An Alternative Vision of Librarianship: James Danky and the Sociocultural Politics of Collection Development

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ABSTRACT

The work of James P. Danky, longtime librarian at the Wisconsin Historical Society, is situated within the intellectual context of collection-development practices. Danky's belief in the value of alternative periodicals—and the lengths that he went to identify and acquire them—may be interpreted as a rejection of increasingly mechanical and generic ways to develop library collections. Reliance on centralized selection procedures, approval plans, and serials vendors was not only tantamount to the "disintegration of librarians as sources of expertise," but also structurally privileged books and serials from mainstream publishers. The biennial *Alternative Library Literature* (1982–2001), which Danky coedited with Sanford Berman, is compared with the annual *Library Lit.—The Best of* (1970–1990) to illuminate the way in which contrasting philosophical approaches to the selection of anthology articles may be interpreted as a microcosm of larger issues in collection development.

In the middle and late 1960s, three structurally intertwined events altered the practice of collection development in public and academic libraries in the United States. Taken together, these events moved collection development away from the realm of what could be described as item "selection" on a title-by-title basis by subject specialists into the realm of item "purchasing" (Harris, 1970, p. 53). First, many large and midsized public libraries with multiple branches instituted the practice of centralized selection, whereby relatively low-paid paraprofessionals in consolidated acquisitions departments adhered to a demand-driven philosophy embodied in the phrase "Give 'Em What They Want," which had its origins at the Baltimore County (Maryland) Public Library (BCPL). Second,

many academic libraries outsourced their monograph purchases to vendors who provided them with books through approval plans, defined as "an acquisitions method under which a library receives regular shipments of new titles selected by a dealer, based on a profile of library collection interests, with the right to return what it decides not to buy" (Nardini, 2003, p. 133). Third, academic and public libraries increasingly entrusted their periodical purchases to serials vendors or subscription agents, thus avoiding direct contact with publishers of journals and magazines. As these changes became normative throughout the last three decades of the twentieth century, they contributed to a situation whereby alternative books and periodicals from small presses were not easily found in many American libraries.

Throughout his more than thirty-year career (1973–2007) at the Wisconsin Historical Society as an Order Librarian; Newspapers and Periodicals Librarian; Assistant Librarian for Research and Development; and founding codirector of the Center for the History of Print Culture in Modern America, James P. Danky looked askance at the philosophies associated with serials vendors, monographic approval plans, and the "Give 'Em What They Want" approach, believing that they significantly impoverished the cumulated written record available at the nation's libraries by overlooking material that was not readily available through convenient channels. Danky's academic interests were primarily historical—an effort to extend, deepen, and thus problematize the public's awareness of neglected historical sources that told a story that ran counter to received wisdom in many fields. As coeditor of volumes such as *Women in Print: Essays on the Print Culture of American Women from the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Danky & Wiegand, 2006); *African-American Newspapers and Periodicals: A National Bibliography* (Danky & Hady, 1998); *The German-American Radical Press: The Shaping of a Left Political Culture, 1850–1940* (Shore, Fones-Wolf, & Danky, 1992); and *Native American Periodicals and Newspapers, 1828–1982: Bibliography, Publishing Record, and Holdings* (Danky & Hady, 1984), he displayed meticulous scholarship and an abiding passion for opening new perspectives on American life and culture. But underlying his historical pursuits was the recognition that collecting contemporary alternative and small-press publications was key to providing an in-depth picture of current social, cultural, and political issues and debates (e.g., Campbell, Bowles, & Danky, 1984a, 1984b; Danky, 1974, 1982, 1986, 1989, 1991, 1996a; Danky & Hennessy, 1986; Danky & Shore, 1982; Hady & Danky, 1979; Hunter & Danky, 1986). For him, these publications represented not only the cornerstone of any informed historical portrait of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century written in the future, but also the essence of librarianship, since they alone were capable of interrogating mainstream publications that comprised the bulk of materials available at libraries. In short, collecting alternative materials was the

responsibility of all librarians if they wanted to give full meaning to concepts such as equality, diversity, and substantive neutrality. If only mainstream publications were collected, Danky felt, substantive neutrality was impossible because, while such publications ventured to the left or the right of conventional wisdom on any given topic, they never went beyond a safe middle range of opinion that represented a consensus status quo. Collecting alternative materials—those on the margins of accepted contemporary discourse—was therefore a necessary part of librarianship's commitment to substantive neutrality. It was difficult work that obligated librarians to look beyond serials vendors, approval plans, and BCPL-inspired rhetoric.

Debates in Librarianship about Collection Development

Danky's views about collection development were grounded in the social activism of the 1960s and early 1970s. It was a time when "hundreds of American librarians and library school students became involved in championing socially related change in librarianship . . . and in so doing brought the library profession into the social protest movements of the time" (Bundy & Stielow, 1987, p. 1). Discouraged with what they perceived as an ossified American Library Association (ALA) and with library leaders who retained "comfortable illusions" about the profession, many practitioners worked "to make good [librarianship's] intellectual freedom and other ethical commitments, to recognize and do something about the inequalities in [library] services, to withhold . . . support from still segregated library associations, and to take a position on . . . the war in Vietnam and police repression at home" (Bundy & Stielow, 1987, p. 5). One area of concerted effort was women's rights: "women librarians became aware of the wide spectrum of ideas being addressed by the women's movement and began to discuss such issues as salaries, promotional opportunities, and sexism in library materials" (Cassell, 1987, p. 21). Other areas of focus were: serving minority populations and the disadvantaged; heightening the relevancy of library education; and integrating library schools and the profession as a whole (Axam, 1987; Haro, 1987; Josey, 1987; Owens, 1987; Williams, 1987).

Some of these concerns were summarized in the "Friday the 13th Manifesto," an outgrowth of the 1969 Institute on Library Service to the Black and Urban Poor, which stated that the priorities of public libraries were skewed toward "the articulated needs and demands of the power structure and have not extended to the unarticulated needs of those outside the power structure" (qtd. in Bundy & Stielow, 1987, pp. 186–187). Librarians therefore needed to engage in "a philosophy of advocacy" on behalf of the excluded (qtd. in Bundy & Stielow, 1987, pp. 186–187). This mindset animated the founders of the Social Responsibilities Round Table

(SRRT), which from its inception in 1969 saw itself as "the 'conscience of ALA' and as a pressure group within ALA" whose mission it was to engage the ALA in "intellectual confrontations" so as "to define the role of the library in society" (qtd. in Bundy & Stielow, 1987, p. 193). As Toni Samek (2001) shows, SRRT soon became "the largest ALA round table with 1013 members," an indication of widespread frustration with current practices of the ALA (p. 70).

Perhaps the most searing confrontation was about intellectual freedom. If libraries were to better serve individuals outside the power structure, they should collect materials that reflected those hitherto excluded voices. Libraries could no longer afford to be neutral in a "hands-off liberalism" sort of way, since such neutrality was not substantive neutrality (Samek, 2001, p. 46). Intellectual freedom was therefore a collection-development issue. As Sanford Berman (1976) argued, if libraries wanted to be venues for "liberation"—the "single keyword or rubric [that] encompasses the multitude of overlapping movements and ideas that within the past decade have forcefully emerged among blacks, students, Jews, teachers, Chicanos, women, the young, Asian-Americans, servicemen, Indians, ecophiliacs, still-colonized peoples, workers, the impoverished, homosexuals, and even some psychiatrists, athletes, retirees, sociologists, and librarians"—it was incumbent that collection-development specialists acquire materials that spoke to the various impulses for "liberation" (pp. 345–346).

Moreover, once acquired, these alternative materials should not fall prey to the traditional "condescending, curator-like, rubber-gloves-and-forceps-mentality" that consigned them to "glass cases" and "padlocked vaults," effectively relegating them to archival status in the same way that "intriguing cadavers [were] gathered and then pickled and frozen for later study by anatomists" (Berman, 1976, p. 346). Instead, they should be placed on "open shelves" because the "articles in *Radical America, Women,* and *Tricontinental Magazine* are just as fitting and citable for term papers and dissertations as material culled from *Foreign Affairs, Time,* and *Business Week*" (Berman, 1976, p. 346). Finally, libraries should avoid relying on the "pathetic" bibliographic data supplied by the Library of Congress or the Online Computer Library Center to catalog purchased alternative materials, since this data lacked "sufficient subject headings and other added entries"; failed "to adequately and helpfully indicate special features or content-elements not discernible from the title alone"; and omitted "subject terms that faithfully and precisely express the content of the work in familiar, unbiased language" (Berman, 1982, p. 31).

Properly understood, collection development was a multifaceted concept that included the selection of items, their display, and appropriate cataloging. All these elements needed to be approached from a "dynamic, responsive" (Berman, 1976, p. 349) perspective the goal of which was substantive neutrality, which would meaningfully expand the conformist

boundaries of what Alan Nadel (1995) referred to as "containment culture" (p. 4). Only in this way could libraries show that they had "opt[ed] for people, participation, compassion, and engagement" (Berman, 1976, p. 344)—the kind of values that informed *Synergy*, one of the first North American publications devoted to alerting librarians about alternative-press books and magazines. Founded in 1967, *Synergy* not only excoriated librarians for being "passive" and soporific consumers in an "information marketplace" controlled by "big publishers" who only paid attention to "alternative press related topics" when they "sensed profit," but also informed them about how the tools that they ordinarily used to select books and magazines were "rear-view mirrors" that had little connection with actual user interests (Samek, 2001, p. 47).

But the call for what Berman (1976) identified as "dynamic, responsive" libraries that gave priority "to the people" (p. 349) was interpreted by others in the 1960s in an entirely different way. This was particularly true when it came to collection development. For the BCPL, responsiveness was conceptualized as a "Give 'Em What They Want" approach, a philosophy that at first glance appeared to have much in common with Berman's prioritization of "the people," but when all was said and done turned out to be its antithesis. As described by BCPL's senior administrators, Charlie Robinson and Jean-Barry Molz, "Give 'Em What They Want" dispensed with attempting to create a "good" library—"We soon saw that [trying to do so] was ridiculous. It was insane"—in favor of buying multiple copies of bestsellers (Pearl, 1996, p. 136). For the BCPL, responsiveness meant being "the best seller library, or the bookstore library" (Pearl, 1996, p. 136). Making circulation statistics the main criteria by which to judge a book's value, Robinson spoke caustically about libraries' responsibility to serve anyone else but middle-class users interested in "maintaining their lawns" and "heat pumps" (Pearl, 1996, pp. 136, 137). If such materials were what customers wanted, "what was the point of giving them what they didn't want?" such as "every book about the Vietnam War ever published. . . . [which] sat on the shelf" or sleep-inducing "great literature" (Pearl, 1996, pp. 137, 138). Disdainfully noting that "the library profession is full of closet social workers" who had studied impractical "philosophical issues" in graduate library degree programs, he also remarked that "libraries can't do anything about" such "quality-of-life issues" as "jobs, housing, and education," much like McDonald's can't do anything about "those people who can't afford its hamburgers" (Pearl, 1996, p. 138).

Because of the BCPL's emphasis on bestsellers, Robinson and Molz saw little need to retain collection-development specialists who were responsible for a specific subject area or branch library. Instead, they instituted centralized selection, which was carried out by paraprofessionals trained to perform rote tasks at a "cost benefit" to the BCPL (Pearl, 1996, p. 138). Implicit in this procedural transformation was the notion that

the selection of books was a simple one-size-fits-all mechanical procedure, since it involved ordering multiple copies of bestsellers and other popular books that received widespread attention in the mass media. And because selection was now an easy, deskilled task that did not require broad-based subject knowledge, it could also be remunerated in such a way as to generate financial savings for the library system. Giving the people what they wanted had become a rationale for implementing a collection-development strategy for public libraries based on market imperatives. It was a far cry from providing the type of liberating materials Berman had in mind.

Library Vendors and Homogenized Collections

Libraries' almost universal reliance on approval plans to purchase monographs reinforced the homogenizing tendencies set in motion by the "Give 'Em What They Want" ethos. Indeed, approval plans were justified in much the same terms as BCPL procedures: they not only assisted libraries "in containing operating costs," but they also "speed[ed] up and streamline[d] the acquisition of in-print titles in the interest of providing an improved service to . . . users" (Abel, 1995, p. 47). As described by Richard Abel (1995), the originator of the approval-plan concept, the economic basis of approval plans rested on vendors and wholesalers obtaining sufficiently large "discount schedules" from book publishers, typically "30–35 percent" below list price (p. 54). The larger the publisher and print run of a book, the larger the discount schedule given to a vendor, with trade books typically discounted "40 percent to 50 percent" (Miller, 1992, p. 22). Vendors bought large quantities of books at discounted rates, warehoused them, and then shipped individual titles to library customers based on library-created purchasing profiles, which included desired subject parameters; nonsubject delimiters such as language, price, or place of publication; and publisher inclusions and exclusions (Nardini, 2003, p. 134). Vendors' ability to make a profit depended on the difference between the discounted price they paid a publisher for a book and the price at which they sold that book to a library: the greater the difference, the greater a vendor's profit. To increase profit margins, vendors also provided libraries with value-added services such as full cataloging records for purchased books, as well as "physical processing" of bought volumes so that they were "fully shelf-ready," in which case items were not returnable (Nardini, 2003, p. 135). Arguably, approval plans were the beginning of outsourced collection-development work.

Because many alternative publishers could not generate "economies of scale" due to small print runs, unpredictable publication schedules, small advertising budgets, and lack of reviews in popular reviewing outlets (M. Eldredge, 1996, pp. 53–54), they could not afford to offer vendors discounts, let alone the type of appealing discount schedules that vendors needed to be profitable. Vendors were therefore reticent about

buying nondiscounted books from alternative publishers because small-press titles, along with "highly specialized societal publications," were "a direct financial liability for an approval vendor to handle" (M. Eldredge, 1996, pp. 53, 54). Procuring hard-to-locate items from alternative publishers negatively affected the "increased efficiency" that vendors needed to remain profitable—the type of increased efficiency that came with the bureaucratic and "standardized procedures" characteristic of the "large publishing operations" that vendors preferred to deal with (M. Eldredge, 1996, p. 54, 53). If vendors did make an effort to supply alternative publications to libraries, high service charges were frequently added to the price libraries were asked to pay for these not-discounted-to-the-vendor titles so that vendors could cover their unit transaction costs and show a profit. This was especially true of those vendors who preferred "each title to pay for itself rather than gamble on a high volume of trade titles" and those that adopted "cost-plus pricing" (Miller, 1992, p. 22). When financially constrained libraries evaluated vendor performance at the end of a fiscal cycle or upon receipt of a shipment, it was logical that vendors would be questioned about high service charges for specific items. Libraries, after all, were interested in receiving the maximum discount possible from vendors on their overall orders. If a library's approval-plan profile included many alternative publishers, its overall discount on its purchases from the vendor was relatively low. In these circumstances, libraries rethought their "publisher mix" so as to receive "a deeper discount from the vendor," which ultimately meant expanding their profile "to include lots of books from publishers that give [the] vendor a 30 percent or 40 percent discount" (R. Anderson, 2004, p. 38). While rethinking "publisher mix" was financially beneficial for libraries, it nevertheless disproportionately affected nondiscounted titles published by alternative presses, which were usually the first to be eliminated in the interests of securing "a deeper discount."

As Charles Willett (1998) bluntly noted, academic libraries that put their faith in approval plans often failed to provide adequate coverage of alternative materials that challenged "conservative" and "authoritarian" policies, which in turn reinforced "a biased set of ideas in support of élite beliefs and goals" (p. 93). Instead, they invariably bought "the same general core collection" of books from vendors who dealt with "well-known" publishers (p. 93). If libraries wanted to ensure that their collections contained a substantial number of alternative materials, they had to bypass "mainstream distribution channels" and take time-consuming (and expensive) steps to systematically identify and order alternative publications (e.g., Minneapolis Community & Technical College, n.d.). As acquisitions budgets became tighter in the last decades of the twentieth century, only the most persistent libraries systematically collected monographs published by alternative presses (Lee, 2002), choosing instead to spend their

budgets on what they perceived to be more reputable core items from mainstream presses. Even a strong supporter of approval plans such as Robert F. Nardini (2003) commented that one of the unresolved "objections" to them was that "vendor concentration on mainstream, profitable books would produce library collections that were too much alike, without the collective richness resulting from local selection in support of local needs" (p. 133). Summarizing her previous research, Anna H. Perrault (1999) observed that "there was an increase in homogeneity in the acquisitions of the group of member libraries of the ARL [Association of Research Libraries] in 1989 from that of 1985" insofar as "there was a decrease in foreign language acquisitions, a decrease in the percentage of unique titles to the total in many subject areas, and an increased concentration on core materials, indicating less diversity and more homogeneity in academic library collections in the future" (p. 51). Although a cause-and-effect relationship cannot be demonstrated between the growth of approval plans and the homogenization of collections, the economic realities faced by vendors often worked against the sustained inclusion in approval plans of monographs published by alternative presses.

Just as the widespread adoption of monographic approval plans ensured low holding rates in libraries of alternative and small-press books, the increased reliance by libraries on serials vendors to purchase periodicals was not a positive development for their holdings of alternative journals and magazines. Because many publishers of alternative periodicals faced the same structural disadvantages as publishers of alternative monographs, their relationship with serials vendors paralleled the relationship of approval-plan vendors with publishers of alternative monographs. Alternative-periodical titles were difficult to procure, causing time-consuming inefficiencies for vendors. If serials vendors managed to procure these periodicals for libraries, they added high service charges to their non-discounted base prices, which did not endear alternative periodicals to libraries caught in the throes of persistent budget crises. When skyrocketing journal prices in the 1980s and 1990s decimated serials budgets, many academic libraries embarked on extensive journal cancellation projects. Journals were cut "by a set percentage . . . across all disciplines" or according to "likelihood of future use as predicted by . . . objective criteria" (Gorman, 2003, p. 461). As a result, core journals with well-established reputations or large impact factors were retained while less-well-known journals were cut. These trends were not favorable to alternative periodicals. For example, using the list of 220 periodicals contained in the Alternative Press Index (API), Rita A. Marinko and Kristin H. Gerhard (1998) examined "the holding rates of alternative press titles" (p. 363) in 104 ARL libraries in the United States. They found that 69 of these libraries had holding rates "below 40 percent" of API periodicals, and that "only thirty-seven [API] titles (17% of the total 220) were held by 70 percent or more

of the libraries studied, whereas 139 of the 220 titles (63%) were held by less than 40 percent" of the applicable libraries (p. 368). Observing that titles categorized as leftist/Marxist politics, gay and lesbian, labor, education, and ecology were "underrepresented" in ARL library holdings, they concluded that "alternative views" were often unable "to contribute to the democratic discussion" in American society (p. 370).

Marinko and Gerhard's (1998) findings suggest that, while the social activism of the 1960s and 1970s brought some gains on the question of alternative-press publications, librarianship's sense of professionalism—embodied in the traditional belief that they should be "providers of a neutral forum" in which all sides of a question were accorded a respectful hearing instead of advocates and "partakers of the struggle to save society from itself"—eventually triumphed (Peattie, 1987, p. 52). For all intents and purposes, professionalism came to mean "hands-off liberalism" (Samek, 2001, p. 46). Many librarians accepted David Berninghausen's (1972) argument that SRRT-like advocacy on behalf of social and political issues such as "racial injustice and inequities," environmentalism, and antimilitarism went beyond their professional mandate (p. 3675); that "divisions of opinion on [these] out-of-scope issues" were causing irreparable harm to librarianship as a whole and to the ALA in particular (p. 3676); and that there was little justification for attempts "by some librarians to try to 'educate the people' by giving them access only to publications judged 'correct' by librarians" (p. 3681). If the concept of intellectual freedom was to remain viable, Berninghausen explained, librarianship's central goal should be "to maintain balanced collections of facts and opinions and theories concerning all issues" (p. 3681). For him, neutrality was acceptable, but substantive neutrality was not. By the late 1970s, the ALA had co-opted SRRT, "incorporat[ing] and contain[ing] it within its institutional focus, bureaucracy, and organizational structure" (Samek, 2001, p. 139) in a way that was reminiscent of what Herbert Marcuse in *One Dimensional Man* called "repressive tolerance" (as cited in Samek, 2001, p. 5). Accordingly, while librarians may have "preserved [their] neutrality and professional integrity," such preservation came "at the cost of both radical and conservative groups outside the profession—thus placing professionalism above human needs" (Peattie, 1987, p. 56).

In this environment, the purchase of alternative books and periodicals by libraries was viewed as an act of social advocacy that had little place within the traditional framework of intellectual freedom and professionalism. For collection-development specialists, this implied that their primary task was meeting short-term user needs, all within the context of cost containment, streamlined operations, and speedy service. Reliance on a "Give 'Em What They Want" philosophy, approval plans, and serials vendors meshed perfectly with the idea of library professionalism as *managerialism*, a term used by education scholars to signify an emphasis

on "productive efficiency" and "allocative efficiency" in decision-making processes (Fitzsimons, 1999). Rather than searching out alternative publications that addressed thorny issues from viewpoints that challenged conventional ways of thinking, collection-development specialists allocated scarce resources as productively and efficiently as possible in order to meet "explicit standards and measures of performance in quantitative terms" (Fitzsimons, 1999). It was both sad and ironic that one of the most important legacies of the 1960s for librarianship was convincing itself that the "Give 'Em What They Want" philosophy empowered people.

Given these developments, it was only a matter of time before a for-profit entity such as Library Systems & Services (LSSI), described as the "the first company to offer full outsourcing (or privatization, to some) of public libraries," appeared (Oder, 2004, p. 36). Contracted to manage about twenty financially tenuous public libraries in the United States by the middle of 2004 (Oder, 2004, p. 38), LSSI generated profits "by paying lower salaries and benefits, hiring fewer librarians, . . . choosing less-educated employees" (p. 37), spending less on materials, and increasing the hours worked by volunteers (pp. 38–39). According to Vice President for Business Development Steve Coffman, its aim was to make libraries "more like bookstores" (Oder, 2004, p. 40), an approach that was not unfamiliar to one of the key members of LSSI's Advisory Board, Charlie Robinson, the originator of the "Give 'Em What They Want" philosophy (Oder, 2004, p. 39). Any pretense that collection development was an intellectual endeavor carefully conducted by knowledgeable subject specialists was gone, gradually eroded by the implacable forces of deskilled centralized selection and approval plans. Libraries had indeed become "dynamic" and "responsive," as Berman had hoped, but they emphasized the economic aspects of that dynamic responsiveness instead of its sociocultural and knowledge-building aspects.

The Rejection of Outsourced Collection Development

Danky (1994a) rejected the outsourced vision of librarianship, believing that it was an "ubiquitous" and tragic "abandonment of expertise" on the part of librarians (p. 3). Echoing the insights of Wayne A. Wiegand, he traced the origins of "this disintegration of librarians as sources of expertise" to Melvil Dewey, who "sought outside academics to aid in the selection of appropriate books for the collection" (Danky, 1994a, p. 3). Once the fundamental task of book selection was outsourced to others, Danky (1994a) felt that librarians "doom[ed] themselves to a subservient position, one where they deny their abilities [and] their power to affect their own professional world" and the community around them (p. 3). Librarians' reliance on centralized selection, approval plans, and serials vendors to develop collections was only the latest manifestation of the outsourcing

process started by Dewey. Outsourcing robbed the librarian of subject-specific knowledge, resulting in a situation "where the librarian [who] knows about the materials in the collection has become something relegated to special collections, to rare books and other smaller, less central parts of library service" (Danky, 1994a, p. 3). It was understandable that librarians were given scant respect: they had been "socialized" not to "know books," but rather to "know how to apply the standards dictated by conventional canons that have been developed outside the profession" (Wiegand, 1986, p. 395) and to spend their time on managing and organizing collections using "new technology and improved methods of administration" (p. 397).

To help solve this problem, Danky asked future librarians to take it upon themselves to know "something, anything" by choosing their "own subject to become an expert on" (Danky, 1994a, p. 3). And once they had become experts—defined as being "steeped in the literature, know[ing] the trends, know[ing] the authors or creators of new works of value" and being able to "offer informed opinions"—they would invariably contribute to strengthening their libraries' "commitment" to an active "social role" (Danky, 1994a, p. 3). Librarians with in-depth subject expertise were therefore the building blocks of any library "where all ideas, regardless of form or source, can find a home and where the curious, or desperate, can [subsequently] find" those ideas (Danky, 1994a, p. 3).

Perhaps the most important consequence of subject expertise was that librarians were never satisfied with their current state of knowledge and constantly strove to discover new sources with which to expand and deepen their existing knowledge in the belief that "all ideas, regardless of form or source" should be available at libraries. Discovering new sources was exactly what Danky did during working trips to far-flung cities. In London, England, he scoured numerous bookstores such as Compendium Books, New Beacon, Freedom Books, and Gay's the Word for alternative periodicals, enriching the Wisconsin Historical Society by more than two hundred titles, including "British National Party literature" and "an antiracist Leeds United supporters' fanzine" (Danky, 1991, p. 678). An even more compelling illustration of Danky's commitment was his experience in Miami during a visit in the mid-1990s. The Miami-Dade Public Library (MDPL) claimed that it had taken great strides in bringing library services to diverse populations, but Danky, in the midst of compiling "a national bibliography of African-American newspapers and periodicals," discovered that the claim was exaggerated (Danky, 1998, p. 4). The small number of African American periodicals at the central location of MDPL and the nonexistence of Haitian American periodicals at an MDPL branch purportedly serving the Haitian American community was a revealing statement about the true extent of MDPL's "accomplishments" (Danky, 1998, p. 5). The dearth of Haitian American periodicals at the MDPL branch

in question was all the more inexplicable insofar as Danky unearthed no less than "27 new [Haitian American] titles" at a bookstore situated about "125 feet" past the MDPL branch and "a different mix of titles" at a "second bookstore, a mile or so away" (Danky, 1998, p. 5). Even more incomprehensible was that none of the titles he purchased was "held by an OCLC library" (Danky, 1998, p. 5). The physical distance Danky traveled to purchase these titles was small—125 feet and, subsequently, another mile. But the psychological, intellectual, and symbolic distance traveled was immense—a striking indicator of the distance between two different visions of collection development.

Danky's MDPL trip served as a touchstone for his view that librarianship in general and collection development in particular had become deskilled: "We check off the books sent on centralized approval plans, replicate the cataloging others have done (frequently without the complete book in hand), and then answer our patrons' questions with information from commercial databases" (Danky, 1998, p. 6). MDPL showed him the end result of woefully incomplete collection-development procedures relying on centralized selection, approval plans, and serials vendors: existing collection-development practices in libraries were too involved in promoting "the adoration of the mainstream, the corporate mainstream" (Danky, 1998, p. 6). Not only were "radical/progressive/left titles" underrepresented, but so too were "conservative/traditional/right" journals such as The Liberty Lobby's *Spotlight,* the *Phyllis Schlafly Report,* and the *Limbaugh Letter* (Danky, 1998, p. 5). How else to explain collections consisting of "more and more of the usual stuff, stuff that doesn't address the burning questions in libraries or in the rest of society" (Danky, 1998, p. 7)? How else to explain that libraries order "hundreds of copies of books" just "because Random House announced it will spend $50,000 on hyping the new [John] Grisham or Mary Higgins Clark novel or Marcia Clark memoir" (Berman, 1998, p. 8)? On the other hand, if collection development was undertaken by librarian-experts who possessed in-depth knowledge about specific subjects, they could identify numerous gaps in existing holdings and thus move collections beyond "the usual stuff" produced by "the corporate mainstream" to include items that grappled with "burning questions" in terms of "race, class, gender, or sexual orientation" (Danky, 1998, p. 6).

Alternative Periodicals and "Increased Understanding"

From its beginnings, Danky's career testified to the belief that the words "dynamic" and "responsive" should be construed in terms of sociocultural liberation based on subject-specific knowledge. These values were clearly on display when Danky began writing a column entitled "Alternative Periodicals" in *Wilson Library Bulletin* (WLB). The column first appeared in May of 1975, and over the next two years it was published nine times,

initially with Susan M. Bryl as coauthor and then with Michael Fox. Each column had a distinct thematic focus: radical labor (Bryl & Danky, 1975a, pp. 631–633); Asian Americans (Bryl & Danky, 1975b, pp. 29–33); religion, cults, and faiths (Bryl & Danky, 1975c, pp. 217–221); peace, amnesty, and the GI underground (Bryl & Danky, 1976a, pp. 474–479); Chicanos (Bryl & Danky, 1976b, pp. 628–633); radical Christianity (Danky & Bryl, 1976, pp. 137–141); Native Americans, part I (Danky & Fox, 1977a, pp. 481–485); Native Americans, part II (Danky & Fox, 1977b, pp. 662–666); and alternative library periodicals (Danky & Fox, 1977c, pp. 763–768). Drawing upon the knowledge he had gained as editor or coeditor of *Undergrounds: A Union List of Alternative Periodicals in Libraries of the United States and Canada* (Danky, 1974); *Asian-American Periodicals and Newspapers* (Hady & Danky, 1979); and *Hispanic Americans in the United States: A Union List of Periodicals and Newspapers* (Strache & Danky, 1979), Danky used the tribune afforded him by the WLB to call attention to journals, magazines, and newsletters whose voices he thought "should be heard and collected by libraries interested in broadening the points of view represented in their collections" (Bryl & Danky, 1975a, p. 631) insofar as they "challenge[d] many commonly held beliefs" (Bryl & Danky, 1975b, p. 29). Referring to alternative library literature in the final column of the WLB series, Danky wrote that, "even if the reader is not converted to the ideas espoused by the creators of these publications, the increased understanding will contribute to her/his professional performance" (Danky & Fox, 1977c, p. 763). It was no doubt a sentiment that he felt could be applied to all of the alternative periodicals he annotated in the WLB. Even if an individual didn't agree with their contents, "increased understanding" on the topic in question would inexorably result. Although the logical corollary of this statement was left unsaid, it nevertheless imbued all of Danky's efforts: the central purpose of libraries was to increase understanding. No matter how difficult it was to get the materials that led to increased understanding, that effort must be made to ensure that points of view were broadened and that substantive neutrality was achieved.

Danky's statement that the "professional performance" of librarians would be improved by reading alternative periodicals should also be seen in the context of the appearance, in 1971, of the first annual volume of the *Library Lit.—The Best of* (*LLTBO*) series. The brainchild of William A. (Bill) Katz, *LLTBO* reprinted what it considered to be the approximately thirty articles that exemplified "the best writing about libraries and related topics" from the previous calendar year (Katz & Schwartz, 1971, p. vi). Its last volume, edited by Jane Anne Hannigan, was published in 1992, marking the end of twenty-one annual editions containing 633 "best" articles (Hannigan, 1989, 1990, 1992; Katz, 1972, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988; Katz & Burgess, 1975; Katz & Gaherty, 1974; Katz & Klaessig, 1973; Katz & Schwartz, 1971; Katz & Weibel, 1982).

LLTBO came into existence to combat what Eric Moon called the "proliferation" of "appalling" articles in the library press (Katz & Schwartz, 1971, p. vii; Moon, 1969, p. 4104). It was meant "to purify by elimination," thereby providing a welcome "shortcut for librarian, student and layman" (Katz & Schwartz, 1971, p. vii), especially because "there are at least three times as many library periodicals in this country as we can afford or are necessary" (Moon, 1969, p. 4104). And while *LLTBO* was intended to be "the crystallization of all that is exciting and progressive in our profession" (Katz & Schwartz, 1971, p. vii), it selected its articles through a jury system, which meant that it was the result "of compromise, of give and take between the jurors and the need for an anthology of this type to be representative not only of the best, but of the field as a whole" (Katz & Gaherty, 1974, p. v). Juries typically included three to five individuals, yet over the course of the twenty-one *LLTBO* editions, there were only thirty-one jurors—a tight-knit circle of leading figures in the library world (Hannigan, 1992, pp. xv–xvi). In sum, *LLTBO* attempted to define a core collection of articles for librarianship that was "a painless, even pleasant overview of libraries and librarianship" (Katz & Klaessig, 1973, p. v). It thus reflected Katz's (1980) advice in *Collection Development: The Selection of Materials for Libraries* that "a high degree of selectivity" is mandatory when choosing serials (p. 184; qtd. from Texas A&M University Library System). Here he advocated the formation of a "core collection," which could primarily be determined by use studies, circulation statistics, citation studies, and inter-library loan data (Katz, 1980, pp. 188–191). Emphasis should not be "on casting a net to take in all the journals but on formulas that will allow the library to function with a minimal number of essential titles" (Katz, 1980, p. 181). From a structural perspective, Katz's words paralleled Richard Trueswell's (1969) 20/80 rule, which claimed that "approximately 20% of any library's collection could generate 80% of its overall circulation" (J. D. Eldredge, 1998, p. 496).

As shown in Table 1, of the 633 reprinted articles appearing in *LLTBO,* 267 articles (42.18 percent) originally appeared in the top 10 (core) journals from which *LLTBO* drew articles. In fact, just three journals—*Library Journal, Wilson Library Bulletin,* and *School Library Journal*—supplied 154 articles, or 24.33 percent of the total. As shown in Table 2, *LLTBO* drew on 169 journals for its 633 articles. Thirty journals, representing 17.75 percent of the total number of journals, each provided at least five articles, which cumulatively represented 63.35 percent (401 articles) of the total number of articles that appeared in *LLTBO.* Conversely, 88 journals, representing 52.07 percent of the total number of journals, provided one article apiece, which cumulatively represented 13.90 percent of the total number of articles that appeared in *LLTBO.* In other words, a relatively small core of journals supplied the bulk of the articles in *LLTBO.* And while the percentages adduced here do not meet Trueswell's (1969) ratio, they nevertheless follow Joseph Juran's 1954 observation—from which Trueswell

Table 1. Top Ten Journals from Which the *Library Lit.—The Best of* Series (1970–1990) Drew Articles

Journal	Number of articles drawn from this journal
Library Journal	77
Wilson Library Bulletin	39
School Library Journal	38
American Libraries	26
College & Research Libraries	26
Collection Building	14
Special Libraries	13
Top of the News	13
Journal of Library History (Libraries & Culture)	11
Journal of Academic Librarianship	10
Total	267

likely derived his ratio—that "'a vital few' of any population or group often exert [a] disproportionately larger effect than the 'trivial many' in the same population or group" (J. D. Eldredge, 1998, p. 496; Juran, 1954).

For Danky, the many were anything but trivial; in fact, they were at the heart of things. The biennial *Alternative Library Literature* (*ALL*) was therefore conceived by Berman and Danky as a response to the selection philosophy animating *LLTBO* (Berman & Danky, 1984a, 1986, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002a). It functioned as an antianthology, a "deliberately *un*balanced collection" that spanned the years 1982–2001 in ten volumes (Berman & Danky, 1984b, p. 1). Unlike *LLTBO, ALL* was proudly nonjuried, with articles "arbitrarily" chosen by Berman, Danky, and the recommendations of coworkers (Berman & Danky, 1984b, p. v). In its ten editions, *ALL* contained 613 articles: 562 reprinted articles from other periodicals and 51 original contributions. Articles were typically arranged in thematic sections such as "People/Work"; "Censorship/Human Rights"; "Service/Advocacy/Empowerment"; "Women"; and "Multiculturalism/Third World" (e.g., Berman & Danky, 1996, pp. v–vi). In nine of the ten *ALL* volumes, there was also a separate thematic section entitled "Alternatives," which provided insight into both the theory and practice of building strong collections of nonmainstream materials.

Berman and Danky did not claim that the selected articles were the best of library literature. Rather, articles in *ALL* dealt with topics "usually overlooked or minimized in standard library media"; as such, they "truly represent[ed] the major out-of-the-mainstream concerns, viewpoints, and creativity" with which all librarians should be familiar (Berman & Danky, 1984b, p. v). Readers should not just be presented with purified library literature, as in *LLTBO.* Such an approach was disingenuous, especially because "[c]onventional library literature describes a world that does not exist, one of conventional people working in standard-issue environ-

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Journals Represented in *Library Lit.—The Best of Series* (1970–1990) According to the Number of Previously Printed Articles Drawn from Individual Journals

Number of articles	Number of journals from which this many articles were drawn	Percent of journals with this many articles	Exact number of articles represented by percent of journals	Percent of articles represented by percent of journals
20 or more articles	5	2.96	206	32.54
Between 10 and 19 articles	5	2.96	61	9.64
Between 5 and 9 articles	20	11.83	134	21.17
Three or four articles	28	16.57	98	15.48
Two articles	23	13.61	46	7.27
One article	88	52.07	88	13.90
Total	169	100	633	100

ments," where more attention is given to "personal aggrandizement" than to "participatory democracy" (Danky, 1994b, p. viii). In a library world "where . . . jobs are increasingly deskilled and demeaning," library workers should "turn back to a world of ideas" from "many places" (Danky, 1994b, p. viii; 1996b, p. viii). Only in this way could libraries assume real "value" for the "millions of people who are denied access to all other governmental institutions save prisons, welfare and asylums" (Danky, 1994b, p. viii). The diversity of sources from which *ALL* took its articles can thus be interpreted as a trenchant response to a "standard-issue" working environment where professionalism was equated with narrow specialization and the type of "restrictive procedures" (Danky, 1994b, p. viii, 1996b, p. viii) that ensured the domination of "corporate and conservative views of what librarianship is all about" (Berman & Danky, 2002b, p. 1).

As shown in Table 3, the top 10 journals from which *ALL* drew articles supplied 24.14 percent (148 articles) of its total contents of 613 articles, or 26.33 percent of its 562 previously printed articles. As shown in Table 4, *ALL* drew on 240 journals for its 562 previously printed articles. Twenty-seven journals, representing 11.25 percent of the total number of journals, each provided at least 5 articles, which cumulatively represented 45.20 percent (254 articles) of the total number of previously printed articles that appeared in *ALL*. On the other hand, 162 journals, representing 67.50 percent of the total number of journals, provided one article apiece, which cumulatively represented 28.83 percent (a plurality) of the total number of previously printed articles that appeared in *ALL*. Compared with *LLTBO*, *ALL* drew on more journals for its reprinted articles (240 titles, as opposed to 169 titles for *LLTBO*) and took a significantly smaller percentage of its reprinted articles from a core set of journals (26.33 percent, as opposed to 42.18 percent for *LLTBO*). The percentage

Table 3. Top Ten Journals from Which the *Alternative Library Literature* Series (1982–2001) Drew Articles

Journal	Number of articles drawn from this journal
Collection Building	23
Counterpoise	22
Progressive Librarian	22
Women Library Workers (WLW) Journal	18
Librarians' Guild Communicator	16
Librarians at Liberty	10
The Unabashed Librarian	10
Journal of Youth Services in Libraries	9
Public Library Quarterly	9
Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) Newsletter/Resolutions	9
Total	148

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of Journals Represented in the *Alternative Library Literature* Series (1982–2001) According to the Number of Previously Printed Articles Drawn from Individual Journals

Number of articles	Number of journals from which this many articles were drawn	Percent of journals with this many articles	Exact number of articles represented by percent of journals	Percent of articles represented by percent of journals
20 or more articles	3	1.25	67	11.92
Between 10 and 19 articles	4	1.67	54	9.61
Between 5 and 9 articles	20	8.33	133	23.67
Three or four articles	30	12.50	104	18.51
Two articles	21	8.75	42	7.47
One article	162	67.50	162	28.83
Total	240	100	562	100*

* Due to rounding.

of articles that *ALL* reprinted from journals that supplied it with one article (28.83 percent) was more than twice as large as the percentage of articles that *LLTBO* reprinted from journals that supplied it with one article (13.90 percent). The titles alone of many of the 162 journals that were sourced only once by *ALL* bear witness to Berman and Danky's multidimensional view of librarianship: *Adbusters, Asian American Justice Watch, Black & Ethnic Minority Workers Group, Central America Connection, Essays in the Philosophy of Humanism, Human Rights Interest Reporter, Social Anarchism, Tikkun*, and *Whole Earth Review*.

In addition, other than *Collection Building*, there were no overlaps between the top ten journals sourced by *LLTBO* and *ALL* (Table 1 and Table 3). And, as shown in Table 5, the core titles that appeared most frequently in *LLTBO* hardly ever appeared in *ALL*, again with the exception of *Collection*

Table 5. Comparison of the Frequency with Which Specific Journals Are Represented in *Library Lit.—The Best of* Series (1970–1990) and the *Alternative Library Literature* Series (1982–2001)

Journal	Number of articles drawn from this journal that appear in *Library Lit.—The Best of* series (1970–1990)	Number of articles drawn from this journal that appear in the *Alternative Library Literature* series (1982–2001)
Library Journal	77	1
Wilson Library Bulletin	39	2
School Library Journal	38	1
American Libraries	26	1
College & Research Libraries	26	1
Collection Building	14	23
Special Libraries	13	1
Top of the News	13	0
Journal of Library History (Libraries & Culture)	11	2
Journal of Academic Librarianship	10	0

Building. Viewed from another perspective, 38.55 percent of the articles appearing in *LLTBO* (244 articles) were taken from the twenty most prestigious journals as determined by directors of ARL libraries (Kohl & Davis, 1985, p. 42), while only 3.91 percent of the articles appearing in ALL (22 articles) were sourced from this same set of twenty prestigious journals (Table 6). Finally, seven of the top ten journals from which *LLTBO* drew its articles also appeared among the twenty most prestigious journals as determined by ARL directors, while none of the top ten journals from which *ALL* drew its articles appeared among this same set of twenty prestigious journals. The core titles used most frequently by *LLTBO* as sources of its "best" articles to a great extent mirrored the titles deemed most prestigious for tenure and promotion purposes by ARL library directors.

LLTBO and *ALL* were therefore two very different compendia: the former sourced its articles from well-established and well-known journals; the latter went much further afield to encompass a wide range of alternative periodicals. Not only was *ALL* a new kind of anthology, it also provided a blueprint for the way that libraries should develop their collections of books and periodicals. If librarians included alternative publications in their libraries, the resulting collections would be richer than if they had been put together under the auspices of centralized selection, approval plans, and serials vendors. In *ALL*, Danky formalized what he had known for years: the "trivial many" were in fact the "useful many," something that Juran admitted almost forty years after his initial statement about the "trivial many" (J. D. Eldredge, 1998, p. 500). If librarians read *ALL*, their professional performance and general understanding of

Table 6. Relationship between Prestigious Journals as Determined by Directors of Association of Research Libraries (ARL) Institutions and the Frequency with Which Those Journals Appear in *Library Lit.—The Best of* Series (1970–1990) and the *Alternative Library Literature* Series (1982–2001)

Journal (drawn from the first 20 journals listed in Table 1 of Kohl & Davis, 1985)	Number of articles drawn from this journal that appear in *Library Lit.—The Best of* series (1970–1990)	Number of articles drawn from this journal that appear in the *Alternative Library Literature* series (1982–2001)
College & Research Libraries	26	1
Library Quarterly	6	3
Journal of Academic Librarianship	10	0
Library Resources & Technical Services	4	0
Library Trends	1	3
Information Technology & Libraries (Journal of Library Automation)	5	1
Journal of the American Society for Information Science	4	1
Library Journal	77	1
American Libraries	26	1
RQ	7	4
Special Libraries	13	1
Wilson Library Bulletin	39	2
Library & Information Science Research	1	1
Journal of Library History (Libraries & Culture)	11	2
Journal of Education for Librarianship	7	1
Collection Management	0	0
Library of Congress Quarterly Journal	3	0
Drexel Library Quarterly	3	0
Harvard Library Bulletin	0	0
Microform Review	1	0
Total (% of all reprinted articles in series)	244 (38.55)	22 (3.91)

the interdisciplinary nature of librarianship would increase. Articles from alternative publications were therefore highly useful. Libraries that developed strong collections of alternative periodicals and books were similarly useful because such alternative publications increased the understanding of patrons about any given topic.

In some ways, Danky anticipated Chris Anderson's (2006) "Long Tail" thesis, which argued that continual focus by producers and retailers on the 20 percent of consumer goods (the "Short Head") that constituted 80 percent of demand ("and usually 100 percent of the profits" [p. 7]) led to a mainstream and "hit-driven" "lockstep culture" (p. 27) that disadvantaged individuals who wanted access to "the hidden majority" of choices lying "under the current waterline" (p. 26). This "hidden majority" of choices was termed the "Long Tail." Although demand for each of the items in the Long Tail was confined to "a mass of niches," collectively those niches were a powerful cultural force that could produce profits for online retailers,

especially those offering books, music, and films (C. Anderson, 2006, pp. 52–53, 5). And while the Long Tail "*is indeed full of crap,*" "it's also full of works of refined brilliance and depth," a dual phenomenon necessitating sophisticated information filters that allow individuals to find suitable items (C. Anderson, 2006, p. 116). Because Anderson was writing about how online aggregators ("hybrid retailers" such as Amazon and "pure digital retailer[s]" (p. 90)) could benefit from a Long Tail economic model, he envisioned filters as "recommendations and search technologies" (p. 122).

Danky was convinced that libraries—the type of bricks-and-mortar entities that did not have the limitless space of large online aggregators—could also benefit by stocking Long Tail items, which in their case were alternative publications. Not only did these publications represent "the hidden majority," but they could also act as a much-needed counterweight to library collections that were becoming increasingly homogenized through the type of material they received from centralized selection departments that often worked closely with approval-plan and serials vendors. For Danky, the ideal filter was the librarian with vast subject-specific knowledge—someone who could enrich library collections by finding the "works of refined brilliance and depth" in the Long Tail. His work on *ALL* was an example of what was possible when the universe of possible choices was expanded such that the items at the furthest reaches of the Long Tail (e.g., the 162 journals from which *ALL* reprinted one article apiece) constituted a plurality of all included items. *ALL* was a model for how library-wide collection-development practices could be reinvented so that alternative publications would be significantly represented on library shelves.

Conclusion

Danky knew that it was pusillanimous to invoke time-honored collection-development principles such as "suitability of subject and style for intended audience," "reputation or significance of the author and publisher," "popular appeal," and "number and nature of requests from patrons," since these criteria frequently excluded publications produced by alternative presses (B. Anderson, 1999, p. 12). Similarly, it was folly to limit the range of materials made available to readers by defining a "best of" (or core) collection because definitions of "best" often excluded views that were radical and controversial, settling for the "painless" and "pleasant." Instead, items should be collected based on "insight into human and social conditions," "relevance to the experience and contributions of diverse populations," and "representation of a minority point of view" (B. Anderson, 1999, p. 12). Only then could a library aspire to "a collection that approaches comprehensiveness" (Atton, 1996, p. 18). Librarians should therefore consider alternative publications as an "inevitable" part of their collections because the alternative press, freed from the constraints imposed upon its mainstream counterparts to realize significant

"commercial gain," can provide "interpretations of the world which we might not otherwise see" (Atton, 1996, p. 18).

As Danky's career attests, developing comprehensive collections was an arduous process that could not be outsourced to approval-plan and serials vendors, nor could it be performed in centralized selection departments where paraprofessionals mechanically bulk-ordered copies of bestsellers and other popular books. If outsourcing occurred in libraries, not only did it risk homogenizing collections, but it also doomed librarians to be non-experts in numerous subject fields—a troubling development for anyone wishing to bring "as wide a variety of viewpoints as possible into the library" so that "principles of fairness, of equity" apply (Danky, 1994b, p. 3). Instead, collection development must be undertaken by librarians who are subject experts and who are prepared to spend time identifying obscure, alternative, and controversial items that, once found and made available to patrons, are the best testimony of libraries' embrace of substantive neutrality. After all, approval-plan and serials vendors were businesses driven by the profit motive, not substantive neutrality. John R. Secor and Gary M. Shirk (2000), senior administrative officers at YBP Library Services, asserted that it is the goal of "full-service academic book vendors" (p. 106) in the 2000s and beyond to go "from razor-thin margins to five percent" pretax profit, a level which "is considered minimally necessary for continued corporate vitality" (pp. 107). And, as pointed out by Dan Tonkery (2001), a wave of mergers among approval-plan and serials vendors in the late 1990s and early 2000s consolidated control of the library vendor marketplace in the hands of "fewer than 10 major companies" (p. 47). Because these companies are part of "major corporations" whose "management teams" must deliver ever-higher "shareholder value," they are "held to very demanding standards for measuring growth, ROI [return on investment], and profitability" (p. 50). For example, Crispin Davis, the Chief Executive Officer of Reed Elsevier, a major publisher of scholarly serials, stated in 2002 that one of his "key" priorities was to bring about "above-market revenue growth and double-digit earnings growth" after his company had acquired Harcourt General (qtd. in Black, 2006, p. 133).

In the 2000s, profitability meant "productive efficiency," especially for serials vendors. Many of them turned into Web-based full-text aggregators offering "product bundling" (Covi & Cragin, 2004, p. 314) when libraries undertook a large-scale migration to electronic journals as a result of "patrons' preference for online access" and "budgetary constraints and reductions" caused by soaring print journal prices (Watson, 2005, p. 200). Yet full-text coverage of alternative publications remained low in many of the aggregated databases to which libraries subscribed, hovering between 6 percent and 12.3 percent of API periodicals (LaFond, Van Ullen, & Irving, 2000). One reason for this was that electronic aggregators tried to make their bundles as attractive as possible for libraries (and as profitable for themselves) by

concentrating on titles recommended by "standard sources" such as *Magazines for Libraries,* "journals represented in important secondary databases, such as CINAHL, EconLit, ERIC, INSPEC, MEDLINE, MLA International Bibliography, and PsychINFO" (Chambers & So, 2004, p. 186). Alternative publications did not comprise a large percentage of such "standard sources." As collection-development specialists devoted much of their time to facilitating access to bundled electronic resources packaged by aggregators, they diminished their libraries' "independence with regard to collections" (Covi & Cragin, 2004, p. 313). This change "decreased the power of subject specialists to enhance collections" (Covi & Cragin, 2004, p. 312). From one perspective, it was even difficult to call them "subject specialists" any more, since they were overwhelmed with negotiating licensing arrangements and forming consortia in order to distribute the ever-increasing cost of access to online resources across many institutional budgets.

The loss of subject expertise among collection-development specialists worried Danky because he was convinced that extensive subject expertise was a vital prerequisite for informed collection development. The prevalence of electronic aggregators was another instance of outsourcing that prevented libraries from "think[ing] globally, collect[ing] locally" (Crohan, 2000, p. 374), thus impoverishing collections by restricting them to the kind of juried "best of" model found in *LLTBO.* Conversely, the non-juried long-tail distribution model found in *ALL* was a stinging rejection of a collection-development approach in which only those items that gave "a painless, even pleasant overview" of a given topic were deemed worthy of inclusion in an anthology and, by extension, a library collection (Katz & Klaessig, 1973, p. v). For Danky, it was important to include what others might consider to be "inadequate, anti-intellectual, [and] downright distasteful documents" (Katz & Klaessig, 1973, p. vii). *ALL* was therefore an eloquent invitation to collection-development specialists to reorient their practices so that they no longer conceptualized professional expertise in terms of excluding works based on artificial criteria, but in terms of including as much overlooked material as possible. Exclusionary practices were embodied by outsourcing, as manifested in centralized "Give 'Em What They Want" selection, approval plans, and serial vendors turned electronic aggregators. Inclusionary practices were symbolized by non-outsourced collection-development activities performed by librarians who had not abandoned their subject-specific expertise in the name of "productive efficiency" and "allocative efficiency," who deployed that expertise by purchasing hard-to-find (alternative) materials, and who understood that library collections containing alternative materials were the only ones that would lead to "increased understanding" and socio-cultural liberation. These were the kind of librarians who welcomed each issue of *Counterpoise*, a journal founded in 1997 by Charles Willett, because of its

ability to "concentrat[e] information" about alternative and hard-to-find materials in one place (Dilevko & Dali, 2004, p. 73). These were also the kind of librarians who strove to convince administrators to emulate the library at the Minneapolis Community & Technology College (MCTC), which allocated first 10 percent and later 15 percent of its materials budget to alternative-press resources (Eland, 2000; MCTC, n.d.).

Invoking the spirit of George Orwell's *The Road to Wigan Pier*, a book where Orwell "concluded enigmatically that we (meaning *all of us*) would solve the problem of poverty when we chose to" (Danky, 1996b, p. viii), Danky believed that it behooved each librarian to confront the lack of alternative publications in libraries with "initiative," "energy," and "tenacity" (Danky, 1996b, p. viii). Becoming an expert in "something, anything" was the first step in a process that would inevitably lead individual librarians to include alternative publications in their institutions. The more one knew about a topic, the more one realized how many gaps existed not only in one's knowledge of that topic, but also in the library collections that symbolized knowledge of that same topic. Alternative publications could help fill those numerous gaps.

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