

WOMEN IN SOUTHERN LIBRARY EDUCATION, 1905–1945¹

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Southern library education was an almost exclusively female enterprise until about 1930, when the first male students were accepted into the region's only ALA-accredited library school. In the formative (ca. 1905–30) and developmental (ca. 1930–45) years of southern library education, regional attitudes toward gender, race, and class, and the South's impoverished economic climate, shaped the way in which library education was adapted to meet regional needs. The "old girl network" of library school alumnae, community leaders, and even untrained librarians represented a formidable coalition for library advocacy that even the region's much publicized illiteracy, bigotry, and general backwardness could not deter.

Until at least 1945, southern library education was governed by females, long after women had lost their strongholds in other parts of the country. At the end of the Second World War, nine out of ten southern library schools had a female dean or director (see table 1) [1, pp. 15–16; 2, pp. 463–64; 3, pp. 593–94]. Similarly, among general library education programs with no prohibition against the entrance of males, only the southern programs catered exclusively to females until 1930.³ Why

1. I wish to acknowledge the generous assistance of the following librarians, library educators, and archivists who supplied information vital to this study: Peter Carini, Simmons College; Gerry Compton and Kenan Professor Edward G. Holley, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Sharon Garrison, College of William and Mary; Lynn Kilpatrick, Northeast Georgia Regional Library; Faye Phillips, Louisiana State University; Joe C. Rader, University of Tennessee; Michael Sims, George Peabody College for Teachers; Tom Wall and Professor Toni Bearman, University of Pittsburgh; and Mrs. Almeta Woodson, Atlanta University.
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3. The Library School of Simmons College in Massachusetts was located in a female host institution and did not admit males until 1937, although men were admitted into the program of social work there from the 1920s. At Pittsburgh, the library program was designed to educate school librarians, and although males were permitted to enter

[*Library Quarterly*, vol. 62, no. 2, pp. 169–216]

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0024-2519/92/6202-0001\$01.00

TABLE 1
REGIONAL GENDER RATIOS AMONG DIRECTORS OF ALL LIBRARY TRAINING PROGRAMS LISTED IN EDITIONS OF
AMERICAN LIBRARY DIRECTORY: 1923, 1935, 1945

REGION	1923 (<i>N</i> = 20)		1935* (<i>N</i> = 43)		1945 (<i>N</i> = 38)		TOTAL (<i>N</i> = 101)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
West	2 (66.67)	1 (33.33)	2 (50.00)	2 (50.00)	2 (40.00)	3 (60.00)	6 (50.00)	6 (50.00)
Northwest	1 (100.00)	...	2 (66.67)	1 (33.33)	2 (100.00)	...	5 (83.33)	1 (16.67)
Southwest	1 (100.00)	...	1 (100.00)	...	2 (100.00)	...
Middle states	1 (25.00)	3 (75.00)	5 (41.67)	7 (58.33)	5 (62.50)	3 (37.50)	11 (45.83)	13 (54.17)
Northeast	2 (20.00)	8 (80.00)	4 (33.33)	8 (66.67)	5 (41.67)	7 (58.33)	11 (32.35)	23 (67.65)
Southeast	...	2 (100.00) [†]	3 (27.27)	8 (72.73)	1 (10.00)	9 (90.00)	4 (17.39)	19 (82.61)
Total	6 (30.00)	14 (70.00)	17 (39.53)	26 (60.47)	16 (42.11)	22 (57.89)	39 (38.61)	62 (61.39)

NOTE.—Numbers in parentheses are percentages.

* Excluding summer school programs listed in 1935 *Directory*.

[†] Included the Library School at the Carnegie Library of Atlanta and the program initiated by Elva Balcom at the University of Texas.

did this condition prevail? This article recounts the rise of women in southern library education and identifies regional factors which insured a long-lived female monopoly over the field: (1) the southern historical "identity" and the isolation of southern librarians from the national professional agenda; (2) the prevalence of stronger regional gender norms with respect to "higher" education; (3) the supremacy of the Library School at the Carnegie Library of Atlanta and the lack of southern male library students before 1930; (4) regional racial and religious mores, which required female compliance as well as courage in extending library opportunity to the dispossessed; and (5) the presence of a network of Atlanta library school alumnae who served as gatekeepers for the limited job market.

Surprisingly little has been written about the role of women in southern library education, though the subject is implicit in standard works on libraries in the South. Florrinnell Morton chronicled the growth of southern library education in terms of changing national and regional standards [4], while Mary Edna Anders, as part of her doctoral dissertation, defined the growth of southern library education as a corollary to the public library movement in the region [5]. Betty Callaham supplied a detailed administrative account of the Library School at the Carnegie Library of Atlanta (later the Division of Library and Information Science of Emory University), the first and for several years (1927-32) the only accredited graduate library school in the region [6]. By far the most comprehensive review of southern library education has been Edward Holley's [7], which balances a detailed chronological account with some consideration of regionalism. James Carmichael has profiled the graduates of the Atlanta school [8], particularly Tommie Dora Barker [9], who was for thirty-four years head of the Atlanta program. Arthur Gunn has examined the history of the library school at Hampton Institute [10], while Rosemary Du Mont summarized the problems of educating black librarians in the United States [11]. Robert Martin, in reviewing the early career of Louis Round Wilson, has left a vivid picture of Wilson's struggle to establish a library school at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, although the focus of his dissertation was on Wilson's contributions as a university change agent [12]. Brief published studies and master's theses have reviewed the histories of other individual southern schools [13, pp. 227-39; 14]. To these historical works should be appended the various surveys of southern library

after 1916, work with children was still universally viewed as part of woman's sphere of work; the first male student did not matriculate until 1933-34. At Atlanta, no such explicit restrictions on the entrance of males existed.

training agencies and library development which were undertaken by Sarah Bogle in 1930 [15], Barker in 1936 [16] and 1939 [17], Wilson and Marion Milczewski in 1947 [18], Anders for the Southeastern States Cooperative Survey in 1976 [19], plus the voluminous writings of Wilson on the subject of library education, usually written with some reference to southern conditions.

To be fair, it should be noted that most of the works cited were written before the advent of women's studies. Moreover, precious few southern women's histories have been written from feminist perspectives, save for the work of Anne Scott [20, 21]. Feminists have claimed the novels of several southern female writers [22], and various projects have been undertaken to describe the experiences of black and white women civic organizers [23], mill workers [24], black domestic workers [25], and the relations of black and white southern women [26]. Even so, librarianship is generally absent from historical discussions. Scott has chided library historians for their ignorance of the contributions made by southern women's clubs to library development [27], yet she, like other southern women's historians, gives scant attention to the opportunities for professional advancement that librarianship offered southern women.

The relative obscurity of librarianship as a worthy "women's profession" is also evident in Thomas Woody's 1929 classic study of the history of education for women in the United States [28], in which nursing, social work, and teaching all receive their due, but not librarianship. In recent studies of women in academe, only Barbara Solomon's history of women and higher education in America [29] makes more than passing mention of librarianship. Geraldine Clifford, in her introduction to a recent collection of biographical sketches on academic women in coeducational institutions [30, pp. 1-46], limits her remarks to female librarians with academic rank rather than female library educators.

The southern mentality has always resisted encapsulation in a single unidimensional caricature. As southern writers have been endeavoring to demonstrate since at least 1860, the southern identity is split by infinite considerations of class, family, and ideology [31]. Howard Odum founded the sociological school of regionalism on the premise that regional identity could be defined, measured, and harnessed [32]; but pinpointing exactly what part southern women contributed to the southern character is a more tenuous task. It is clear that the devastating effects of the Civil War and the demise of southern antebellum society gave rise to a myth of southern identity associated with gentility, grace, and manners, all of which the southern lady supposedly personified, but it also embraced the poor white farm woman and entrepreneurial survivors like the fictional heroine Scarlett O'Hara, all of whom shared in the region's legacy of defeat.

Which states constitute the South? Southern librarians by 1930 had made a distinction between the nine "deep" South states included in the Southeastern Library Association (SELA), border states like Maryland, which never joined SELA, and the more westerly states of Texas and Louisiana, which belonged to the Southwestern Library Association. Louis Shores's history of library education included fourteen states in the southern region [33, p. 41], but he did not specify which states these were. Sociologist Howard Odum followed a more comprehensive schema of regional identity and weighed such factors as history, culture, degree of economic development, demography, and geography in defining the Southeast; and thus he included Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia, but not Texas, in the Southeast [34, p. 286], a plan followed by library educator Wilson in his 1938 study *The Geography of Reading* [35, p. 21]. On the other hand, Barker also included both Texas and West Virginia with the southeastern states in her 1936 survey of southern library conditions [16] because of their relatively primitive state of library development. Barker's definition is followed in the present discussion.

Probably nowhere have female librarians been more clearly associated with their regional identity than in the South. While women maintained almost exclusive domain over library education in all parts of the United States until at least 1930, an explanation of their predominance in the southern field involves many factors absent from most discussions of the profession of librarianship: the importance of local conditions in formulating accepted standards of practice; the prevailing ethos of the "southern lady," which shaped expectations of professional behavior; animosity toward the northern/midwestern axis of power in the American Library Association (ALA); gender segregation of higher education in the South; the difficulty for males of gaining national renown in southern library work and in ALA; racial segregation; local politics; and rivalry among different geographic and ideological sectors of the "old girl network" of the southern library establishment.

"The North" and Southern Librarianship

Education for librarianship in the South, which became established nearly two decades after Melvil Dewey organized the first library school at Columbia in 1887, owed as much to the energy and initiative of its founder, Anne Wallace (1866–1960), as it did to Dewey's theories, systems, and preachments. Wallace, librarian of the Young Men's Library Association of Atlanta (1892–99), created a national sensation by host-

ing a National Congress of Female Librarians at the Cotton States Exhibition (1895), and founding the Georgia Library Commission (1897); the region's first state library association (Georgia Library Association, 1898); Atlanta's public library, the Carnegie Library of Atlanta (1899); and the region's first library school (1905), all within a decade. She did not fit the serious and selfless mold of her northern contemporaries described by feminist historians Laurel Grotzinger and Dee Garrison [36, *passim*; 37, esp. p. 176]. Richard Bowker described Wallace as a "beauteous" person whose "vivacity and wit" so charmed Andrew Carnegie that she easily pleaded the case for cost overruns in the construction of the Atlanta library and later secured his unconditional pledge for support of a library training program [38, p. 590]. She enticed American Library Association delegates into holding the 1899 convention in Atlanta, was elected ALA honorary second vice-president in 1902, and lured the conferees back down south for the 1907 Asheville conference, which was organized around the discussion of southern library topics. She was the cause of much celebration among her kinswomen and no little jealousy among some northern female contemporaries like Dewey's student Ada Alice Jones, who found the adulation inspired by Wallace unbearable [39]. Female educators at the library school at Albany had to content themselves with responsible positions in the already established field of northern library education begun by Dewey; Wallace and her immediate successors at the Carnegie Library of Atlanta owed no obeisance to Dewey and very little to the Board of Trustees of Atlanta's library. Wallace was a first daughter of Atlanta, and she established the precedent of female library leadership.

No small part of Wallace's command of her situation derived from her sense of self-worth. Daughter of an esteemed Confederate captain, she moved with ease among the social leaders of "New South" Atlanta. Likewise, her immediate successors at the Library School at the Carnegie Library of Atlanta all had relatives who had served the Confederacy, some with distinction. Surviving recommendations of prospective library school students in the files of the library school make generous references to the southern family background of the candidates, many of whom were already known to the library school directors. The collective identity of southern women was therefore more than merely symbolic, and southern female library educators, among others, were motivated to make significant contributions to the reintegration of the "benighted" post-Reconstruction South into the national fabric.

For a period of approximately twenty-seven years (1905–32), the Library School at the Carnegie Library of Atlanta was the only formalized training agency for whites in the South maintaining continuous representation in the councils of library educators: the informal meetings of

library school teachers (1907–8), the Round Table of Library Instructors (1911–15), and the Association of American Library Schools (1915–).⁴ The Library School was originally funded by Carnegie in order to train librarians for the Carnegie Library of Atlanta and for the surrounding southern states as conditions warranted. Demand soon exceeded the supply of graduates, however, and the school's original local mission was subsumed in general library training for the southern states.

The school was maintained under Wallace's sole direction until 1908, and from 1908 until 1930 under the daily management of a principal and chief instructor who reported to the director. In the wake of the famous Williamson Report on library training of 1923 [40], informal negotiations began in 1924 for affiliation with Emory University. From 1928, students received a Bachelor of Arts in Library Science from Emory. By 1930, with the growth of enrollments, the school had graduated 314 students. The Library School at the Carnegie Library of Atlanta was physically removed to the Emory campus in that year, at which time its name was changed to the Library School of Emory University [6, p. 179]. It joined the School of Nursing as the second female professional program on campus, although Emory, a Methodist male school, did not become coeducational until 1953.

From its inception, the school displayed several characteristics that distinguished it from other library schools of approximately the same era, but none was so pronounced as its distinctly regional mission as a "school for southern conditions" [41]. Wallace intended to balance geographic distribution in the school by including one student from each of the southern states in every class. As much as she and her immediate successors may have touted the school's mission as purely southern, "preference being given to residents of this region" [42], the informal regional admission criteria were never strictly followed, especially if candidates met acceptable standards of scholarship.⁵ Still, nearly all of the school's students were southern-born or southern-bred. Of the first ninety-nine graduates of the first ten classes of the school (1905–15), only seven hailed from outside the South, and one of these, a native of Atlanta, only happened to be living in Buffalo at the time she made application for admission. Nearly 94 percent of Atlanta's student body

4. The school was also for several years the only southern school for whites accredited by the Board of Education for Librarianship (1925/26, only accredited southern junior undergraduate school for whites; 1926/27–1931/32, only accredited southern graduate school).
5. For example, the class of 1907 included Constance Kerschner (from Maryland, living in Pennsylvania) and Mary Lambie (Pennsylvania) among its twelve graduates. Although the school was designed to accommodate trainees from the surrounding southern states, it would admit students from other regions if circumstances warranted it.

were therefore southerners during these years. By contrast, native midwesterners constituted 89 percent of Indiana Library School's entrants of 1905–12 and only 81 percent of Illinois Library School graduates of 1898–1908 [43, p. 478; 44, p. 6]. Moreover, both Illinois and Indiana attracted a larger geographical mix than Atlanta, including students from the West as well as those from the Northeast and South.

The reasons given by these regional outsiders for attending the Atlanta school were varied. Mary Lambie of Allegheny, Pennsylvania (class of 1907), who suffered from chronic bronchitis, traveled south for her library training on a doctor's advice [45]. Constance Kerschner (class of 1907), a co-worker of Lambie's in the Carnegie Library of Allegheny, simply wanted to leave the Pittsburgh area [46]. Kerschner's initial failure to be admitted on the basis of her Pennsylvania residency led to a last-minute night letter from the distraught young woman, declaring herself "southern Born." Wallace confessed herself "completely vanquished" by the news and capitulated [47, 48]. Katherine Seon of Paget, Bermuda (class of 1909), applied to Atlanta because expenses were an important consideration for her and because the southern school was closer to Bermuda than its northern counterparts. Her Alabama family connections provided a secondary factor, although she had relatives in other parts of the country [49, 50]. Gertrude Olmsted of Glen Ridge, New Jersey (class of 1910), had a sister in Atlanta and entertained exotic notions of the South [51], while Bertha Young of Bradford, Pennsylvania (class of 1911), chose Atlanta over Drexel because she was poor and felt that Atlanta would be a cheaper city in which to live than Philadelphia while earning her certificate [52]. A sixth student, Jessie Hutchinson (class of 1909), hailed from Indiana, a state of mixed regional loyalties and identity, but evidently did not view her choice to attend the Atlanta school as extraordinary [53]. During the same period, of course, southern women attended northern library schools: Indiana admitted six southerners between 1906 and 1912, while Illinois admitted five between 1898 and 1908 [43, p. 478; 44, p. 27].

Some southern library employers actually preferred northern talent, seemingly because they believed that southern students were incapable of hard work. In Birmingham in 1912, for example, Atlanta girls were made to feel "unwelcomed" by the president of the board of trustees of the public library. He apparently made a habit of imposing hardships on southern girls in order to drive them away and "gratify his desire for filling the positions with Northerners" [54]. The Atlanta school, too, occasionally employed northern instructors, though few lasted longer than a year or two. Mary Esther Robbins, founder of the Simmons Library School, was employed during 1916–17 as assistant director to

relieve Director Tommie Dora Barker of the daily burdens of school administration, a plan that failed [55]. Winifred Lemon Davis of Wisconsin served several ill-starred terms as principal from 1925 to 1929, but she fell far short of filling the central role played by her predecessor, Susie Lee Crumley, as instructor (1913–15), principal and chief instructor (1915–25), chief confidante and “the angel of good cheer” in the school [56]. Similarly, Mrs. Jessie Luther (1927–28), Julia C. Pressey (1927–30), Vera W. Mooers (1927–29), Lydia M. Gooding (1929–30), and Ethel M. Fair (1929–30) were briefly imported to teach courses in the difficult years during which the school was straining to achieve credibility with the Board of Education of Librarianship as a graduate institution. Only after the school moved to Emory University was a northern woman associated with the school on an indefinite basis.

The presence of a fairly homogeneous body of instructors and students from elevated southern social backgrounds (defined by manners and family connections more than money) ensured that a finishing school atmosphere prevailed until the 1920s. Students were judged by their deportment, recommended to employers for their “pleasing” southern personalities, and treasured if they could muster the ability to tell Uncle Remus stories in authentic “darky” dialect at storybook hour. Graduates possessed of the latter ability were prized emissaries of southern culture in the North, particularly in New York City.

Beginning in 1909, promising students were sent north to gain broadened experience through work with the diversified clientele of the New York Public Library. Between 1909 and 1915, twenty-six of the first ninety-nine graduates of the Atlanta school followed this pattern of career development, many under the direct supervision of the children’s librarian, Annie Carroll Moore. As Sneed explained to one such graduate, “For a variety of experience in a short while there is nothing to be compared to the observation one may get in so large a system” [57]. Yet, even though the southern students were surrounded by the innumerable attractions of Broadway, fascinated by the immigrant library patrons who lined up for service at the branches, and stimulated by open library lectures by professional luminaries in the library school run by Mary W. Plummer, the appeal of the seemingly ceaseless stream of activity on all fronts in New York’s library system usually paled after a year or two. Far away from the slower pace of the sleepy rural South with its profound network of familial connections, its small-town rivalries and its endless round of social events which offset even the most unbearable of library conditions, adventuresome graduates usually returned to the South with relief after a respectable absence to resume the more familiar attitudes of home. Surviving letters of southern graduates who worked

in the North make plain their general feeling that, however alluring was the sublime sophistication of New York, they preferred the southern devils they knew to those northern ones they did not [58, p. 392].

While not xenophobic, leaders of the Atlanta school until 1915 could and did blame the shortcomings of northern students on the fact that they were "different somewhat from the usual type of our graduates" [59]. Gertrude Olmsted was described as "wild to come South as she has a sister living in Atlanta. She is from New Jersey. She barely got a certificate here and is too old to do anything better" [60]. Sneed considered her "rather a joke . . . personally the most concessive person I have ever seen, but her personality is so unlike that of the southerners that we could not recommend her" [61]. Sneed also condemned southern behavior when it did not meet her high standards of conduct. One Alabama girl was described as "Irish and has the least desirable Celtic temperament . . . the non-joyous, rather dour turn of mind, occasionally culminating in a burst of high temper against some supposed injustice . . . the only high-tempered student we ever had" [62]. Whether Sneed was merely prone to colorful explanations of erratic behavior, prejudiced, or actually accurate in her appraisals of the students in her charge, employers in both North and South praised and thanked her for her honesty [63].

In southern libraries, all could be forgiven a lazy girl, but not a rebellious one. For this reason, Sneed heartily condemned Atlanta librarian Katherine H. Wooten (1911–13) when she resigned her post at the Atlanta library over a salary dispute and went public in the press with her complaint against the Board of Trustees [58, p. 383]. Incompetence was routinely accepted and could be managed by shuffling less able graduates through the round of less demanding posts, but one whose behavior demonstrated "loss of control," "loss of dignity," insubordination, or language of "unspeakable vulgarity" risked placing herself "by her own act" beyond the consideration of the library school [64].

Nevertheless, stereotypical southern prejudice against northerners seems to have been at least muted in the southern school. Northern practitioners and educators frequently served as lecturers in the Atlanta school: for example, Lutie Stearns of the Wisconsin Library Commission, Mary Wright Plummer of the Pratt Library Institute, and Gertrude Stiles and Effie Powers of the Cleveland Public Library were regular visitors. Moreover, some transplanted northern and midwestern library educators successfully identified the main part of their careers with the South. The term "southern female library educators" should be expanded in some cases to embrace such figures as Florence Rising Curtis of Ogdensburg, New York (1873–1943), director of Hampton Institute's library school program, and Clara E. Howard of Bloomington,

Illinois (1879–1935), director of the Library School of Emory University from 1930 to 1935, since these women made their greatest professional contributions to the field of southern library education. Similarly, Charlotte Templeton (1877–1970), the person probably most responsible for creating the local administrative climate necessary for the founding of the Atlanta University Library School in 1941, was a native of Kansas (the Northwest) and spent a substantial part of her career (1906–19) as executive director of the Nebraska Library Commission, but she is chiefly identified as secretary of the Georgia Library Commission (1919–23) and librarian of the Greenville Public Library (1923–30) and Atlanta University (1930–41). The acceptance by these expatriates of the realities of southern life and their dedication to the amelioration of southern library development seem to substantiate Wilbur Cash's view of the South as a state of mind as well as a geographic region [65].

Southern Female Librarians and National Leadership

Examples of national leadership among southern female librarians and library educators are buried in the official records of ALA committee activities, for none held a top elective position in ALA until long after the association had passed its fiftieth anniversary in 1926. Wallace was the most prominent southern librarian of her era, as her term as honorary second vice-president of ALA (1902) attests; it was an honorary post, however, not one that carried responsibilities. Wallace left the Atlanta library in 1908 to marry a library furniture and equipment sales representative, Wallace Howland, but soon after his death, Drexel Institute convinced her to abandon retirement and revive its defunct library training program.⁶ From 1921 until her second retirement in 1936, she became equally prominent in Pennsylvania library affairs and served a term as president of the Pennsylvania Library Association (1924–25). Wallace was an exception, however: neither male nor female southern librarians occupied any top positions of power in ALA until 1936 when Louis Round Wilson, then dean at Chicago, became the first southern native to be elected ALA president. Essae Martha Culver, ALA president in 1940–41, was a native of Kansas, though her name became synonymous with library development, including library education, in the Louisiana backwaters.

6. Alice B. Kroeger, a graduate of Melvil Dewey's library school at the New York State Library at Albany, founded a library training class at Drexel Institute in Philadelphia in 1891. Kroeger died in 1909, and the school suspended operations in 1914. Wallace revived the program in 1921.

Southern librarians generally were excluded from the mainstream of ALA deliberations for a number of reasons. Although ALA membership drives succeeded so well that the South as a region had the largest proportion of librarians who were ALA members [58, p. 395], in reality southern librarians had little chance of participating in ALA affairs because of the great distances and expense involved in travel to conferences. Of course, distance was also a problem for librarians in other parts of the country. Templeton reminded Julia Rankin (director of the Library School at the Carnegie Library of Atlanta, 1908–11) that the 1911 Pasadena meeting was out of the reach of more than just southerners, and lest she think “that here in Nebraska we are right next door . . . we really aren’t” [66]. Mary Lambie, back in Pennsylvania after her graduation from Atlanta, applauded the idea of a newsletter for graduates since “few of us will get to A.L.A. conferences, I am afraid” [67]. Still, southerners seemed to have the fewest opportunities to attend a meeting nearby. After the 1899 conference in Atlanta and the 1907 Asheville conference, ALA did not meet in the “deep” South again until 1936, when Richmond hosted a conference surrounded by controversy because of racially segregated conditions affecting conferees in the city [68]. Louisville, Kentucky, and Hot Springs, Arkansas, where the ALA held its 1919 and 1923 meetings, lay in a region of divided sentiments, while New Orleans, where ALA delegates met in 1932, was not typical of southern cities because of its cosmopolitan mix of races and nationalities. Given the great distances they usually had to travel to attend ALA conferences and their sense of general disfranchisement, some southerners grew cynical about ALA membership [69]. The difference in graduate attendance figures of more southerly conferences was disappointing and suggests that factors other than distance influenced ALA participation; at the 1928 meeting in West Baden, Indiana, twelve Atlanta graduates attended the conference; out of 192 Atlanta graduates still in library work at the time of the 1929 Washington, D.C., conference, however, thirty-five were present, only fifteen more than attended the 1928 Biloxi meeting of SELA where Barker presided as president [70, 71].

Similarly, total attendance at “southern” ALA conferences was comparatively small, at least partly because of physical discomfort. In the years before air conditioning, southern cities were ill equipped for conferences. Northern delegates like Herbert Putnam found Atlanta a “mongrel city” in 1899, not least of all because of his uncomfortable hotel accommodations [72, p. 109]: although Atlantans boasted of the splendor of the Kimball House, not until 1903 did Atlanta build its first world-class hotel with white waiters and bellboys [73, vol. 2, pp. 441–42]. Moreover, there was social dissonance: along with pig-picking in Piedmont Park, the delegates of 1899 had been entertained by the Lard Can

Quartet, a black novelty group from Decatur Street who produced music by blowing on cans. The *Constitution* remarked that "every negro on the ground was photographed, and it seemed as though every delegate to the conference was possessed of rare ability as a photographic artist" [74]. Coupled with Atlanta's heat, the total effect of black musicians, cooks, and servants must have seemed bizarre to those whose only contact with southern "black" culture had been the stories of Joel Chandler Harris, the speeches of Booker T. Washington, and vaudeville "black-face" performances.

Southerners were not much happier with ALA southern conferences than their northern colleagues. The 1907 Asheville conference, in spite of its southern setting and theme, merely served as a backdrop against which the struggles for dominance between northeastern and midwestern librarians were played [72, pp. 173–76]. Although some southern librarians continued to attend ALA conferences and were acclaimed for their accents, charm, and personalities, it is clear that the larger social problems surrounding the race question eliminated them from serious consideration in the political forays of ALA until the Great Depression.

That southern library educators were elected to key posts in the struggling Association of American Library Schools (AALS) at an earlier date than they were in the ALA points more to the informality of the library educators' association than it does to the particular strength of its officers. The southern officers of AALS seemed to have occupied their posts at singularly unpropitious times: Susie Lee Crumley, principal of the Atlanta school, resigned the AALS presidency along with her post at the library school in order to be married in 1925, and when a ready replacement could not be found among the remaining elected officers, there began two "lost years" of AALS when leadership and a sense of mission were totally lacking [75, pp. 100–101; 76, pp. 23–37]. Clara Howard, head of Emory Library School, also resigned the presidency of the association in 1931–32, apparently already suffering from the cancer that would cut short her career in 1935 [77].

Strong, innovative female educational leadership was disparaged everywhere, and a northern female library educator who pushed a southern institution too hard did so at her own peril. Margaret Herdman, an Illinois native who headed the library education program at Louisiana State University, served as vice-president of AALS in 1935–36, although by 1940 she fell from grace with the Board of Education for Librarianship (BEL), the university administration, and the alumni when she established a second year's advanced work in librarianship without consulting the faculty or ALA. One may well admire Herdman's decisiveness, but her style of administration deeply offended her southern colleagues. Her dictatorial attitude and manipulative treatment of faculty,

her contempt for the value of practical experience in library education, and her patronizing attitude toward school librarianship lost many allies, most important the director of the State Library Commission, Essae M. Culver. She escaped firing only because the university president, then struggling to come out from under the cloud of his association with ex-governor Huey Long, wished to avoid a grievance procedure involving a tenured faculty member which might result in adverse publicity [78]. Herdman was offered a six-month leave of absence to study at Chicago so that the feelings against her would cool before she assumed different duties at the school. Whether Herdman's ideas would have received the same treatment had she been male is a difficult question to answer; in instances cited elsewhere in this article, region of origin seemed to have had at least equal weight with sex in accounting for unfavorable reactions to various librarians from the Northeast and Midwest, or at least, region of origin provided a convenient tag on which to pin deficiencies.

A more palatable style of leadership was offered by Barker, who managed any public office with dignity, restraint, and due respect to protocol. If taciturn at times, she could be trusted to fill any office competently. In her term as president of AALS in 1938–39, she demonstrated her mastery of bureaucratic detail in establishing an AALS liaison with the Third Activities Committee [79], though characteristically, she performed her work with a minimum of fanfare. On the other hand, her reserve, lack of visibility, and southern origins ultimately cost her the ALA vice-presidency in 1927 and 1952 to candidates from the Midwest and the Northeast.

The crux of the southern image problem was race, of course, and southerners were taken to task for segregated conditions in the South even if they did not personally endorse them. Wallace had secured a Carnegie grant for a black branch in spite of race riots in Atlanta in 1906 and had even won the approval of the Board of Trustees to send a prospective black librarian to the Hampton Institute for further education [80]. Barker, too, took a leadership role in library education for blacks. In 1921, she finally gained the necessary cooperation from city officials to build the Atlanta branch for blacks for which Wallace had originally secured a Carnegie pledge in 1908. More important, she drafted the report which ultimately decided the relocation of a library school for blacks in Atlanta after the Hampton Institute closed in 1939 [17]. Florence Rising Curtis, who headed the Hampton Institute Library School from 1925 to 1939, and served for six years as AALS secretary (1915–21), was tireless in her efforts on behalf of black librarians. Likewise, Susan Grey Akers directed library education programs at both North Carolina College for Negroes in Durham and the University of

North Carolina at Chapel Hill from 1941 to 1946. Akers had the distinction of being the South's first female library school dean with academic credentials, being the fourth person and the second female Ph.D. to be graduated from the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago, the first academic dean to be appointed at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill in 1942, and the author of a classic textbook on cataloging that went through five editions under her own hand between 1927 and 1969 [81, 82].

Nevertheless, however gallant may have been their efforts in their own region, southern librarians of every stripe played a limited leadership role on the national level because of the national perceptions of the Jim Crow South. Attempts at rational discussion of racial issues at the national level, such as those planned for meetings of the short-lived ALA Library Work with Negroes Roundtable (1922–24), deteriorated into “heated” debates [83, p. 256]. ALA “southern” initiatives, such as the Carnegie Corporation–sponsored ALA Regional Field Agent of the South (1930–36), were abandoned when they no longer served the association's larger end of gaining perpetual endowment from the big three library program benefactors: Carnegie Corporation, the General Education Board, and the Rosenwald Foundation [8, pp. 231–47]. Given such a scenario, southern female library educators like Barker served a very necessary function in staying apprised of developments at the national level, maintaining an active profile on committees and roundtables, attending conferences, and preventing further schism between the national and regional associations. At the Atlanta school, ALA membership was presented as a positive good to the graduates by the same women who were disfranchised, in fact if not by caveat, for being southerners first and women second.

Southern Women and “Higher” Education

It almost goes without saying that no southern public educational institution was all it might have been in the late nineteenth century, thanks mainly to pork-barrel politics, which made educational funding precarious, but also to the agrarian economy, to underdeveloped natural resources and state government agencies, and to the financial burdens imposed by the biracial mandate. The latter condition necessitated the maintenance of two separate, racially segregated school systems, and meager personal and government resources were further diluted in maintaining separate educational institutions for men and women [84, pp. 96–97]. The fact that LaGrange College in Macon, Georgia, became the nation's first female college in 1846 was perhaps more indicative of

the rigidity of gender attitudes than any regional broad-mindedness. At the same time that smart university administrators in the Northeast and Midwest were already aware of the fact that coeducation could help ease the slack of diminished male enrollments, the South was alone in forming new "higher" educational institutions for women, including the nation's first state normal institutions in the late 1880s. Southern female academies like the Agnes Scott Institute, founded in 1889, became colleges after a fashion if they could survive. Like Agnes Scott, which was the first college in Georgia to receive accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges for Women, female institutions fared better with a strong male president at the helm. Even so, the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools found in 1913 that over half of southern female colleges offered bachelor's degrees which represented the equivalent of one year's college work, while the degrees of fifty-eight others were unclassifiable. As Clifford surmised, "Gentility overwhelmed academic values" [30, pp. 4-6].

Southern women invested heavily in the prevailing gender ideology. Even Cornelia Phillips Spencer (1825-1908), daughter of a mathematics professor and for years the grande dame of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, admitted that "co-education will never do in these latitudes." The ambiguous male corollary of her attitude was furnished by state Governor Zebulon B. Vance (1830-94, governor 1862-67), who called Mrs. Phillips the ablest woman in North Carolina, "and the ablest man, too." The first five coeds to be admitted to classes at Chapel Hill in 1897 had to sit behind a screen so as not to distract the men and were treated "like bearded ladies at the circus" [85], but in spite of the fact that they were lonely, one of them considered a year at the state university "a gift of God" [86]. Even so, not until 1963 were female freshmen admitted to the university outside the school of nursing and the library science (B.L.S.) program, started in 1932 [87]. Not until the 1970s did the university cease interpreting rules and regulations differently for women than they did for men. In loco parentis would apply equally, or not at all [87, p. 22].

On the other hand, at female institutions like the Agnes Scott Institute (after 1906, Agnes Scott College), conditions were not much more relaxed: women were admonished for wearing "dusters" (dressing gowns) in the halls outside their rooms and were reprovved if they braved the wet grass in low-topped shoes. Even their parents were rebuked for sending food treats [88]. Until the middle of the present century, at state institutions like Georgia Normal and Industrial College (after 1922, Georgia State College for Women; after 1961, Women's College of Georgia), female students wore uniforms, and rules for decorum governing relations between the sexes were strictly defined; unautho-

rized fraternization with male students from neighboring Georgia Military College was heartily discouraged and could provide grounds for immediate expulsion. Regulation number 21, instituted in 1905 and advertised in the prospectus of the college, read: "Secret or clandestine association or communication of any sort whatsoever with boys or young men will be punished by dismissal from the college" [89, p. 129]. Some women found the female curriculum, with its heavy concentration of literature and home economics, oppressive. Flannery O'Connor, the most distinguished alumna of Georgia State College for Women, satirized the home economics department's final project requirement by sewing a tiny picqué coat for her pet chicken "Lord Eggbert," whom she then presented, fully dressed, at the final class session [90].⁷ Even library school students, whose "acquaintance with and fondness of books" was evaluated on the Atlanta library school's recommendation form, occasionally ran afoul of the genteel college curriculum in female colleges, which according to one graduate involved "a lot of sewing, drawing, expression, and some other tommy-rot that was required for the first year. . . . I don't believe any other place on earth would give credit on it—Heaven knows I hated it" [91, p. 108].

The lack of standardization in female education in the early part of the century gave rise to a wide variety of female institutions, variously labeled institutes, seminaries, academies, and colleges, at which instruction and quality varied considerably. Entering library school students at the Carnegie Library of Atlanta were accepted with academic credentials as meager as a "Certificate in Expression," several years of high school, even private tutoring by a parent. Only five of the first ninety-nine students accepted in the Atlanta library education program claimed to have received the equivalent of a college degree, although many more had attended schools like Wesleyan, Agnes Scott, Winthrop, Randolph-Macon, and the Women's College of Baltimore, where they received some exposure to "college" courses. In 1921, the Atlanta school had the smallest percentage of graduates with a college degree of any library school in the nation [92, p. 372]. The distinction of a college degree may have been almost meaningless considering the lack of standardization, however: "institutes, collegiate institutes, and colleges appeared in great numbers and were to a large extent different from the academies in name only" [93, p. 155]. Barker, although she had only attended Agnes Scott intermittently in 1908, was offered a job teaching in the institution in that same year but decided to become a librarian instead [94].

In Georgia, from which fifty-nine (60 percent) of the first ninety-nine

7. Mrs. Fitzgerald [90], widow of poet Robert Fitzgerald, is currently writing a biography of Flannery O'Connor.

students of the Library School at the Carnegie Library of Atlanta hailed, the most desirable educational institutions for upper-class girls were the Washington Seminary in Atlanta and the Lucy Cobb Institute of Athens. Lucy Cobb in particular exemplified the heavily literary approach to female education, complete with a European tour in the summer months with the school's indefatigable preceptress, Mildred Lewis Rutherford (1851–1928). Famous throughout the state, the South, and the nation for her lectures on southern history, chivalry, literature, and manners, which she delivered on formal occasions in antebellum costume, Rutherford was the embodiment of the genteel tradition. Her 1916 speech on the "Old South" before the United Daughters of the Confederacy was placed in the pages of the *Congressional Record*, apparently the first speech by a woman ever printed there [95]. Rutherford was revered at the Atlanta library school, where six graduates of her institution entered between 1905 and 1915, including her niece. Principal Crumley extolled the "charms of Lucy Cobb" and, as Rutherford's health declined, expressed the wish that "the future may preserve its atmosphere and traditions for the good of the state" [96]. Lucy Cobb, like the antebellum female academy, taught more than letters, for becoming a woman "meant more than mastering lessons. It meant keeping ties with women friends, meeting marriageable men, and confronting the changed conditions of family life as [students] contemplated beginning a new family" [97, p. 91].

For those Atlanta girls whose parents did not possess the means to enroll them in private institutions, there was Atlanta Girl's High, which was apparently the educational equal of any of the more exclusive academies. Nineteen of the first ninety-nine students at the Library School at the Carnegie Library of Atlanta had attended Girl's High, including Barker, Ella May Thornton (Georgia State librarian, 1912–54), and Fannie Hinton (director, Atlanta Public Library, 1939–49). There, under the tutelage of principals Nettie C. Sargeant (1889–1912) and Jessie Muse (1912–38), girls were taught not only the rudiments of Latin, French, mathematics, and art, but were also infused with a philosophy of woman's role in society, appropriately capped by graduation ceremonies at which the processional was the "Triumphal March" from Verdi's *Aida*. The educational experience of Girl's High graduates culminated in Muse's lessons on "How to Be a Lady" [98, p. 140]. While there were successful coeducational schools in Georgia from the 1840s, coeducation was never without its opponents. Muse opposed coeducation in high school because it detracted from the "efficiency" of the educational experience, which for women should include special physical education "to develop body mechanics." All female educational activities should be "designed to encourage self-expression" [99].

Naturally, the philosophy of the educational institutions from which

library school candidates were channeled was shared to some extent by the pioneers of the Atlanta school. Principal Delia Foreacre Sneed (instructor, 1906–8; principal, 1908–15; and librarian, 1914–15) was particularly alert to the subtleties which educational and economic advantage could supply, though perhaps no quality was more valued than membership in a family of long, not necessarily wealthy, standing in the community. Thus, one young lady was recommended by Sneed to a northern employer as coming “from an excellent Kentucky family, and has been carefully reared with the best traditions, and I think would anywhere make the impression of high breeding in the best sense in which we can employ that term” [100]. As in other areas of library education, these standards sometimes became trivialized. One graduate of the class of 1924 remembered Barker standing at the door to the Carnegie Library at lunchtime to make sure that all students leaving the building were properly attired in hats and gloves before exiting onto Carnegie Way and Peachtree Street [101].⁸ The cloistered gentility of southern female educational institutions inevitably shaped the environment of the library school, particularly the expectations of the school for refinement of character, but character was often assessed by appearances as much as by spiritual and intellectual qualities.

Given the dual expectations for familial and professional fulfillment extolled by southern female institutions, it is not surprising that the attrition rate among Atlanta library school graduates was high. Forty-seven, or nearly 48 percent, of the first ten years' graduates left librarianship for marriage, and a total of sixty-three of the ninety-nine graduates eventually left librarianship. Of these, only twenty-one returned to library work at a later date. The Atlanta marriage rate was considerably higher than those identified for Vassar, Smith, and Wellesley in 1903 (25 percent), the Illinois Library School between 1898 and 1908 (41 percent), the Indiana Library School between 1905 and 1912 (38 percent), or the University of Wisconsin Library School between 1895 and 1921 (19 percent) [34, p. 176; 43, p. 480; 92, pp. 175–76]. Three out of the five first head librarians in Atlanta left librarianship for marriage, and only one openly declared herself against the mild courting that frequently took place within the library [102]. Policies barring the employment of married women were applied sometime in the late nineteenth century by school boards as well as business firms. The “marriage bar” was expanded in the early twentieth century and remained prevalent until after 1940 [103]. Librarianship generally followed the pattern of discrimination against married women, and women's domestic role precluded the professional role well into the 1960s.

Employee turnover due to marriage was a national professional prob-

8. Mrs. Margaret Brenner Awtrey [101] was a graduate of the class of 1924.

lem, and southern librarians seemed to feel neither rancor nor guilt in leaving their profession for marriage. In the case of the Atlanta graduates, in fact, some positively relished the abandonment of their roles as peripatetic library organizers in small southern communities. As one Atlanta graduate of 1910 expressed her relief, "having shuffled about from boarding house to boarding house for the past three years—I feel that there was never a poor ship wrecked mariner gladder to reach port, than I am to sight this haven of a home" [104]. Even if she worked "harder than I ever did in library work—about a 14 hour day!" [105], married life permitted her to use her expertise in organizing a local library as a volunteer, a pattern followed by several other graduates.

Of course, many women eschewed the female professions anyway, not for their lack of prestige relative to "male" professions, but because they did not like women. One female library administrator once told Joseph Wheeler that many women failed to choose librarianship as a profession simply because they refused "to be bottled up for the rest of their lives with a lot of women and no males" [106, p. 23]. Katherine Seon, mentioned above, who founded the Bermuda Library in Hamilton, Bermuda, went on record as preferring male friendship to that of females [107]. Librarian Frances Newman left what is perhaps the most bitter indictment of the female network of southern librarians in her 1928 novel *Dead Lovers Are Faithful Lovers*, in which, through thinly disguised caricatures of Atlanta librarians, she dissects the desiccated idealism of the maiden ladies of the Carnegie Library of Atlanta (which she calls by name) [108; 109, pp. xxiii–xxv]. Sneed (Mrs. Addington Smythe in the book) "walked across a cork carpet with an air of regretting a decade when she might have held a black velvet train away from such a floor" [108, p. 175]; Barker (Miss Joma Currier) wore a corset which the heroine imagined was "long and hard and white" though it barely concealed the evidence for her "female utensils for continuing the human race" [108, p. 177].

The attitude of southern female librarians toward the position of women in the profession reflects their ambivalence toward their role as women. The southern lady enjoyed the best of both worlds in that she actually enjoyed a great deal of "power behind the throne," even if she exercised discretion and indirection in wielding it. The student files of the Library School at the Carnegie Library of Atlanta for 1905–28 contain only one reference to suffrage or women's rights, and it is unfavorable [110]. While there seems to have been very little suffrage activity in libraries nationwide, it is possible that female librarians simply did not articulate their concerns in documents that survive. Moreover, in the southern system of library education, in which the values of the female academy survived longer than they did in other parts of the

country, there was a note of antipathy toward female independence, not least of all because some conservative elements felt that, if women had the vote, it would only be a short time until blacks broke the restraints of political disfranchisement. The female vote thus presaged the black vote to some southern antisuffragists. The flurry of letters which the *Library Journal* article "The Weaker Sex" occasioned in 1938 seems to indicate that female librarians had indeed thought about their positions relative to males for quite some time, yet the only southern response, from Barker, laid the problem of the disproportion of male leaders in the national association at the feet of the women who had elected them [111]. If there was solidarity in sisterhood in southern libraries, it certainly operated on a subliminal level.

Changing Gender Roles in Southern Library Education

As in other regions, library work was considered "genteel" work for bookish ladies, both because of the traditional gender roles it reinforced and for the expanded opportunities it provided for women. Yet in the South, the public library movement had greater economic and political obstacles to overcome than elsewhere, and consequently, southern library education promised progressive young women a hand in opening the doors of "library opportunity" in their impoverished region, a mission made more urgent given the widely publicized southern illiteracy rates. Southern legislators appropriated millions of dollars to support the biracial educational system at the turn of the century, but many still resisted child labor reform. The ominous educational indicators seemed confirmed by the level of public library support, the lowest in the nation. By 1935, two-thirds of the southern population was still without library service of any kind [112, p. 4].

Although male initiative was responsible for the founding of many public, social, or subscription libraries like those at Atlanta (1868) and Macon (1874) in the last half of the nineteenth century, the men who headed them were usually destitute, infirm, or possessed of misguided political ambitions that their library position was used to satisfy. Atlanta had employed its last male librarian at the predecessor to the Carnegie Library, the Young Men's Library Association (YMLA), in 1882, and he had been fired for dereliction of duty. His four predecessors had included two infirm Civil War veterans, and in general, all five male librarians had merely acted as keepers of the building [6, p. 150; 113, pp. 169-70]. After Lida Field, a schoolteacher, became the first female librarian in Atlanta and began an active program of library service to the community, there was never any question of hiring a male for the job

until 1949 [8, pp. 436–50; 58, p. 380], no doubt because females took a real interest in the welfare of the library and its role in the community. Anne Wallace set an example of library leadership in Atlanta that few people of either sex could have matched, and she fixed the idea of female leadership in southern library affairs. After the establishment of the library school, the idea of female librarianship was institutionalized.

Males occupied library positions in academe more frequently, though many seemed to lack any conception of the requisite skills that library work required. When Erastus W. Everson, librarian at the University of South Carolina during the radical reconstruction administration of that institution, deserted his post in 1876, Richard T. Greener, the first black graduate of Harvard, was hired to replace him. Greener found that Everson “had begun a catalogue, progressed just far enough to ‘throw everything into disorder,’ and misclassified many books because of his ignorance of Latin, Greek, and French” [114, vol. 2, p. 78]. Unfortunately, Greener remained librarian only six months, long enough to prepare a catalog of the library’s holdings and to submit a forty-page report to the Bureau of Education in Washington for the 1876 report [115, p. 538n.], but with the withdrawal of federal troops in the South and the election of Wade Hampton as governor, the campus was purged of northerners, and the library returned to its moribund state under Louis G. Smith.

It was not unusual for the graduates of the Atlanta program to joke and complain about the incompetency of male librarians, university presidents, and trustees in their letters back to the school, even if in practice they had to tolerate the peculiarities and paternalism of the males under whom they worked and endure the proclivity of top state library and university officials to fill vacancies with untrained favorites, both male and female. News of a job opening in a top university library position sparked plans for “a general shuffle” of library jobs among graduates in the field, but inquiries were made cautiously lest the university trustees “have a man in view” [116]. Many of the male librarians and trustees, who had no idea of the value of professional training, simply hired the cheapest labor available. Very few employers could accommodate the idea that mobility and advancement were positive professional goals for librarians. At the State Normal College in Troy, Alabama, for example, President Shackelford filled the vacancy left by an Atlanta graduate with an untrained “young widow” in 1911 because he felt trained women would “get married or leave in some way” [117].

Barker, who graduated from the Atlanta school in 1909, found on her first job that she was better equipped to deal with library problems than her self-taught employer, Alabama state archivist Thomas McAdory Owen (1866–1921). Moreover, she possessed to a remarkable

extent the ability to manage men without appearing to do so. One of her classmates reported to Atlanta library director Julia Rankin in 1911 that Dr. Owen had "turned everything completely over to her" and did not "stick his nose into what she's doing." He saw that Barker knew "more than he does" and she kept "her own way with him." She exemplified the ladylike restraint expected of southern graduates, yet while she never gave offense to Owen, she saw to it that the necessary standards for library organization were maintained. As her classmate boasted to the director of the Atlanta school, "You would be awfully proud if you could see how she gets the best of him every now and then" [118].

As the surviving letters of the Atlanta library school alumnae make clear, untrained southern male librarians, like their counterparts elsewhere, made fetishes of their own systems of library organization and scorned "modern" methods. At Auburn Polytechnic Institute in 1912, for example, the former librarian was "dedicated to his own dear system hence of course resents a new one" and was "antagonistic towards classification & cataloging and approved library methods in general" [119]. Even could the flexible male be found who would not feel threatened by standardization of library practices or female initiative, there was the danger for female librarians everywhere of being replaced by an untrained "man . . . at the *same salary*" [120].

Librarianship may have offered broad vistas to women straining to break free of parental control and forge a new identity, but for the man struggling to maintain self-respect at home and in the community, the rewards of library work were outweighed by embarrassments for which his upbringing had not prepared him. As late as 1908, the seventy-seven-year-old male librarian of the Macon Public Library was ready to admit that he was "sick, tired, worn out and disgusted with the humiliating condition" of the library since he had been forced through business misfortunes to accept a post at the library on "a salary that no city government in the world would offer a white man or woman for the services that I have rendered" [121, p. 57]. He had been expected at one point to run the library, buy book stock, and support himself on monthly city and county appropriations of twenty-five dollars each; ironically, he was a former Macon mayor.

It was generally assumed that women would perform library work competently and efficiently if they were trained in a library school, particularly if they showed promise in work as local library assistants, in the assistants' training classes conducted intermittently at various libraries throughout the South, or at summer school classes and institutes (see table 2) [5, pp. 99-115; 6, pp. 152-53; 7, passim; 122]. Although several men were involved in the initiation of these programs, there is no evidence that males applied for admission to any of them before 1931.

TABLE 2
PARTIAL LIST OF UNACCREDITED TRAINING PROGRAMS, SUMMER PROGRAMS, AND
ORGANIZED IN-HOUSE TRAINING IN THE SOUTHERN STATES BEFORE 1930

Location	Director, If Known	Type	Dates
Carnegie Library of Atlanta	Anne Wallace	In-house	1899-1905
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Louis R. Wilson	In-house	Summer, 1904-23, 1923-31
Virginia State Library	. . .	In-house	Ca. 1905-12
Louisville Free Public Library, Kentucky	George P. Settle	General	1905-19
University of Alabama	Thomas M. Owen	General	1906-ca. 1908
Winthrop College	Ida Dacus	General	1907-13
Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama	Thomas M. Owen	Summer	1908-10
Louisville, Kentucky, Colored Branches	Thomas F. Blue	General	1911-ca. 1925
University of Kentucky	. . .	In-house	1911-?
Carnegie Library of Montgomery, Alabama	Laura Elmore	In-house	1911-13
Virginia Polytechnic Institute	. . .	In-house	1913-?
University of Texas at Austin	Elva Bascom	General Summer	1919-25
University of Georgia	Duncan Burnet	Summer	1919, 1925-36
Alabama College, Montevallo	Fanny Taber	Summer	1922-30
North Carolina College for Women	Charles B. Shaw	General	1921-27
Richmond Public Library	. . .	In-house	1924-26
Birmingham Public Library	Lila M. Chapman*	General (teacher- librarian)	1925

* Principal instructor.

Perhaps it was assumed that male librarians, where successful, would serve as administrators with general business skills; females, on the other hand, would perform the day-to-day duties—in other words, do the actual library work. For women, then, special education was intrinsic to the performance of library work; for men, it existed as an extraneous corollary to “innate” abilities which they already supposedly possessed.

In certain larger southern municipalities, male librarians flourished. George Settle and Thomas Blue in Louisville, Carl Milam in Bir-

mingham, William Beer in New Orleans, Lloyd Josselyn in Jacksonville, and later, Hoyt Galvin in Charlotte and Harold Brigham in Memphis, all left notable records. In the case of Birmingham, however, it was Milam's successor, Lila May Chapman, and not Milam himself, who was venerated in the local press [123]; Milam fared better in the national arena [83].

Several males did attempt to initiate southern library training programs in the early decades of the century, but their influence was diminished by circumstance. Owen, founder of the nation's first state archives in Alabama, promoted several schemes for library development, including the idea of a regional library association (1905), a plan that Wallace did not encourage because it diminished Atlanta's sphere of influence [5, p. 85]. Owen also directed a program of library extension in the first decade of the century which included library training courses. Owen's plans failed, however, when his program fell victim to state budgeting committee politics in Montgomery in 1911. Librarian Charles Stone developed one of the first formal programs tailored to fit the new standards adopted by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools at the North Carolina College for Women in Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1927.⁹ By 1931, the Board of Education for Librarianship had raised the program's rating to that of a Type II school, which required a college degree for admission. Bad luck plagued Stone, however: the library burned in 1932, and he was reduced to teaching cataloging courses from the stage of Aycock auditorium [124, September 23–29, 1932]. In 1933, North Carolina's reorganization plan finally squelched Greensboro's bid for the school library market when library training programs were consolidated at Chapel Hill. Ironically, the Chapel Hill program's new director, Susan Grey Akers, insisted that credit be given for school library work only if school library students participated in the full year's course, and her decision effectively precluded for a time the participation of working school librarians from the field who sought training in successive summers [125, 126]. Stone moved on to the College of William and Mary in 1935, where he developed still another program for school librarians.

There were exceptions to the female rule, of course, especially in academic libraries. Wilson in particular became a crucial figure in southern library education and one of the most influential librarians in the country, only a few years after he offered his first formal library training course at Chapel Hill in 1923. Wilson's role as activist and statesman was pivotal in the development of standards for secondary schools, in fostering foundation support for southern projects, and in gaining na-

9. Charles B. Shaw began teaching library science courses at NCCW in 1921.

tional recognition for the problems peculiar to the South. The graduate school he founded at Chapel Hill was coeducational, though like Louisiana State University and the Hampton Institute, few males could be attracted to library work. The Library School of the University of North Carolina graduated only one male each in the classes of 1932 and 1933. Stone's claim that "the University of North Carolina [at Chapel Hill] is practically non-coeducational and the girls all seem to come to NCCW [North Carolina College for Women]" was somewhat misleading; NCCW, with its female instructional staff, female student body, and "female" curriculum (school librarianship) at Greensboro, caused Bogle to remark on the "feminine element" in Stone's school [127, 128].

Adoption of the *Southern Association Standards for High School Libraries* [129] provided one unexpected incentive for males to enter the southern library education market. Librarians like Stone at North Carolina Women's College and Earl G. Swem at the College of William and Mary, and college administrators like Dr. O. C. Carmichael of Alabama College improvised their own library education programs to meet local demand for certified school librarians. Typically, the school of education would broach the topic with the university president, who would then seek the advice of the librarian. More often than not, the BEL was consulted only after classes were already under way. The proliferation of "wildcat" programs in fact prompted the Policy Committee of the Southeastern Library Association to request a survey of southern training agencies to be undertaken by Bogle in 1930 [15], and obviously, tension mounted between those who demanded quality and consistency and those who opted for expediency. Before, during, and after the survey, programs opened and closed with astonishing rapidity, some headed by men, some by women, and some prodded along by conscientious college administrators, most of whom were only dimly cognizant of the degree of commitment required.

Occasionally, an overly ambitious librarian would try to expand courses in the use of the library into library training courses for school librarians, with mixed results. Until her death in 1932, Sarah Bogle worked tirelessly with this "second tier" of southern library education personnel, many of whom lacked either the requisite political and didactic skills, the necessary equipment and financial means, or the necessary vision of what library training should be. Writing to Bogle to inquire about library training, the aspiring directors made plain their dismay and confusion over the dual requirements of Southern Association and ALA accreditation. Hard-pressed for resources, especially after the advent of the Great Depression in the 1930s, they had little use for the finer points of BEL standards for plant, equipment, and qualified instructors. Duncan Burnet, in an effort to meet the local need for certi-

fied teacher-librarians, revived summer courses at the University of Georgia in 1929, taught mainly by his wife, Atlanta graduate Inez Daughtry (class of 1906). He designed the program to meet Southern Association standards, "since this is what really counts." When the BEL wrote asking for information regarding the status of the program in 1935, he called their interference "absurd" and even publicized his opinion in the local press that the ALA was trying "to destroy all summer courses for teacher-librarians now receiving the blessing of the Southern Association" [130, 131]. Librarian Whitman Davis was devastated by the unfavorable evaluation received by the University of Mississippi in Bogle's 1930 survey [132, 133], and at the other extreme, hopeful library educators in Arkansas and Alabama took the slightest word of encouragement from the BEL as a sign of imminent accreditation [134, 135].

It should be added that males and females were equally confused by accreditation: Louise Richardson of the Florida State College for Women falsely advertised her program as "fully" accredited by the ALA (that is, for graduate work), and after months of negotiation with the BEL, finally gave up the struggle and contented herself with undergraduate courses [136]. Even with BEL accreditation, success was not assured: just as BEL accreditation began, the program which Elva Bascom had struggled successfully for six years (1919–25) to establish at the University of Texas ran afoul of Governor "Ma" Ferguson's financial hatchet and failed [137, pp. 233, 640].

Although southern female representation in all positions of leadership was roughly equivalent to the national average [8, p. 137], the implicit gender segregation of southern library education resulted in strengthening the female rule of the southern field during most of the first half of the century. During the 1930s, however, five other library school programs received accreditation, and, after Wilson left North Carolina for the University of Chicago in 1932, four of the five were headed by men (see table 3) [7, p. 166]. In the case of the George Peabody College for Teachers, Lucile Fargo was expressly hired by Jackson Towne as assistant director from the University of Illinois for her national renown as a school library leader, and her presence "favored accreditation . . . [although] how much [the confidence of the BEL in Peabody] owed to genuine accomplishments and how much it owed to Fargo's reputation remains an unanswered question" [138, p. 201]. She left the school in 1933 following the resignation of Towne, however, when it became obvious she would not be named as director. It should be emphasized that the school was founded by Charles Stone in 1919. He helped to frame the question of higher standards for school libraries in 1926 and established the tradition of male leadership at Peabody.

TABLE 3
ACCREDITED PROGRAMS OF LIBRARY SCIENCE IN THE SOUTHERN STATES WITH DATES OF FOUNDING, FOUNDERS,
AND DATES WHEN COEDUCATIONAL, 1905-45

Library Program	Founder	Date of First Formalized Training	Date of Initial Accreditation	Director If Different from Founder	Date When First "Coed" Admitted	Date of Closing If Applicable
Carnegie Library of Atlanta	Anne Wallace	1905*	1927	Tommie Dora Barker	1930/31	1988
Hampton Institute	Florence R. Curtis	1925	1927	...	1931/32	1939
George Peabody School for Teachers	Charles H. Stone	1928 [†]	1930	Jackson Towne	Not known, but two males graduated in 1932	1988
North Carolina College for Women	Charles H. Stone	1928	1930	...	Never coeduca- tional	1933
Louisiana State University	James G. McMillen	1926	1931	...	1932/33	...
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Louis Round Wilson	1931 [‡]	1931	... [§]	1931/32	...
College of William and Mary	Earl G. Swem	1931	1938	...	1931 [#]	1947
University of Tennessee	Mary E. Baker	1928	1931	...	Not known	...
Atlanta University	Eliza A. Gleason	1941	1943	...	1941/42	...

* First training classes 1899.

[†] First training classes 1919.

[‡] First classes (library use instruction) in 1904; first formal classes 1923 (summer school).

[§] Louis R. Wilson left the University of North Carolina in the summer of 1932, at which time Susan Grey Akers replaced him.

^{||} Swem was on leave of absence most of the time that he was director (1931-35). Charles Stone became head of the Library Science Department in 1935 and served until 1942.

[#] Frank C. Winston was the first graduate of the program.

The infusion of male leadership in southern library education was usually more cosmetic than indicative of a shift in faculty gender ratios, however, since the instructors and working librarians on whom the school library programs relied for teaching were usually female. Peabody was a notable exception, as nearly one-fourth of the faculty from 1919 to 1933 was male [138, p. 200].

In spite of Bogle's admonition that each state should have one strong library agency affiliated with the state university, school library work did not pay enough in most cases to justify an ALA-accredited degree. As standards for library education were being introduced throughout the region, two simultaneous groups of agencies emerged—those which complied with ALA standards for accreditation and those which were content to strive for state or Southern Association accreditation. The latter group matriculated great numbers of school librarians, teacher-librarians, and workers in small public or college libraries. As library training programs could often pass muster in the local marketplace with only state certification, many forbore the stringency of ALA review. Neither economic conditions, employer expectations, nor student levels of satisfaction warranted the effort required to institute nationally competitive programs. With its huge geographical area and dispersed rural population, the South still gave birth to many ill-equipped schools after 1930, in spite of efforts of the ALA to limit their number [15, pp. 38–39]. As these schools existed mainly to train school librarians, a totally feminine market, the self-perpetuating teaching faculty was predominantly female.

Even given the rudimentary state of southern library conditions, the persistence of feminization in southern library education during its first half-century seems remarkable and suggests that women alone were willing to contend with the low pay, frequent lack of political support from civic leaders, and general lack of bibliographic resources which the southern field afforded. The rather combustible and nepotic nature of southern social and political life and the half-hearted support of city, county, and state officials for library service presented unusual challenges to southern female library school graduates, but most accepted the challenge of work in the southern field out of regional pride. Salary differentials between males and females never became an issue in the southern field because there were so few males in the field. Besides, some of these middle- and upper-middle-class women had private resources on which to rely. Bettie Caldwell, the self-trained public librarian of Greensboro from 1902 to 1920, abstained from accepting more than twenty-five dollars a month for her services. It was some time before her successor, Nellie Rowe (1920–48), could persuade city officials to pay assistants as they were paid elsewhere. Rowe complained

that Caldwell's self-abnegating acts were "very nice to be able to do, but most of us have to look to the material side of things" [139]. The southern view of library work involved courtesy and custom as well as adequate remuneration, however. Rowe was shocked and angered when in 1923, Charles B. Shaw, the new librarian of the North Carolina College for Women, began raiding her hard-won staff of professional librarians with higher salaries than she could match. As she confided to Crumley, Shaw and most of his staff were northern, and "You know, Miss Crumley, this is *not* the way we were taught to do things in Atlanta" [140]. It was only several years before Shaw was replaced by the more gentlemanly Charles Stone, a Georgia native who had an innate sense of the niceties of the southern way of conducting library business.

As individuals, southern female librarians were tied to their region by their common upbringing in a segregated, otherwise ethnically homogeneous society and by their shared heritage of southern history. As females, they shared a common understanding of the limits to acceptable professional behavior fitting to a southern lady, including the limits on their professional aspirations with respect to men. Lila May Chapman of Birmingham, after serving as head librarian from 1909 to 1913, served as vice-director under the directorship of Carl A. Milam (1913–19) and Lloyd Josselyn (1919–25) but seemed unwilling to relocate to another library where she could enjoy complete autonomy. As she told Barker, "I have advanced as high as a woman is ever expected to go in the Birmingham Library," but her mission was to the library, not her own self-advancement: "For over sixteen years I have wandered with our people over this homeless library wilderness, and I can not bear to stand on some lonely Mount Nebo, viewing from afar the Promised Land and never enter in. . . . None the less, I appreciate your thoughtfulness [in offering a job opportunity] and some day I may ask you to take me in hand and show me that people *can* and *do* read books elsewhere and that librarians really can be quite happy outside this Spot of Smoke and Slag, this dear City of Cinders, which is called Birmingham" [141].

Formal Removal of the Gender Barrier

The gender barrier at the Atlanta school was finally removed when the Rosenwald Fund offered scholarships to five male library school students in 1930, an incentive designed to bring more males into the southern field. The creation of this scholarship program, which emerged considerably before the G.I. Bill (1944) and ALA's postwar male recruitment campaign, indicates the extent to which the lack of males in the

southern field was felt to be significant. A total of fifteen male Rosenwald scholars were graduated from the school between 1930 and 1933. One female graduate of 1931 remembered the Rosenwald scholars as “a pretty dull bunch” [142], and although the Rosenwald scholarship program would further the careers of several men who became prominent at the national level—including Errett McDiarmid and Randolph Church—the perception on the part of their female cohort seems to have been that, as classmates, these were inferior, or at least unexciting, specimens of men. The presence of men at Emory Library School made Clyde Pettus, who had taught cataloging since 1922, nervous: she recommended that one outspoken Rosenwald scholar needed “strong *male* supervision” (emphasis added) [143]. Even in 1950, when one male student, referring to his wife’s condition, used the word “pregnant” in Pettus’s presence, “her whole frame visibly shuddered” [144].¹⁰ Until 1930, when the school moved from the Carnegie Library of Atlanta to Emory University, two male instructors taught at the school (John Bascom Crenshaw, 1916–20; George Holladay McKee, 1922–24), but then only in a part-time capacity [145, pp. 11–14].

That southern library education was limited to females was a matter of custom rather than law, as was the precondition that they be native-born southerners. While there may have been southern female librarians who idly fanned themselves all day, as one writer described an employee in the border state of Maryland [146, p. 12], more often they had to be vigorous, strong-willed women willing to perform all varieties of library work in punishing summer heat. Moreover, it was preferred that they be temperamentally suited to the communities they served, able to satisfy both the religious denominational predilections of library board employers as well as the conservative political, social, and racial views of the communities. Carl White underestimated the influence of the southern outlook when he concluded that “except for the regional emphasis on recruiting . . . [the Atlanta school] was not much different from the better training classes of other large public libraries . . . like Brooklyn or Chicago” [147, p. 106], since southern “conditions,” which included paltry library resources, segregated library service to blacks (where it existed at all), and abundant traffic in provincial thinking, limited the pool of potential recruits to those with inbred tolerance for southern mores. Salaries were also considerably lower than elsewhere: Tommie Dora Barker was the lowest-paid library school program director in the country in 1921, as well as the lowest-paid librarian of a southern municipal library relative to the size of the population served [8, p. 59; 93, p. 319]. Given these conditions, there may well have

10. Mr. Hitt [144] was a member of the class of 1951.

been a causal relationship between the region's economic and social climate and the prevalence of southern women in the field. Only six of the 242 women graduated from the Atlanta library school between 1905 and 1928 hailed from outside the South, and only 13 percent eventually relocated outside the region. By the same token, over 70 percent of southern library workers included in the 1933 edition of *Who's Who in Library Service* [148] were native southerners [8, p. 134].

With the reform of library training, beginning with the Williamson Report of 1923, the southern system of library education came under increasing national scrutiny. According to the unedited comments made in the original 1921 version of the report, Atlanta "only formally" complied with standards established by the American Association of Library Schools. Both the school and the region had little to offer a woman with a bachelor's degree, since Atlanta graduates were at that time employed in only two Georgia public libraries, due in part to limited resources; thirteen out of thirty public libraries in Georgia were supported on total annual appropriations of less than \$1,000 [149, pp. 120–21]. Implicit in Williamson's comments was an indictment of the oppressively female atmosphere of the school. Barker took exception to his somewhat elitist views, as she knew that, in the South, it was equally important that library education give all librarians a "professional outlook and vision . . . and a sense of responsibility for the effectiveness of their contribution to the progress of library development," whether or not they eventually assumed well-paying jobs [150].

Even after she had complied with the recommendations of the Board of Education for Librarianship, Barker had difficulties explaining to various officials the aims of the school and the peculiarities of southern conditions. Her problem was compounded by the rapid turnover rate in the Atlanta library, where salaries were the lowest in any city library in the South relative to the size of the population served, and where marriage took its toll on some of the most able librarians, including Principal Crumley. Barker scrambled to hire a replacement for Crumley, but low salaries precluded qualified applicants. When the city eventually ceded to demands for salary rate increases, Crumley's successor, Mrs. Winifred Lemon Davis of the University of Wisconsin, was lured to the South. BEL visitor Louis Round Wilson, however, found her to be an appallingly bad teacher. By 1929, when affiliation with Emory finally seemed a *fait accompli*, Barker had one more word of male advice to endure from a Rosenwald Fund official whose words may have borne considerable weight with ALA because the fund was offering \$500,000 for demonstration libraries in the South. He suggested that the Emory school could more easily educate students to administer separate-but-equal library service to blacks and whites under Rosenwald demonstra-

tion grants if Barker were replaced by a man, since women could not "enter into negotiations" with blacks as well as men [9, p. 35]. He was obviously unaware that Barker had already negotiated quite skillfully with black leaders, the city government, and the Carnegie Corporation to realize the building of the city's black library branch in 1921. Fortunately, the advocacy of BEL Executive Secretary Sarah Bogle on behalf of the school convinced Rosenwald Fund officials to furnish scholarships for male students instead. While such callous manipulations may strike the modern reader as both chauvinistic and racist, the reasoning by which some males routinely discounted women in the name of preserving racial harmony seems to have been fairly typical [151].

Being a relatively small university in the 1930s, Emory fostered informal administrative relationships, even if, as in the case of the library school, they were characterized by occasional paternalism. The Emory Library School was located on the third floor of the Candler Library and regularly furnished promising students with internships in the library. President Harvey W. Cox of Emory had been recruited by Barker and Wallace (on hand in 1924 for the celebration of the Atlanta library's silver anniversary) to help the school achieve university affiliation as recommended by the Williamson Report [152].¹¹ Contributions of \$50,000 each were received from the Rosenwald Fund and the Carnegie Corporation over a three-year period to maintain the school, after which Cox pledged Emory's complete financial responsibility for the program [153, 154]. It seemed quite natural therefore that he occasionally assumed proprietary airs toward Emory's library, since it engaged a regular stream of library school students as interns. His occasional meddling in library affairs was perhaps justified by the lengths to which he had gone to see the school established at Emory. Sarah Jones of the class of 1932, however, who worked as an intern and a reviser in the library school, breathed a sigh of relief as she left the Emory library to accept a job at the Tennessee Valley Authority in 1935, for President Cox's heavy-handed presence, as he rummaged through the stacks and gave random advice, intimidated her [155].

The Rosenwald male scholarship program did herald a new era in southern library education in which men were encouraged to apply for admission. All of the new southern library programs included token numbers of males in the graduating classes of 1931-33. The impact of men on southern librarianship was not immediate, however, for with the exception of Wilson, they provided little of the kind of local leadership associated in the popular consciousness with librarians like Greensboro's Nellie Rowe, Chattanooga's Nora Crimmins, or Birmingham's Lila May

11. Mr. Howland [152] was the son of Anne Wallace Howland.

Chapman. If southern-educated male librarians were practically nonexistent, a small number of professional librarians had already migrated south, particularly during the business boom of the 1920s. By 1933, 9.1 percent of all southern entries listed in *Who's Who in Library Service* [148] were male, and males occupied 17.4 percent of the head librarian positions listed for the southern states [8, pp. 134, 139]. Southern female librarians sometimes elected males to "head" their local and regional library associations, but few wielded the power of Wallace, Barker, Templeton, or Rothrock in regional or state library association affairs, or in the daily hirings, dismissals, and transfers effected by the southern female library network. Like Charles Shaw, mentioned above, these transplanted northerners faced formidable opposition from southern female librarians if they failed to pay them their due respect. Thus, Harold Brigham, New Jersey-born librarian of the Nashville public library, learned much to his chagrin in 1930 that he had to soften his direct approach to association problems. At a Tennessee Library Association meeting, after Brigham reported on the activities of a regional library association committee of which he was chair, Rothrock, "aided and abetted" by other state public library leaders, bitterly opposed the committee's actions as "undemocratic" because she suspected the hand of ALA in decisions reached by the committee. Baffled, Brigham wired the ALA for advice, but ALA Executive Secretary Carl Milam, who knew the lay of the southern library landscape all too well, simply told him he should not have mentioned details in his speech [8, pp. 182-83]. Similarly, Louis Shores from New York narrowly averted a political disaster at Fisk University when he planned a Negro Library Conference in 1931 without seeking the advice of southern white librarians. Only the skillful intervention of Milam prevented the "alienation" of Barker and Rothrock, who eventually appeared as speakers on the program [8, pp. 267-70].

Male librarians were desirable prospects in more dynamic southern cities where competition among city departments was fierce, particularly if city fathers had a keen eye for profit and subscribed to what sociologist Rupert Vance called the "Chamber of Commerce mentality" [156, pp. 485-89; 157, pp. 136-58; 158, pp. 125-55]. Given the nature of southern town and city governments during this era, however, including their infestation by members of the Ku Klux Klan [159, pp. 37-40], and their control by political machines like that of "Boss" Crump of Memphis [160, pp. 29-48], it was even more important that library employees tolerate the unpredictable elements in southern society than that they be expert fund-raisers. In this sense, the gender of the librarians may have ultimately been a less important factor in their careers than the slant of their regional sensitivities, and due to the lack of southern-born

male librarians working in the South, the importance of regional attitudes may explain the relative paucity of male southern public library directors well into the 1950s.

For whatever reasons, the Rosenwald scholarships had a negligible effect on male enrollment in the Emory Library School. After the scholarship program's discontinuance in 1933, no males entered the school in 1934 or 1935, and not until after the introduction of the G.I. Bill did as many as three men enter a single class. Whether southern men avoided the library school program simply because it lacked the dynamism and potential earning power of Emory's more prestigious offerings in programs like law and medicine or because the tradition of southern female librarianship had become entrenched in the popular imagination may never be conclusively demonstrated. The existence of the Rosenwald program does illustrate the severity of the male shortage in the national perception of southern librarianship. It is doubtful, however, that the majority of Atlanta's female graduates perceived the shortage as an impediment to furthering library extension in the South.

Race, Rivalry, and the Female Network

The rivalry among some southern female librarians for dominance in the region's library affairs and their differing philosophies on racial policy indirectly affected the development of several aspects of southern library education. Knoxville's Mary Utopia Rothrock, who presided over the first three conferences of the Southeastern Library Association (SELA) at Signal Mountain and Asheville in 1922, 1924, and 1926 both as president (1922-24) and unofficial hostess, became slightly piqued when Tommie Dora Barker, third SELA president (1926-28), moved the conference to Biloxi, supposedly because the mountains of North Carolina and Tennessee provided a more "central" location. She became vitriolic, however, when Barker was elected to the post of regional field agent for the South for the American Library Association, a position Rothrock had tailored to her own specifications [161, p. 21]. Atlanta's dominance in southern library affairs further fueled Rothrock's resentment at the pervasive presence of the Atlanta library school contingent at SELA conferences. Mary Eileen Ahern noted the presence of the two coalitions at SELA meetings as early as 1922, "the largest number being in the Tennessee group, while the one with the most dignified and intellectual atmosphere was that gathered at the table set aside for the Library School of the Carnegie Library of Atlanta" [162, p. 615]. Rothrock threw herself behind the formation of a rival school at the University of Tennessee in 1928, and Bogle wisely noted that even

though Rothrock was “agin most things . . . she recognizes Tenn[essee]’s need of trained librarians . . . [on the other hand] She would not want to be left out of a program but her outlook is purely local” [163]. Rothrock, a Memphis native graduated from the New York State Library School in 1914, was snobbish about the library school training of her employees, and several times backed out of employment negotiations with Barker for Atlanta graduates. “If we can’t have both thorough training and native ability,” she wrote, “we prefer the latter. Of course we would like also a good disposition and adaptability. In short we want Albany quality” [164]. Nevertheless, when demand for librarians exceeded supply, Rothrock and her assistant Helen Harris continued to hire Emory graduates in Knoxville and, later, in libraries of Knoxville and the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Two rival branches of a southern female network thus consisted of the Tennessee librarians and the Atlanta graduates, and while their purposes were often at odds, their similarities ultimately outweighed their differences. Barker, Rothrock, and Templeton, among several others, had actually drawn up plans for a regional association together while making the long train ride to the 1920 ALA conference at Denver [165; 8, pp. 125–26]. Templeton did not have the same investment in representing her state or city as did Rothrock or, for that matter, Barker. For this reason, perhaps, she ceded the position of ALA regional field agent to Barker when the SELA Policy Committee could not decide between Barker and Templeton. The Barker-Rothrock relationship was alternately civil and stormy. When Atlanta graduate Lucile Nix (class of 1930) failed to receive a recommendation from Rothrock for a state job to which she felt eminently entitled, Barker found her an equally prominent job with the state government in Atlanta and, years later, used Rothrock’s slight as a pretext for ignoring requests for survey information from Knoxville [166].¹²

Another important component of the female network thrived independently at the state department, county, city, and university levels, and it often clashed with the Atlanta axis of influence, which was synonymous in some southern minds with ALA influence. Relationships in this professional network occasionally resembled those of a genteel mafia. Willie Welch, an Atlanta graduate then working as Alabama state school library supervisor in 1935, sabotaged Barker’s long campaign to win Alabama’s Governor Bibb Graves to the public library idea by convincing him that school library work would have to precede public library development [124, July 30–31, 1935]. Barker, then serving as ALA re-

12. Ms. Dickson [166] was a long-time employee of the library, served under Rothrock, and was acting director at the time of this interview.

gional field agent for the South, knew more than even Wilson about personnel and conditions in the southern field and had already encountered problems with female scruples when working on the southern survey with Bogle in 1930: Louise Richardson, far from confident that Barker would give an impartial evaluation of her classes in Tallahassee, asked Bogle to conduct the survey in her state, as did representatives in Alabama and Virginia. It is important to emphasize at this point that Barker's knowledge of the field grew directly from her management of the Atlanta school, which served as a training agency, employment bureau, and pacesetter in the pecking order for librarians of the South.

The southern field was further fractured during the 1920s and 1930s over the question of the location of a library school for blacks. Whereas the rivalry over the home base of regional dominance in library affairs was really a cosmetic concern, the location of the library school for blacks concerned fundamental racial philosophy. Black education, like white education, was in the process of evolution in the 1920s. While the issue of coeducation was raised on black campuses across the South in the 1920s, however, a more threatening question was posed by the proper educational model to be followed. The Carnegie Corporation's decision to locate a library school for black librarians at Hampton, Virginia, in part represented a throwback to an earlier generation of educational philosophy: the Hampton Institute, founded in 1868, provided a symbolic bridge across which amicable relations would be restored between North and South, principally through northern philanthropy and the uplift of blacks [167, pp. 115–69]. Similarly, the choice of Hampton as a location for a black library school seems to have represented an intermediate solution between the industrial model of education exemplified by Tuskegee Institute and more radical liberal arts models then being proposed elsewhere.

The founding of the Hampton Institute Library School came at a particularly crucial period when librarians of the North and South could not otherwise agree on racial policy in libraries. The Work with Negroes Roundtable had been abandoned after an impassioned discussion of segregated services, apparently led by Rothrock, at the Hot Springs ALA conference of 1923. Wilson's recommendation to the BEL to locate the school at Hampton—then struggling to break free of its industrial education mold into a true liberal arts college [168]—thus represented a concession to the traditional model of black education controlled by white teachers and administrators. The news of the selection of Hampton as a site riled Anne Wallace, who had come out of retirement in 1921 to revive the Drexel Library School, not least of all because her vice-director, Florence Rising Curtis, left Drexel to head the new school [169].

Though blacks could gain admission into certain northern and mid-western library schools, documentary evidence and reminiscences of librarians like Virginia Lacey Jones repudiate official statements that they were accepted on a par with white students [11; 170, p. 238]. Hampton was already a coeducational institution, and the library school was open to students of both sexes, but Curtis complained to Sarah Bogle in 1927 that "so far, no men are available" [171]. The administration's tight surveillance over the relations of male and female students at Hampton ultimately led to a student revolt in 1927, although the library school's students remained aloof from the conflict [172; 173, pp. 230-75; 174, pp. 60-61, 273-74]. It was five years before Hampton could attract its first male student, Theodus Lafayette Gunn [10, p. 157]. Curtis, a Quaker dedicated wholly to the improvement of black education through libraries and literacy, was an inspirational choice for director of the school. Wallace Van Jackson credited her with making possible, through countless field visits and consultations with graduates of the Hampton program, the accreditation of many black colleges and universities through improvements to their libraries and collections [175]. Although the official reason given for the closing of the library school at Hampton in 1939 was financial, and the unofficial reason was that, according to Curtis [176], a school was needed to take up "where Hampton left off" (that is, a graduate school), more probably the imminent retirement of Curtis, and the lack of a forthcoming replacement, finally tipped the scales.

That Hampton's library school represented a temporary solution to the shortage of black libraries and librarians in the South was evident soon after it opened. Rothrock vied with Barker for relocation of the Hampton Institute Library School in Tennessee well before the official demise of that program. She let it be known through Rosenwald Fund representative Clark Foreman in 1929 that she disapproved of the Hampton program because of its physical location and because the Hampton Institute itself had yet to rise above its reputation as a technical rather than a liberal arts institution. Perhaps the fact that Curtis was not a native southerner, and therefore could not sympathize with Rothrock's ambiguous views on racial matters, made her uneasy. At any rate, she employed an evasive argument about Tennessee's "central" location, an argument that Wilson had wielded in justifying selection of the Hampton site in 1925, and proposed a "new" program to be located at Fisk University [177]. At the same time, Atlanta University president John Hope and Greenville librarian Charlotte Templeton, an intimate of Barker's, were discussing plans for the new library on his campus, including potential expansion room for library school quarters [178]. Templeton was in the thick of library education for blacks, just having

headed a summer school session for teacher-librarians at Spelman Institute. Only the Depression reined in any immediate plans Rosenwald, Carnegie, or the General Education Board may have had for replacing Hampton's program, although the future of the school was a source of concern throughout the 1930s.

Internecine squabbles over race, politics, and regional dominance frequently colored the deliberations of southern librarians after 1920. That southern female library educators—most notably, Barker—became actively engaged in the debate and resolution of controversial questions gives some indication of the degree to which library work and library education in the South were married. The base of power for southern female library educators lay in their ability to recommend graduates for posts, to approve or condemn the effects of national association policy on library development in the region, and to interpret for students the meaning of library work in a “changing” South. Social and political custom, which favored the preeminence of women in educational affairs, also forced their compliance with the conservative white interracial philosophy of black “uplift” which limited the choice of curricular offerings and educational experiences to those deemed appropriate by white males. In this sense, their activities were circumscribed to an advisory nature in deliberations of the funding agencies and the American Library Association, who relied on the decisions of southern males like Robert E. Lester of the Carnegie Corporation, librarian Louis Round Wilson, and Carl Milam of the American Library Association to establish a regional agenda of library development.

Discussion

As professionals, southern female librarians were bound to their region by a network of shared acquaintance, and library training adapted to meet the conditions of a legally segregated, economically deprived, and educationally backward society. Even if women did not always hold the positions of leadership in the field, they maintained their position in library education where they outfitted recruits for the whole gamut of employment possibilities, from the one-person library to the corporate city system, and from “professional” work as menial as book mending to “incidental” work as challenging as drafting library legislation. Perseverance occasionally paid, too, even in the field: the city of Birmingham officially declared Chapman director of the Birmingham system in 1926, and she remained in that position until her retirement in 1947.

There are many other sociological and historical factors which may explain why the phenomenon of female dominance in southern library

education until 1945 was not a random demographic occurrence, but none of them completely explains why southern female librarians maintained their leadership position for so long. The numerical gender imbalance between males and females on the eastern seaboard, particularly in the latter half of the nineteenth century, certainly created the necessary preconditions for the availability of a female work force whose prospects of marriage were doubtful. Also, southern women entered traditionally male occupations following the Civil War in order to survive. Although southern female librarians of the first generation came from upper-middle-class backgrounds, many of them had grown up in families directly affected by the personal tragedies of the war and the financial reversals of Reconstruction. Librarianship provided them with respectability and an opportunity to test their traditional mettle in circumstances at the same time primitive and patrician. The southern female librarian could prove herself the equal to whatever circumstances local library conditions afforded, armed with "the most attractive appearance . . . the best southern manner, but coupled with that . . . hardheartedness, and good judgement to a very unusual extent" [179]. Men, on the other hand, were apt to be viewed askance for accepting all but the highest-paid positions, especially if they had wives and family who would be subjected to the reduced earning prospects of library work. It is hardly accidental, then, that the most prominent of the Rosenwald male scholars, Errett W. McDiarmid, made his most outstanding contribution to the profession outside the South.¹³

Certainly a most pervasive factor acting in favor of the predominance of women in southern librarianship was the cult of southern womanhood to which the Atlanta school catered, and the perception of library work as part of "women's sphere." Ironically, the acceptance of male authority (on library boards and in university management, for example) complemented the corollary male cognizance of female superiority in library work. The myth of the "power behind the throne" was not at all figurative, and the southern gender norms served to smooth the way on southern campuses for female educators in "appropriate" studies such as librarianship. The perpetual state of southern educational crisis, made even more imminent by the Great Depression, and the relatively simple organizational structures of southern colleges and universities fostered informal networks of administrative support that encouraged the feminized southern library education program. As library educa-

13. Errett W. McDiarmid was best known as director of the University of Minnesota Library (1943-51) and founding director of the library education program at that institution (1943-63). He was elected ALA president in 1947-48.

tion—a professional venture endorsed by enlightened southern university administrators—flourished, the female library educator gained acceptance. As was customary in other nascent professional fields at the time, the female library educator often earned her standing through experience and renown rather than through her academic credentials. Barker, for example, never finished her college work at Agnes Scott but was given an honorary doctorate by Emory in 1930, the first such degree awarded by Emory to a female. The University of Georgia awarded a similar degree in 1929 to Anne Wallace Howland, the founder of the Atlanta school, and in 1930 to Jessica Hopkins, who succeeded Barker as Atlanta's librarian. Taken together, the three ceremonies represented a most fitting tribute to the traditions of training and practice which women had adapted to fit the southern environment.

Barker in particular exemplified the female library academic sans B.A. degree. It was by force of southern gender norms and the confluence of these norms with the perception of librarianship as predominantly women's work that Barker enjoyed a certain degree of *carte blanche* even after the school was placed in a university setting. Her circumstances were enviable, from either a male or female point of view.

Southern female library educators experienced special limitations and opportunities due to regional gender role expectations, and these in turn were influenced by reduced professional expectations of the southern region. Throughout this article, some reference has necessarily been made to examples from the field of library practice, for in the South, as in perhaps no other region, education for librarianship was shaped by conditions in the field and cultural norms, including the southern ideology surrounding womanhood. To this extent, practice overlapped with theory to a remarkable degree.

Certainly there are economic factors which explain why women prevailed in librarianship and library education in the South, but cultural factors, regional predilections, and professional politics played an equally important role. Of course, the South was not a country apart: evidence of most, if not all, of the general characteristics discussed in this study could probably be found in the experience of librarians from other parts of the United States. The degree to which these characteristics were present among southern librarians, however (legal, as opposed to *de facto* segregation, for example), rendered the characteristics more visible as aberrations. Indeed, southern "character" stands out in sharp relief against the occasionally flat and linear chronicles of American library history. Further research into regional factors affecting library education and librarianship in other parts of the country may serve to restore a lost dimension to historical accounts of the profession.

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