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VOLUME 3, NO. 4

NOVEMBER, 1988

REPORT ON ILA WORKSHOPS
By Anne Matjeka

Having been tempted to deck a few patrons at the CRC Desk over the years, I was inexorably drawn to Dr. Suzanne McCorkle's workshop titled HOW TO KEEP A STIFF UPPER LIP WHEN YOU WANT TO GIVE A STIFF UPPER-CUT presented at this year's ILA Conference in the BSU Student Union.

Suzanne's workshop dealt with the problem patrons that librarians encounter, not the patrons who are pathological, needing the help of police or a mental health professional, but the "normal" patron who causes librarians trouble.

MOTIVES

In dealing with the public the first thing the librarian must consider is "Is it me or is it them?" Is there something that I am doing that is making the patrons defensive? If I am projecting superiority, stereotyping patrons, being elitist, etc., I may be causing patrons to defend themselves and causing my own patron problems.

After eliminating their own actions, the librarian must next consider the patron's motives.

A problem patron can be a

person with very poor communication skills whose requests are so vague that their questions are hard to answer.

A problem patron can be playing some kind of mental game.

A problem patron may have no social skills.

In dealing with problem patrons the librarian must keep from being injured, from being drawn into the games or neurotic behavior the patron is exhibiting.

LIBRARIAN'S GOALS

1. Be a professional
2. Maintain their self esteem.
3. Move others to a win/win orientation.

LIBRARIAN'S ROLE

1. Be a professional librarian.
2. Be an active listener.

BARRIERS to active listening can be.

1. Thinking the other person is incompetent. They may not be incompetent, but even if they are, they may

- have legitimate needs.
2. They may be physically unattractive.
3. They may be physically attractive.
4. There may be a language difficulty.
5. They may have annoying habits such as constantly drumming their fingers, or interrupting, etc.

In active listening the librarian is not just hearing the person but is mentally involved in trying to understand what the other person is saying. In active listening the librarian can use the technique of paraphrasing the content of what the other person is saying or the technique of paraphrasing their feelings. For example, the patron says, "I am doing a paper on illegal drug use among Olympic Athletes in the 1980's." The librarian says, "Oh it is my understanding that you are doing a paper on illegal drug use among Olympic Athletes in the 1980's. Is that right?" By doing this the librarian is sure they know what the patron wants. If a question is too vague, for instance, "I need to write a term paper about drugs and I've never done a term paper before", the librarian will have to ask clarifying questions, for example, "Are you interested in legal drugs, illegal drugs, how the FDA regulates drugs?" etc. After questioning, the librarian can then get to the step of paraphrasing the final form of the reference question. An example of paraphrasing the feelings of the patron would be, for example, the patron says "I can never find anything I want in this library!" The librarian says, "You are very upset with the library today.", and then goes on to the reference interview.

3. Be an assertive person. Suzanne referred librarians to the book "The Assertive Librarian" which BSU owns.

4. Get into the problem solving mode with the patron.

5. Turn win/lose situations into win/win situations.

It is not the librarian's role to be 1) a game player, 2) a loser, 3) a punching bag.

STRATEGIES

1. The librarian should practice mental health, mentally refuse to accept unearned criticism from a patron, and be mentally tough. When someone is criticizing the librarian, they can accept the criticism, run from the criticism, retaliate against the patron or disarm them. The last alternative is preferable. The librarian should look in back of the attack which is often motivated by insecurity, i.e., fear of being taken advantage of by the library. The librarian should get right to the information need of the patron.

Sometimes when faced with a criticism, the librarian can use the technique of fogging, i.e., agreeing with the criticism, or agreeing with the criticism and making an assertive statement. For instance, "Gee, your desk is messy." "Yes, I guess it is." or "Yes, I guess it is, but it doesn't stop me from getting my work done."

2. The librarian should focus on the problem not the person. "You sound angry. How can we help you?"

EXAMPLE: A person comes in angry because they didn't know when their books were due and they were fined. Librarian: "That's all we can do. We stamp the date due in the back of the book. I'm sorry you didn't notice the date."

3. The librarian should be assertive.

4. The librarian should stick to their role, continue to be a librarian, and do not switch to the role of counselor, or parent, etc.

5. The librarian should be aware of their triggers, buttons and lures: behavior in others that cause them to be angry and upset. These lures can be tones of voice, types of people, etc. It's OK for librarians to feel their emotions but don't have to act on them.

6. The librarian shouldn't act on vague information. They should make sure the patron gives specific needs or problems instead of vague generalities.

7. The librarian shouldn't play games they don't want to play. If someone comes in acting offensive, they may be playing "Kick me." and want the librarian to punish them for that behavior. The librarian shouldn't play the game.

At this point Suzanne reviewed the Transactional Analysis theory that states that all people have in them: a parent, and adult, and a child. Patrons may come and speak in their parent voice or their child voice. It is important that the librarian answer back in their adult voice and not be the child to the patron's

parent, or the parent to the patron's child.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

Suzanne suggested that when an angry patron comes in claiming they returned an overdue book, the librarian develop a routine. For instance, "Books hide. Sometimes they make it really difficult to find them. We'll look here in the Library. You look at home." This technique depersonalizes the issue of who has the book.

Suzanne explained the steps to go through with an employee who is not performing up to standard.

1. State one recent specific behavioral problem. eg. "You mailed out your overdue notices two weeks late this month."

2. State the effect. "Library patrons have overdue material out, and they haven't been reminded of that fact. If some of them had been reminded on time, the material might already have been returned for someone else to use."

3. State your feelings about this. (Unless you are the supervisor. This doesn't mean that supervisors shouldn't be open with their employees, but the fact that the supervisor is upset by the behavior is irrelevant to the situation. The important fact is that the work isn't getting done.)

4. State the specific behavior to fix. eg. "this month I want you to send out the overdues on time."

5. Can you do that? If the employee gives lots of excuses,

the supervisor keeps repeating 1,2, and 3. If the behavior goes on, the supervisor may have to add consequences such as threatening to note the problem in the employees performance evaluation.

If a person such as the supervisor gives vague criticism and not enough specifics to know what is wrong, the employee should ask for specifics. If this isn't done the employee may correct what they guess is wrong, and it may not be what the boss found objectionable.

Praise pattern for supervisors.

1. State one recent behavioral positive thing.
2. State the effect.
3. State your feelings.

Following is a section from a handout given during the workshop entitled RIGHTS IN THE LIBRARY ENVIRONMENT. There is a two page Librarian's Assertive Inventory which is revealing and fun to take. You may obtain a copy from the Administration Office (L116) if you are interested.

RIGHTS IN THE LIBRARY ENVIRONMENT

LIBRARIANS' RIGHTS

1. The right to understand expectations governing work.
2. The right to be an equal member of the library staff.
3. The right to recommend changes.
4. The right to have a reasonable work load.
5. The right to make decisions regarding information needs of patrons.
6. The right to dislike a person. (But the responsibility not to let dislike interfere with your professional work.)
7. The right to limited areas of expertise.
8. The right to deny out-of-scope requests. (In a nice way.)
9. The right to seek information from patrons that will help you set the parameters of your assistance and its priority.
10. The right to fail.
11. The right to respect library property.
12. The right to be assertive.

LIBRARY USERS' RIGHTS

1. The right to be treated equally.
2. The right of free access; right to request that assertive behavior be taken in their behalf to restrain other patrons.
3. Right to request priority service and exceptions.
4. Right to dislike libraries.
5. Right to evaluate the library and its services.

Adapted from Jenette Caputo, The Assertive Librarian.

LIBRARY SERVICE CONFERENCE
By Janet Strong

On October 20-21, I attended the Off-campus Library Services Conference in Charleston, S.C., sponsored by Central Michigan University. The thrust of the conference is to gather librarians who are providing services to students on far-flung campuses and to discuss what each is doing so we can all go home and do it better.

It was an international conference that included people from Ireland, England, Canada, Australia and the United States. The presenters were selected on the basis of papers they submitted late in 1987. During the conference there are concurrent sessions in which the selected papers are given. There are also featured speakers who speak after the meals. (All meals are eaten together). This year's speakers were Anne Mathews, Director, Library Programs, Office of Education; Terrence MacTaggart, Chancellor, University of Wisconsin-Superior; and Evan Farber, College Librarian, Earlham College. At registration we were given a copy of the conference proceedings so that if anyone is interested in reading the papers, the proceedings may be checked out from me.

As colleges try to maintain enrollments and the general population ages, this type of off-campus educational offerings and library services will become more prevalent. BSU offers courses from Mountain Home to Payette so this is an important area of service for us. All of the sites have COM's and

periodical holdings lists, and we use Continuing Education to deliver requested books to people in those communities. While I have visited most of the sites and talked with the coordinators, there is more that can be done. This conference gave me ideas as well as reassurance that what we are doing in bibliographic instruction is in line with what other people are doing.

As for Charleston, it is a nice old city and I did have some time to look around and to eat some wonderful seafood.

SOME 'DANGEROUS' BOOKS

Some 105 incidents of attempted censorship in school libraries and classrooms in 42 states last year were listed by the American Library Association in connection with the seventh annual Banned Books Week, September 24-October 1.

More than one-third of these attempts were successful, up from 23% five years ago, the ALA said. The most frequently cited object was "offensive language," and the second "promoting Satanism or the occult."

Among the challenged titles were Pat Conroy's The Prince of Tides ("trashy pulp pornography"); Roald Dahl's The BFG ("too sophisticated and did not teach moral values"); William Faulkner's As I Lay Dying ("offensive and obscene passages referring to abortion and used God's name in vain") and Shel Silverstein's A Light in the Attic ("contains violence, idealizes death and makes light of manipulative behavior").

Publishers Weekly/Sept. 30, 1988

"In a sense, one can never read the book that the author originally wrote, and one can never read the same book twice."

Edmund Wilson



We would like to extend a warm welcome to BethAnn Skamser who joined the reference staff as an assistant the beginning of October. Bethann has an Associates and a Bachelors degree in Marketing and Mid-management. She is currently a graduate student in the Masters of Public Administration program.

Besides working on her Masters, working half time in the reference department and trying to keep up with her 29 month old son, Argus, BethAnn likes to camp, travel and take photographs.

Gerry Bryant, the newest staff member in Serials has just directed a very successful production of "As Is" for the Idaho AIDS Foundation. It played for three nights at the Playhouse 2000 in Boise and got a very good review in the Idaho Statesman. Claudia Scott from acquisitions was in the show and did an excellent job with the rolls she played. Gerry will soon be holding auditions for the "Importance of Being Earnest" which will also be done at Playhouse 2000 for Stage Coach Theatre in January 1989. As most of you already know Gerry came to us after working at the Boise Public Library for seven years.

If you plan to order books for Christmas presents on our Baker and Taylor staff account, now's the time to be getting your orders in. Carole Clemens has consented to taking over responsibility for this account so Cynthia Carroll will be turning it over to her in November. But until that time, please continue to give your requests to her. B & T now requires that we include the ISBN on our orders as well as title, author, publisher, and price.

In future articles of the CROSSFIRE we would like to have a new section entitled "After Hours" which would include what library staff like to do in their spare time. It would be a lot of fun if everyone would participate and write a few words about their favorite after hour activities.

CROSSFIRE is published by the Boise State Library. Contributors to this issue are Gerry Bryant, Cynthia Carroll, Ralph Hansen, Anne Matjeka, Janet Strong, Julie Stubbers, and Alan Virta. Comments should be sent to Julie Stubbers, editor.

"A GOOD MEDICINE"

Common sense has always associated laughter with a sense of well-being, even with good health. "A cheerful heart is a good medicine, but a downcast spirit dries up the bones," according to the Book of Proverbs. A laugh clears the mind and reduces tension, most people would add. Yet science has a hard time demonstrating what everybody "knows" to be true, and there's something inherently funny about researching laughter--which may explain why few scientists have studied it. Here's the latest from those hardy enough to tackle the chemistry of cheerfulness.

"Positive affect," as the psychologists call a happy face, was the subject recently of a study at the University of Maryland. Groups of students were asked to solve a problem requiring ingenuity: given some matches, a box of tacks, and a candle, they were told to attach the candle to a corkboard wall in such a way that it did not drip wax on the floor when lighted. The trick was to take the tacks out of the box and attach the box to the wall so it would function as a candle holder. Students who watched a comic film just before taking the test succeeded three times as often in finding the solution as those who watched an educational film. The researches theorized that a person in a good mood has a greater tendency to combine his ideas in new ways, that is, to react creatively to an intellectual challenge. And in

another recent study subjects who saw a funny film had lower levels of stress hormones (adrenalin and cortisol) than a comparable group who didn't watch the film.

Laughter also appears to have its uses when people are dealing with illness. A dozen years ago Norman Cousins (now a professor of medical humanities at the School of Medicine at UCLA) startled the medical community by claiming that watching the Marx Brothers has helped him recover from a serious arthritic disease affecting his spine and joints. There's no documentation for his claim: he may simply have experienced spontaneous remission. And yet research has since uncovered the fact that laughter increases respiratory activity, oxygen change, and heart rate. It may stimulate the brain to produce endorphins, the body's natural painkillers. It can reduce depression. Scientists have even speculated that laughter may be related to longevity. A good laugh is free, and you don't need a prescription. As one expert on the subject has said, "Humor, then, is not only valuable in human life, but valuable in a way nothing else is."

So while medical science attempts to quantify the benefits of laughter, keep your sense of humor. If necessary, become a Marxists--à la Groucho, Harpo, or Chico.

University of California, Berkeley
Wellness Letter/Oct. 1988

SELF-HELP BOOKS

There has been a veritable flood of self-help books in the last twenty years and many of them concern stress on the job. A new to the library book on stress is **BREAKING THE STRESS HABIT: A MODERN GUIDE TO ONE-MINUTE STRESS MANAGEMENT**, by Andrew Goliszek (BF575.S75G6). The author categorizes stress symptoms under three major headings, namely Physical, Emotional, and Behavioral. The editors thought that by exposing you to these symptoms it might increase your level of stress. If your stress level is already high do not read on.

PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

Headaches (forehead or back of head)
Twitching eyelid
Twitching nose
Facial or jaw pains
Dry mouth or throat
Difficulty swallowing
Ulcers on tongue
Neck pains
Dizziness
Speech difficulties like slurring or stuttering
Backaches
Muscle aches
Weakness
Constipation
Indigestion
Nausea and/or vomiting
Stomach pains
Diarrhea
Gain or loss in weight
Loss of appetite or constant appetite
Rashes, hives, or other skin problems
Chest pains
Heartburn
Heart palpitations
Frequent urination
Cold hands and/or feet
Excessive sweating
Insomnia
Excessive sleeping
Sexual inadequacy
High blood pressure
Chronic fatigue

Swollen joints
Increased allergies
Frequent colds or flu
Trembling and/or nervous tics
Accident proneness
Excessive menstruation or menstrual distress
Rapid or difficult breathing

EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS

Irritability
Moodiness
Depression
Unusual aggressiveness
Loss of memory or concentration
Restlessness or overexcitability
Nervousness about little things
Nightmares
Impulsive behavior
Feelings of helplessness or frustration
Withdrawal from other people
Neurotic behavior
Racing thoughts or disorientation
Anger
Inability to make decisions
Anxiety
Feelings of panic
Frequent episodes of crying
Thoughts of suicide
Feelings of losing control
Lack of interest in sex
Periods of confusion

BEHAVIORAL SYMPTOMS

Gnashing or grinding teeth
Wrinkling forehead
High-pitched nervous laughter
Foot or finger tapping
Nail biting
Hair pulling or twirling
Increased smoking
Increased use of prescribed medication
Increased alcohol consumption
Compulsive eating
Compulsive dieting
Pacing the floor
Chronic procrastination
Loss of interest in physical appearance
Sudden change in social habits
Chronic tardiness

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS/MAPS
By Alan Virta

There were two significant additions to the Idaho Writers Archive during the late summer. In August, playwright John de Groot presented the University with his collection of books and periodicals about Ernest Hemingway. President Keiser accepted the gift of the de Groot collection at the ceremony held in the Library on August 2. Also in August, Ruth Wright, widow of BSU English professor Charles David Wright, presented the Library with Dr. Wright's correspondence and manuscripts. Charles David Wright was a nationally respected poet whose poems have appeared in major literary magazines and in book form. His papers will be useful to students of poetry as well as the creative writing process.

Most users of the Frank Church collection (either in person or by mail) during the late Summer and early Fall have been out-of-town professors, including biographers of Henry Kissinger, John McCloy, and Frank Church. The collection was also used by a journalist on sabbatical working under an Alicia Patterson Foundation fellowship.

Deborah Roberts joined Special Collections this Fall as a graduate assistant. She will process manuscript and archival collections and undertake other projects. She will be working half-time during the Fall and Spring semesters.

Two new exhibits now on display were prepared by Special Collections. "The Public Image

of Frank Church," on display in the Hemingway Center until December 2, was prepared by Mary Carter, Ralph Hansen, Deborah Roberts, and Alan Virta. Mary Carter and Deborah Roberts also prepared a new Frank Church exhibit for the 3rd floor showcase.

Alan Virta recently attended the annual Conference of the Society of American Archivists in Atlanta, GA. He received his certificate at the awards ceremony for his participation in the NHPRC - Andrew Mellon Foundation Fellowship program in 1986-87.

Alan attended a number of interesting sessions at the conference, the most useful were entitled Selecting Materials for Preservation; Perspectives on Collecting Literary Manuscripts; and Newsfilm and Video Archives: Current Trends and Activities.

The most-discussed issue at the conference was the new program of certification of archivists. For many years the SAA debated the merits of developing a system of accreditation for archival education programs; instead it has opted to create a certification program for individual archivists, similar to those for the professions of accounting, cosmetology, law, etc. A professional testing service has been hired to develop an examination, which will be first offered in 1989. The charge for certification will be \$250.00