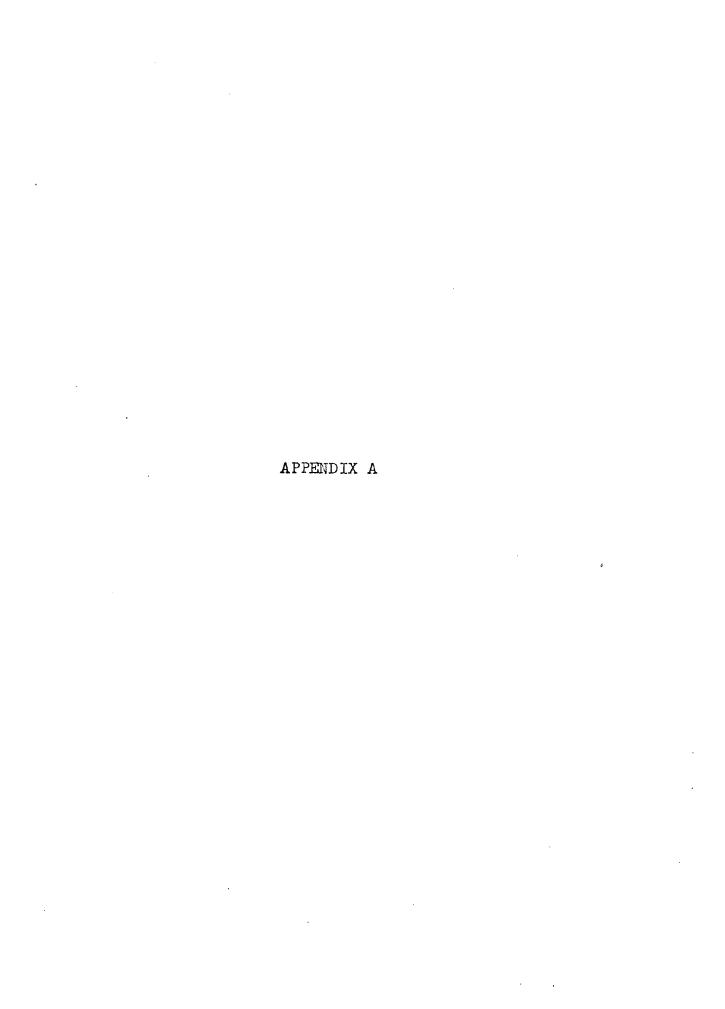   Chicago: Shoe String Press, Inc., 1965.

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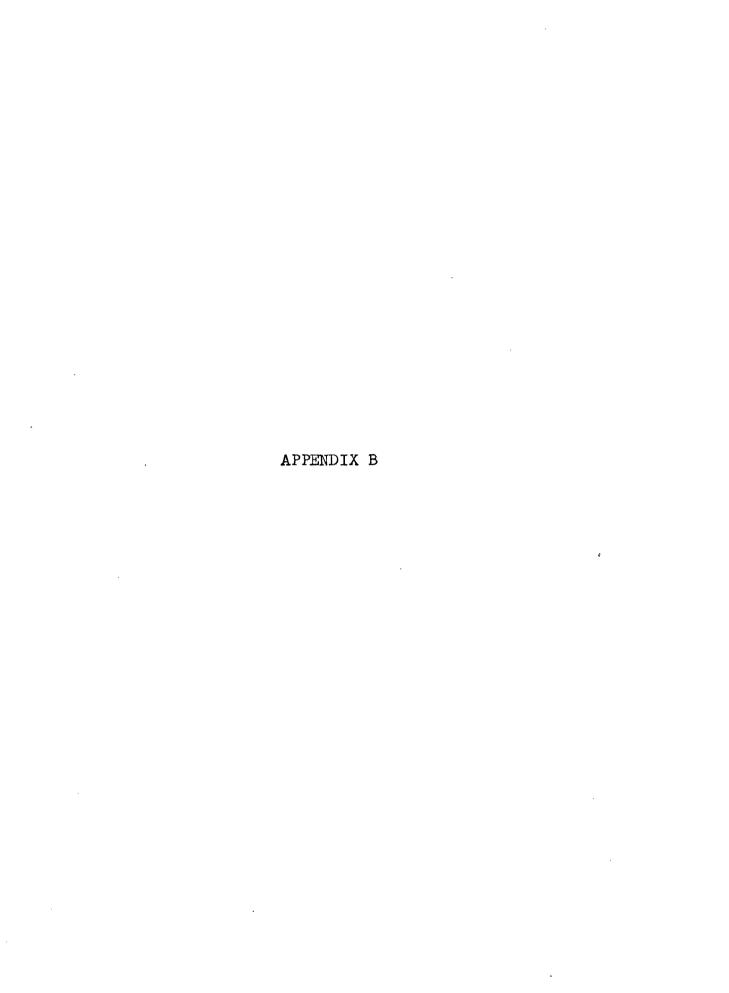   Adults," Bookmark, XXIV (March, 1965), 179-180.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS

What personality traits or characteristics of
librarians working with disadvantaged young adults do
you consider to be important or essential to a successful
program? If possible, it would be helpful if you could
indicate why certain traits are needed to work effectively
with the disadvantaged young adult.

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

LIBRARY SERVICE TO THE DISADVANTAGED YOUNG ADULT

1. In what ways, if any, do you think the library can be an effective agency for social change?

2. To what extent do you think that library programs for the disadvantaged can bring about changes in the traditional concept and practice of library service?

3. Are there particular goals that you are working toward in your program of library service to disadvantaged young adults? If so, please describe.

4. In your opinion what personal characteristics are most important for the librarian working with disadvantaged young adults to possess?

5. Why did you decide to accept a position working with disadvantaged young adults?

6. How can the library and/or the librarian help disadvantaged young adults? That is, are there desirable changes that you think can be brought about in the lives of disadvantaged young adults as a result of appropriate and effective library service?

7. In what ways, if any, do you think the young adults you work with are different from other young adults?