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A STUDY OF RACIAL/ETHNIC LIBRARIANS AND
MANAGEMENT: A Pilot Study

A THESIS

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Library & Information Science
San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Library and Information Science

by

Kathryn Josefina Blackmer Reyes

May 1996

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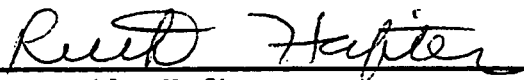
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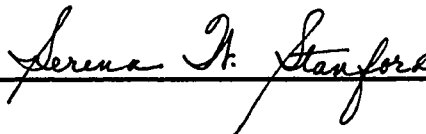


Dr. Ruth Hafter



Jeff Paul, MLS

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ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF RACIAL/ETHNIC LIBRARIANS AND MANAGEMENT: A Pilot Study

by Kathryn J. Blackmer Reyes

This thesis examines racial/ethnic librarians working in ethnic collections in university libraries in the United States. The focus is on the experiences of librarians in terms of their management duties and techniques.

The study is based on a self-selected sample of university librarians who responded to a call placed on an electronic user-group.

The thesis is organized in four parts. The first provides a general backdrop of relevant scholarly literature comprised of an overview of the university and the library and a review of general management and organization issues. The second part is a methodological discussion. Part three is a report of results focusing on respondent answers to questions on collections, management responsibilities and philosophies. The last section serves as both a general conclusion and a discussion of the significance of the study.

This thesis is dedicated in the memory of:

My father
George Powelson Blackmer
1911-1992

and

My friend
Mark G. Zimmerman
1965-1994

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me access to her networks by which I identified participants for my study. I am grateful for her mentoring, knowledge, and encouragement. I thank her for her solidarity! Expect a new member in the AFT.

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Mark, a friend since high school, was always proud and excited about what I was doing. Although we had minimal contact after high school, our friendship was not affected by the geographical distances between us. I had never before had a friend who honestly cared so much for my well being and success. I know he will always be proud of me in whatever I do. Sadly he died too young due to our society's unwillingness to put the money into finding a cure for AIDS. I will always miss him but the tree will grow on.

My father, who had only a third grade education, was a laborer all his life, was a loving man who managed to provide for his family, and was crucial to my educational pursuit. An avid reader and "scholar" in his own right, he was my first teacher of peace, (in)justice, and (in)equality. As a frequent visitor many many years ago to the UC Berkeley libraries always seeking knowledge, having a daughter as a librarian and working at an academic library would have been heaven.

I trust my work will always draw upon the memory of my father and of Mark and that they will continue to accompany me along my path. May they both rest in peace.

To those librarians who willingly gave me their time and support for my research I am most grateful. Without them there would be no study. Any shortcomings in this study or analysis are strictly my responsibility.

Kathryn Josefina Blackmer Reyes

San Jose State University
March, 1996

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Part One

INTRODUCTION

Librarians focusing on ethnic and racial study materials work at various universities and colleges throughout the United States. Organizations such as REFORMA¹, Bibliotecas Para La Gente², and the Black Caucus³ are examples of groups specifically organized around a racial/ethnic subject focus. Furthermore, they are made up primarily of librarians whose own characteristics may define them as members of racial/ethnic groups. In the mainstream library and information science professional organization, the American Library Association, no specific racial/ethnic focus exists. However, there are subject and group areas which speak to the sharpened focus on racial/ethnic group areas and racial/ethnic presence. For example, ALA lists substantive areas such as the "Asian and African materials" among other areas of coverage.

¹REFORMA is a the National Association to promote Library Services to the Spanish Speaking. REFORMA has several regional chapters throughout the nation.

²Bibliotecas Para La Gente is an organization that began in Northern California in 1975. The organization is composed of librarians working with Spanish language materials or the Spanish speaking community. BPLG formed independently of REFORMA but is currently the Northern California chapter of REFORMA.

³The Black Caucus is organized within the American Library Association by African American librarians as well as by those who work with African American studies collections.

Moreover, with respect to racial/ethnic membership groups, ALA lists such groups as the Black Caucus, REFORMA, and the Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association, demonstrating that there is diversity⁴ in both subject matter and group characteristics of those who work in the field of library and information science.

Over the past two decades university faculty, staff, and students have become more diverse, reflecting the general population demographic changes, affirmative action gains, and intellectual interests. These changes are indicative of the curriculum, student enrollment, faculty and staff recruitment. Diverse staff is also reflected in the university library. The need for a diverse library staff has become necessary to provide expertise in the different fields of ethnic scholarship and to provide support and mentorship to faculty scholars and student research interests. The diversification of the library staff is also apparent from the various staff or ethnic subject oriented committees in a university library. That is, library staff may be increasingly diverse, regardless of the library collection focus.

This study is about ethnic librarians working in an ethnic collection within a university library. My special

⁴For the purpose of this discussion "diversity" is defined by racial/ethnic categories, men or women.

interest is the examination of interaction with same and different racial group colleagues. Having completed a field placement at an ethnic studies collection of a major public university, I became intrigued by work relations among librarians and students. My observations led me to wonder about what kind of management practices are exercised in similar situations at other institutions. Thus I developed an interest in management questions and ethnic librarians at university ethnic library collections. Using a questionnaire composed of 61 questions, a general call was made over the Internet to which 15 people responded⁵. My intent was to gather information about ethnic librarians working in an ethnic collection and examine their roles in the main library and their general perceptions as ethnic librarians. A specific area of interest is management experiences among racial/ethnic colleagues and non-ethnic colleagues.

1.1 Beginnings of Race Studies

The establishment of multicultural collections is relatively recent, while the study of race and ethnicity has a long history in the academic establishment. The study of race and ethnicity has gained academic research status and

⁵Fifteen responses to the call were received but only six

(1994) recasts the study of race to a more complex web of special order.

1.2 Historical Student Mobilization

The field of ethnic and race studies is advancing due to the diversification of the student population. In the 1960s with a need to build solidarity, minority students opted for ethnic labels which were restricted in their focus. However, Pan-ethnic labels such as Asian American took precedence over specific group labels such as Filipino or Vietnamese. By the 1980s Pan-ethnic titles become increasingly criticized by group members who wished to focus on within group ethnic differences. New groups of students of mixed heritage backgrounds also emerged and helped to expand the Pan-ethnic titles preferred in the early years of minority identity formation.

Along with the need for group identification was also the beginning of increasing interest in the study of racial/ethnic groups by students. Student mobilization around 1968 marked the first wave of demands to integrate race and ethnic studies into the university curriculum. With the Third World Liberation Front strike at San Francisco State University in 1968 and again in 1969 at the University of California, Berkeley, the first and largest student

mobilization around Ethnic Studies Departments changed the scope of academia forever (Muñoz, 1989). This early stage, the 1960s era, called for minority group studies areas. By the 1980s, a second wave pushed for multicultural studies as well as general area curriculum requirement changes. Universities reacted by establishing departments such as American Cultures or Ethnic Studies and also by instituting requirements such as "American cultures" for the undergraduate curriculum.

This discussion of the study and establishment of race and ethnic studies is important in order to lay the foundation for this work. This thesis addresses questions of racial/ethnic librarian experiences in academic libraries. The thesis is organized in four parts. The first provides a general backdrop of relevant scholarly literature. Specifically, an overview of the university and the library and a review of general management and organization issues. The second part consists of a methodological discussion. Part three is a report of my results focusing on respondent answers to questions on collections, management responsibilities and philosophies. The last section serves as both a general conclusion and a place to discuss the significance of this study.

Part Two

LIBRARY AND MANAGEMENT: A Review of the Literature

This section reviews the literature that provides the background for this study. The areas that I will cover as part of the literature review are divided into three sections. Section (1) will be an overview of the university and the libraries. Section (2) is a review of general management and organization issues. Section (3) provides the conclusion for this chapter where I will tie in some of the literature presented here to my area of study.

2.1 Institutional Organization of Libraries

This section provides for a brief review of university and its library may be structured. In the majority of the cases the structure that will be described tends to be that of the norm, however, like all organizations, every institution has its own way of functioning. The structure that follows is most likely present in universities and their libraries that are part of a large university system, for example universities such as the University of California, University of Texas, or even private universities like Stanford or Harvard.

Organizational Structure

Libraries in an academic setting function within two structures: those specific to their units which can be identified as the "internal structure"; and the structural organization of the university, or the "external environment." While these are two separate spheres, it is important to note that the "Internal structure and the external environment...should not be treated as separate entities but should be seen as inextricably interrelated in a dynamic process" (Ferguson, 1991:111). However, the two structures can be in competition with each other. The successful interplay of the two structures allows for the longevity of the "smaller" structures -- i.e., the library.

The structure of libraries is governed by the university regulations and possibly by specific departments or programs.

Libraries must respond to and cooperate with the request and demands imposed upon them by the existing administrations of individual departments and university regulations. The organizational structure of the university administration sets its own hierarchy in terms of the functions of the university. These consist of governing boards, divisions, services, departments and even recreational sports management.

Each of the university units functions with their own internal structures. Libraries, for example, develop their own "hierarchies": the head librarian, staff, volunteers, and advisory committees. This structure maintains the daily functioning of the organization. This organizational structure consists of several components to run the library and to serve its clientele, primarily the faculty and the students, successfully.

2.2 Management & Organization Issues

The concept of management has been in the workplace in some form since the days of apprentices and the guild. However, it was not until the Industrial Revolution and the establishment of capitalism that management as we know it today established its foundation. To manage is to control and control is indeed the central concept of all management systems. This section will provide an overview of the literature discussing several issues surrounding management and an organization. Areas that will be covered are: management techniques - examining specifically traditional management, scientific management, and human relations; volunteerism; sex characteristics; race and management; solidarity; trust; and individualism-collectivism.

Management Techniques

Libraries, like any other organized unit, rely upon management techniques in order to meet their objectives. Lewis and Lewis define management as "the process of (1) making a plan to achieve some end, (2) organizing the people and resources needed to carry out the plan, (3) encouraging the helping workers who will be asked to perform the component tasks, and then (4) evaluating the results" (Lewis and Lewis, 1983:1). In any organization, be it large or small, it is important that management functions well to be productive and to serve the intended clientele. The techniques that will be discussed will be: traditional management, scientific management, and human relations.

Traditional Management

This form of management is characterized by familial practices whereby workers and tasks are organized along emotionally derived loyalty and bonds of friendship in the workplace. Traditional management tends to be more effective in smaller organizations.

Hutt and Hutt (1993) in their discussion of the management of a small dairy farm address some of the dimensions of traditional or familial management strategies. Most importantly they state that the farm is a business even though it is operated by family or closely knit individuals.

They stipulate that each family member is delegated a job in the organization and that personal feelings towards a family member must not hinder the longevity of the business. An effective family manager must see beyond personnel and personal problems yet at the same time also be aware of differences and conflicts. Hutt and Hutt make it clear that the role of a manager is based on social relationships, but this cannot guarantee that whatever is delegated to a subordinate is going to be liked by the subordinate, who in this case is a family member.

This structural variable is within the realm of the human resource model of management. "This model," states Hutt and Hutt, "views each employee as a resource to the business. Successful management in this model is marked by a decentralized structure. The major distinction between an operation that is centralized and one that is decentralized is delegation. The farm manager in a decentralized operation is likely to have several middle managers who are responsible for various aspects of the business" (Hutt and Hutt, 1993:2072).

This discussion is useful for it provides insight about some of the dilemmas confronted by an organization with a non-bureaucratic management. Management is generally addressed in terms of the techniques used to achieve some kind of objective goal. In economic and political

development management styles are associated with levels of industrial development. Thus, production at home, known as cottage industries, is linked to household or familiar management.

Scientific Management

Popularly known as Taylorism, this management technique, applies methods of science to complex problems of labor control. Highly specialized modern production is linked to some form of scientific management which is carried out by an identifiable production organization such as a factory or plant (Braverman, 1974). The success of scientific management is in breaking down the processes or labor skills, thus reducing the skill to a minimum.

For a large organization, such as an automobile company, assembling automobiles requires high production yet low cost. Henry T. Ford, a United States automobile maker, successfully used scientific management to create the assembly line, also known as Fordism¹, to break down into many parts the process of assembling an automobile.

¹See Peña, Devon. 1987. "Tortuosidad: Shop Floor Struggles of Female Maquiladora Workers". In Vicki L. Ruiz and Susan Tiano, Women on the U.S.-Mexico Border: Responses to Change. Boston, MA: Allen & Unwin.

increases the agency's service delivery capacity, but only if these contributions are respected as highly as those of paid personnel" (Lewis and Lewis, 1983:10). Volunteers are an essential element for running an organization where the budget does not allow for additional hiring of personnel, which is the case for many academic libraries in the current economic crisis. This has been true for ethnic studies libraries throughout time.

Sex Characteristics in Management

While research on racial group management issues is scant, sex characteristics can serve for surrogate information which informs us about the role of personal characteristics in management and the meeting of goals. Studies conducted by Callan (1993) and Scott (1983), examine male and female managers and their male and female subordinates in terms of their perceptions about communication with each other. These studies contribute to the research of perceptions about the nature of communication between managers and subordinates by focusing upon the significance of gender and of sex-role stereotypes in the job setting. Callan (1993) points to the differential assessment of males and females in terms of leadership styles. Men are seen to be in compliance with their sex-role mandates as leaders and managers, the same qualities in women are judged

to be domineering. Given that this study is based on manager and subordinate perceptions, Callan suggests that future research must investigate whether these perceptions do in fact exist.

Scott's (1983) study found that among male and female supervisors, area supervisors, and top management individuals reporting to someone of the same gender had significantly higher trust in their superior than did men or women reporting to a superior of the opposite sex. Scott also states that "the influence of gender of the superior on interaction between superiors and subordinates rather than just considering the gender of the respondent" is also a factor that influences trust (Scott 1983:334).

Callan's (1993) and Scott's (1983) articles do not identify the race of the individuals studied. But, the discussion of staff characteristics is worth considering as a comparison to the discussion of the role of minority membership in managing minority staff.

Race and Management

In a brief article on black managers and their problems with black subordinates Fitzgerald (1993) examines the field of journalism. Fitzgerald identifies what he refers to as the "My Brother Trap" which is a game that some black journalists use on their black managers to enforce familial

patterns of interaction as a means of sabotaging management rules. "I have had to put out the word that I am not going to allow myself to be sucked into that trap called My Brother. You know: 'What's happening, my brother? Oh, I was only five minutes late, my brother. Oh, you'll let me slide on that, my brother,' as stated by Gary Wordlaw, a television news director" (Fitzgerald, 1993:28). Furthermore, supporting Callans' (1993) finding about the dilemmas faced by women managers, Fitzgerald quotes Pearl Stewart, then editor of the Oakland Tribune:

One of the things I've had to deal with as an African-American women is that sometimes when you are firm, you are considered a bitch. And sometimes if you are nice, you are considered incompetent (1993:28).

Stewart, an African American, does not identify the race of the individual(s) whom she is discussing. However, it is safe to assume that the cases she cites include black as well as white subordinates; clearly she is speaking about sex bias.

Stewart states that black journalists tend to be suspicious of any manager: "The people being managed have had huge problems with racism. They approach management -- whoever they are -- with something of a chip on their shoulders. I can relate because I've been through those experiences myself" (Fitzgerald, 1993:29).

group solidarity as resulting from certain social circumstances, both internal and external, under which the members of the group exist...more commonly termed as structural conditions, act directly to enhance the ethnic solidarity of the group or groups under investigation. Others...explain how certain circumstances lead to the rational, strategic selection of ethnic identity as a means of attaining desired political, economic, and other social goals, which in turn increases group solidarity (1990:148).

These two approaches are useful footnotes for the examination of the historical dimension of primordialism and the rational/strategic selection of circumstances, as these are present at the point of establishment of the libraries as well as in the current management styles.

Trust

Along with the element of solidarity also lies the element of trust. This element of trust is frequently taken for granted. Trust "is based on the expectation that the other in the interdependence relation will behave correctly and in the common interest by respecting the social pact which binds the organizational actors together and maintains the negotiated order of the interrelations among groups" (Gherardi and Masiero, 1990:564).

In Zand's (1972) study of trust and problem solving in the workplace, the author uses Gibb's model of the

interaction of trust. Gibb's² model "conceptualizes the transforming of one's inner state of trust (or mistrust) into behavior that is trusting (or mistrusting) through 1) information, 2) influence, and 3) control" (Zand, 1972:230).

In other words, one who does not trust will distort information to, in his mind, achieve more power and to undermine in most cases the progress of the organization or work group. Individuals lacking trust will increase the possibility of misunderstanding or misinterpretation. "The social uncertainty induced by their low trust will increase the probability that underlying problems may go undetected or be avoided, and that inappropriate solutions may be more difficult to identify" (Zand, 1972:230). Thus, it may end up in an inappropriate discussion or a dissolution of the process.

On the other hand, persons that trust each other will provide pertinent, complete, reliable, and timely information, and thereby contribute practical data for problem-solving efforts.

Solidarity and trust work hand in hand. A person who is part of a group (i.e., political or social) needs to have

²Gibb's model appears in Zand's article. For the complete work from Gibb's see: Gibb, Jack R. 1964. "Climate for trust formation." In Leland P. Bradford, et al. (eds.), T-Group Theory and Laboratory Method, p. 279-301. New York, NY: John Wiley.

trust in the leadership -- that the leadership and participants are acting in the interest of the group, not for her/himself, as well as in the interest of the community, for the person to continue to work for the group's mission.

Individualism - Collectivism

In a study examining a group of Anglos, blacks, Asian Americans, and Latinos by Cox, Lobel and McLeod (1991), their hypothesis is that groups composed of people from collectivist cultural traditions would display more cooperative behavior than groups composed of people from individualistic cultural traditions. Cox, Lobel, and McLeod (1991), studied 136 subjects who were graduate and undergraduate students from several academic majors who attended a large public university in the midwestern United States. There were 75 Anglos, 25 Asian Americans³, 17 African Americans, and 19 Latinos.⁴ There were 95 men and 41 women and 115 subjects were native born Americans (Cox, Lobel, McLeod, 1991:832).

Subjects were divided into one person per ethnicity in a study group. Since there were more Anglo subjects than the

³Chinese Americans were the most prominent group among Asian Americans.

⁴Chicanos were the most prominent group among the Latinos.

other ethnic groups there were some study groups composed of only Anglo participants. In total, there were seventeen ethnically diverse groups and sixteen all-Anglo groups. Sex of the participants was also a factor in the establishing of the groups, however, equal distribution was not possible. The tasks given to access both individual and group response was a two-party Prisoner's Dilemma⁵ that subjects responded to individually before they had a group discussion and all subjects completed a 14-item questionnaire to measure individualism-collectivism.

Cox, Lobel, and McLeod (1991) found that "ethnic group difference affects at least some aspects of behavior in task groups. The study found that at an individual level, Asian, black, and Hispanic individuals had more collectivist-cooperative orientation to a task than Anglo individuals" (1991:839). Their findings suggest that the individual differences in behavior originate from differences in the national cultures to which the various groups have cultural roots. In addition, the more ethnically diverse groups acted more "cooperatively than all-Anglo groups" (1991:839). One might argue here that Cox, Lobel, and McLeod have conceptualized the groups' behaviors following a culturally

⁵For detail on the two-party version of Prisoner's Dilemma see: Pruitt, D., and Kimmel, M. 1977. "Twenty years of experimental gaming: Critique, Synthesis, and Suggestions for the Future." **Annual Review of Psychology** 28:363-392.

deterministic framework.

Cox, Lobel, and McLeod (1991) conclude that diverse ethnic groups work better collectively than the all-Anglo workforce that acts more individualistically in its tasks. One variable that this study did not include was that of a power or leadership position in any of the study groups, since each group consisted of members equal in power.

A study conducted by Watson, Kumar, and Michaelsen (1993) built on previous studies on culturally diverse groups, like Cox, Lobel, and McLeod's (1991), by extending the study for 17 weeks. They attempted to answer "what effect does a high degree of cultural diversity have on group interaction and group problem solving over time?" (Watson, Kumar, and Michaelsen, 1993:591).

Watson, Kumar, and Michaelsen collected their data from a group of 173 upper-level undergraduates (103 men and 70 women) that were enrolled in a principles-in-management class at a university in the southwest United States. There were a total of 36 work groups, each group was composed of four to five members, and the students remained in the same group for the duration of the study, a little more than four months. There were 17 culturally homogeneous groups (81 Anglos) and 19 culturally diverse groups (92 subjects).⁶

⁶Each diverse group had four members: one Anglo, black, Latino, and a foreign national from either Asia, Latin

The tasks the groups performed consisted of completing a "structured analysis of a case study that described situations prevalent in 'real-life' companies" (Watson, Kumar, and Michaelsen, 1993:593). Tasks were to be completed within an hour and everyone received the same instructions. One grade would be issued for the group's work rather than individual grading. Tasks were performed during the class time.

The Watson, Kumar, and Michaelsen results were that for the first three tasks, homogeneous groups reported a significantly more effective process. Over time both groups performed equally. By the end of the 17 weeks there was no difference in the process or overall performance. The groups that were culturally diverse appeared to constrain progress and performance at the beginning but by the end of the study the culturally diverse groups performed the same as the homogeneous groups with the homogeneous groups finishing slightly ahead.

Watson, Kumar, and Michaelsen state a limitation in their study was that "the intensity of members' involvement in [the groups] was undoubtedly lower than it would be in ongoing groups in a workplace setting. Our results are

America, Africa, or the Middle East. There were also groups of five members. The fifth member was either Latino or a foreign national.

probably more characteristic of the interaction patterns that would occur in project groups like quality circles and task forces" (Watson, Kumar, and Michaelsen, 1993:599-600).

SUMMARY

In this section I have examined the literature that covers several aspect of management as well as the situation of racial/ethnic and non racial/ethnic individuals working together. The studies mentioned addressed inter and intra group relations by examining different dynamics of worksite relations. Clearly there are distinct elements that affect work relations and worksites. The literature contributes to an understanding of those dimensions. The present study is yet another effort, but with the distinct purpose of addressing racial/ethnic librarian experiences.

Part Three

METHODOLOGY

This chapter address the procedures used for collecting the data for this study. I will discuss three areas. First, the selection and sampling of the participants in terms of ethnicity, gender, and geographic location. Second, the questionnaire formulation in terms of themes and areas of inquiry. In the third section I provide a brief profile of the characteristics of my sample.

3.1 Data Collection

The data was collected by the creation of a questionnaire that consisted of 61 questions both open and closed ended (Fetterman, 1989). The questionnaire was divided into six thematic sections with the fifth section divided into six parts (see appendix D). The six thematic sections covered: 1) general information, 2) history of your collection, 3) budget, 4) current personnel, 5) management issues, and 6) campus at large. The fifth section covered supervisor and co-worker information.

The responses were gathered during the months of October and November of 1995. Each participant was given two weeks to fill out the questionnaire.

3.2 Selection and Sampling

Participating librarians were sought through email using the listserv group "Equilibr"¹ that has about 200 subscribed participants. A message was posted requesting volunteers to participate in my study. Participants received the message via their email. My first call resulted in no responses.² A few weeks later a slightly different version was posted (see appendix A).

The minimum requirements for participation in this study required that a potential subject be an ethnic librarian working with an ethnic collection in a main university library. I received fourteen responses to the questionnaire. Of these thirteen qualified as subjects. I sent them the following items: a letter of information, letter of consent, and the questionnaire by email (see appendixes B, C, & D). Of the thirteen, six responded, two were non-responses, and

¹"Equilibr" is an electronic forum dedicated to the information and communication needs of academic librarians regarding ethnicity and culture in academic libraries. Equilibr stands for the "equity librarian network". Equilibr is sponsored by the ACRL Racial and Ethnic Diversity Committee's Coalition of Academic Librarians from Underrepresented Groups.

Access to the group posting was kindly facilitated by Susana Hinojosa of UC Berkeley.

²Due to my original research proposal (see discussion in introduction) I had to change and re-post my search for participants.

five, upon reviewing the questionnaire, determined that their job positions were inappropriate to the study.

No specific sites or librarians were sought. Librarians that responded to the call were the only ones contacted. Thus, this is a self-selected sample.

The sample consisted of four women and two men. Of the six, two were Chicano, three were African American, and one was Asian American. All were librarians with a Masters in Library Science, and each was a racial/ethnic librarian in charge of a racial/ethnic collection. Geographically, the East and West coasts and the Southwest were each represented by two participants. To preserve anonymity neither the librarians, the universities nor the collections will be identified.

Part Four

RESULTS

In this section I will provide a brief sketch of the respondents, their collections, their management responsibilities, and their management philosophies. As stated previously, my discussion is based on six surveys. The respondents were self-selected based on a descriptive narrative which asked for participants who were of racial/ethnic extraction and who were responsible for an ethnic studies collection within a university library.

4.1 Brief Sketch of Respondent & Collection Characteristics

With respect to racial/ethnic membership, three respondents were African American, two were Chicanos and one was Asian American. Five respondents are responsible for same group collections. For example, the African American librarian is responsible for the African American studies library. One Chicano respondent is responsible for an outgrowth of his own group research collection, an ethnic and multicultural archive. Three collections were initiated during the 1960s, one each during the seventies, eighties, and nineties.

4.2 Overview of Collections

Among the six respondents three worked in their collections without any staff. One had a quarter-time clerical assistant, and two worked with two other colleagues.

With respect to the size of collections managed, two respondents stated that they had 20,000 volumes, while two others had between six and seven thousand volumes. Two respondents gave unusable data with respect to the number of volumes. Two of the collections were based in the Southwest; two on the East Coast; and two on the West Coast. In terms of budget, four respondents had budgets ranging from \$3,000 to \$14,000, while two lacked distinct budgets for their collections. The latter were supported through general library budgets.

Four respondents stated that their collections had been initiated in part as the result of student and faculty research demands. Among the collections initiated during the 1960s, minority research and curriculum efforts served to initiate their development. Two more recently established collections (one in 1988 and one in 1992) were directly linked to university mandates to expand their curriculum offerings to a multi-cultural content.¹

¹During the mid 1980s, academics at Stanford University and the University of California at Berkeley were involved in heated debates regarding curriculum revision. At stake were

4.3 Management Issues

The major area of study addressed in this project entailed the examination of management issues as experienced by ethnic librarians. Potential respondents were asked to participate in this study if they were minority librarians and they were engaged in some manner in management within university libraries. The respondents were asked to address 1) management techniques, 2) staff and working relations, and 3) relations with supervisors.

Management Techniques

Respondents were asked to self-identify with one of three given management styles. The objective was to discuss in terms of self definition how they thought of themselves in terms of management types. The three possible choices were:

- 1) Scientific management (also known as Taylorism) - applies methods of science to complex problems of labor control.

- 2) Traditional management - characterized by familial

the treasured classics of Western thought which formed the intellectual canon of all higher education and the not so classic "new" scholarship which challenged the status quo intellectual cadre. The concepts eurocentric, multicultural literacy, cultural diversity and ethnic studies came to symbolize the loaded political and academic debates. Eventually, the Academic Senate of these universities would establish an undergraduate requirement for all students which addressed diverse populations of the United States.

1940s. The emphasis in the human relations style is less on authoritarianism and control, and more on principles.

Four of the respondents stated that their management style was human relations, one traditional, and one scientific. One librarian, who described her management style as human relations stated:

...the nature of my management is so uncomplicated and effortless...I try to be open and friendly with my students; I am flexible in terms of their study/work schedules; I encourage students to take time to browse/scan materials if they are interested; we discuss both personal and political. I see their time spent at the [library] as a learning process of us. In turn, my students stay an [average] of 2+ years with me, they generally perform very well and quite often we remain friends for years later.

Clearly this librarian exemplifies the characteristics of the human relations manager. This librarian tries to be "open and friendly," is flexible and tries to act as a mentor and a friend to her student workers. Based on her own statement, her student workers like working with her. They have spent two or more years working with her. If one looks at the voluntary continuation of their work relations, one could conclude that this librarian's performance as a manager is employee-centered and generally democratic.

One librarian who stated that her management style is traditional comes to this conclusion on the basis of "favors" done for colleagues on the basis of friendship:

Management always bend[s] over backwards to help who they consider friends. [For] example reassignment leave[s] have been given...to people they know even if they have no intention of doing research. It is a fact that people who have been given [this] privilege of doing research use the time for extended vacations.

From her statement she seems to be describing how the university library management functions rather than how she performs as a manager. Unfortunately, she seems to describe the danger and the possible tensions that can occur when traditional management techniques are abused. Because traditional management sees everyone as a part of the family, everyone's performance is seen as important to the function and running of the organization. Management, for this librarian, seems to reward selected individuals based on being part of the family rather than on merit. They receive the benefits of traditional familial practices.

Another librarian who selected the scientific management style as best describing his own style stated that:

[One] identif[ies] objectives and distribute[s] assignments based on [the] nature of [the] assignments and according to the abilities and job classifications of employees.

His management techniques are based on what he designates as objective principles and abilities. He continues this philosophical perspective in reference to another question but pertinent to how he manages in the

following manner:

...[if] there is...a problem, if I can get it done myself I will do it and write them off from any future collaborative projects--period.

In this instance, this librarian also demonstrates that he prefers to control many aspects of the worksite. Rather than have to make decisions about work tasks, he manages by not delegating responsibilities.

Staff and Working Relations

Generally support staff for the collections tended to be students who would work on average about 25% time. Tasks that they would perform seemed to be clerical, for example, photocopying, answering the telephone, and typing. . Much of the technical duties that need to get done would be performed by the professional library supporting staff.

...regarding support staff, that is shared, their duties are predetermined: I give L.A. III (acquisitions) list of monographs, serials, AV and other format materials to be ordered for library purchase, she asks her staff to check holdings, types up order forms and return[s them] to me. I make sure Central Acquisitions in the main library gets [the] order forms and the rest is up to them and later, cataloging unit. I get the finished product, bound with labels and security strips, and then determine the title's circulation status.

The respondents' daily contacts with other racial/ethnic librarians tended to be few compared to their daily contacts with staff that are non racial/ethnic. Three librarians

indicated that they see five racial/ethnic staff compared to 20-35 non racial/ethnic staff. One librarian identified daily contact to 2 non racial/ethnic staff and no contact with racial/ethnic staff. Only one librarian's daily contact with twenty-one racial/ethnic staff out numbered the five of non racial/ethnic librarians.

Relations with the professional staff, racial/ethnic and non racial/ethnic, seem to be friendly and professional. Since the majority of the librarians surveyed have few daily contacts with racial/ethnic staff when in a committee they tend to be the only racial/ethnic person present. As one librarian stated:

The few times I have had committee assignments...there were no other racial/ethnic librarians.

The same librarian goes to state that when she is in a committee of non-ethnic and racial/ethnic colleagues she identifies common concerns as a reason they work together well:

I participate in an area studies bibliography group so we share many common concerns. When for example our serials budget has been threatened we meet to review each title recommended for cancellation and make suggestions, e.g. multi disciplinary journals might be picked up by another bibliographer [whose] budget is "cushier" or more able to withstand cuts.

It seems that no matter what the discussion is about in a committee and/or what is the ethnic composition of the

group working together, these librarians felt that their points were getting across. Communication with a non-ethnic workforce seems positive. Except for one librarian, the remaining five agreed that they would feel free to consult with non-ethnic librarians and feel that they were understood. "Up to now, I have not experienced a sense of frustration as to whether I am making myself understood," said one librarian; she continues, "...although, sometime[s] I wonder whether I am being articulate enough!"

Another librarian sees communication as his duty to his collection yet also recognizes that problems do come up:

It is my job to make sure that my colleagues are aware and informed about [the library's] activities. Whenever there are any activities requiring consultation, I do so and up to now there have been no problems that I know of. Some issues have surfaced, though, such as when I may have to be out of town on [library] business as opposed to serving time on the reference desk as most librarians do. In the past there have been some perceptions by some librarians that I get to do the exotic, sexy-type work rather than serving in the trenches of academic library land, so this has caused some grumbling that I have heard second-hand, but I have shined it on as going with the job.

The one dissenting librarian on communications with non-ethnic staff states:

In this library department there is vindictive pettiness with the non-ethnic librarian because it is they who are in management.

The librarian continues:

They think for the most part what is best for

themselves and not for the best of you or for the department.

As stated, communication generally tends to be positive. But good communication is only reinforced when some sort of action is needed, and again, the responses tended to be positive that things would get done or action would take place if necessary. One librarian summed up why she felt that things went well with her colleagues:

...these are collegial interactions as opposed to situation[s] where we are bargaining or interacting from power position[s]. Since most of us have little power, the relationship[s] are cordial!

Since it appears that the majority of librarians in this study are not in positions of power, their collections seem to be treated equally in the hierarchy of the management of the library. Competition or other power forces do not seem to affect relationships with either their non-ethnic or their racial/ethnic colleagues.

An added dimension to working with racial/ethnic colleagues is the power of language. Language in some sort can break down and even create borders. In describing how one librarian uses language to make for a more cordial and collegial atmosphere the librarian states:

...I spontaneously greet [my Latino colleagues] in Spanish and this somehow creates a "warmer" relationship - tu sabes, lo cultural.

The librarian relies upon language as a means of

establishing cultural affinity. For some individuals within the Chicano community, Spanish is intertwined with how they communicate and becomes a means of coming together within the workplace.

4.4 Relations with Supervisors

There were mixed feelings regarding the librarians' supervisors. Of the six librarians, four had supervisors of the same racial/ethnic background as themselves. The other two had white supervisors. All six felt that their supervisors encouraged their professional development.

Reports one librarian:

She always approves travel requests and has often ask[ed] me to substitute for her or to represent her at meeting[s], events, etc.

Here the librarian's supervisor is of the same ethnicity as herself but even the two librarians that have non-ethnic supervisors stated that these supervisors also encourage professional development by encouraging them to participate in professional organizations.

Although they agreed on the need for professional development, two librarians felt that if they needed their supervisor to support them or back them up, their supervisor, non-ethnic, would not. One librarian commenting on her supervisor, who is white, stated:

She is not racially opened (sic) to ethnic librarians.

Of all the six librarians, this librarian seemed to have the most tension-filled workplace. Her social relationship with her supervisor is professional only and barely civil:

She is uncomfortable with me. [A relationship outside of work could not happen] because our relationship has been established and...there will only be a civil working relationship.

Perhaps one can ask which party is creating the tension. The librarian could easily just be at fault based on her responses. It seems she is reacting to management based on how management has been treating her.

Five librarians felt that they had a friendly relationship with their supervisors (racial/ethnic and non-ethnic). One librarian that has a racial/ethnic supervisor, seemed to be taking on the role of more than just a friend:

My supervisor is an elderly lady that has grown to depend on me in various ways such as shopping for clothes, mending/altering clothes, etc. Her physical condition has limited the amount and type of activities she can participate in.

Her almost caretaker role or daughterly position could be taken to mean that she does what she does because she really likes her elderly supervisor and/or because her supervisor is also African American there is a sense of responsibility to help her.

Another librarian whose supervisor is of the same racial/ethnic background stated:

We often exchange notes on children, food, clothes, etc. I wouldn't say we are best friends; she is a rather private person, but librarians here have been invited to her home on many occasions.

SUMMARY

This section has described the data obtained from the questionnaires received from the racial/ethnic librarians who participated in this study. The information presented here provides another approach and view to the complexities of inter and intra group relations. With respect to racial/ethnic librarians we have learned that institutional culture and practices are better determinants of both their experiences and the likely behaviors that they will exhibit. That is, the cultural values of racial/ethnic librarians do not determine how they perform their duties.

Part Five

CONCLUSION

This study has examined racial/ethnic librarians working in ethnic collections in university libraries in the United States. The focus is on the experiences of librarians in terms of their management duties and techniques. As academic endeavors more closely resemble the changing demographic parameters present in the United States, the subject matter of this thesis will take on a greater significance. As this century and this millennium conclude, understanding racial/ethnic experiences in all facets of social life becomes a matter of global survival. Thus, the subject of this thesis has a bearing upon the total understanding of the experiences we face as information seekers and givers, and also as a human group. This is a glimpse into the daily activities of one group of individuals who interface between majority and minority groups within institutional settings, namely racial/ethnic librarians in ethnic collections.

This study is based on a self-selected sample of university librarians who responded to a call placed on an electronic user-group called "Equilibr"¹. Each participant

¹"Equilibr" is an electronic forum dedicated to the information and communication needs of academic librarians regarding ethnicity and culture in academic libraries. Equilibr stands for the "equity librarian network." Equilibr

within which they worked (Watson, Kumar and Michaelsen, 1993; Cox, Lobel, and McLeod, 1991; and Fitzgerald, 1993). That is, they did not bring any form of "ethnic communal values" to their work. Rather they performed their duties based upon the training they had received in conventional library programs and in a form appropriate to the institutional location in which they practiced their profession (Kanter, 1977).

It has been stated that most studies addressing work relations in work sites have focused on comparative sex group relations, (Scott, 1983; and Callan, 1993), and trust and solidarity practices among workers of various racial and sex groups (Zand, 1972; and Scott, 1990). Studies which have specifically focused on racial/ethnic group relations examined same race group relations (Fitzgerald, 1993; Watson, Kumar, and Michaelsen, 1993; and Cox, Lobel, and McLeod, 1991) and relations across race and ethnicity (Watson, Kumar, and Michaelsen, 1993; and Cox, Lobel, and McLeod, 1991; Blauner, 1972; and Feagin, 1984).

Most of these studies have made significant contributions to the understanding of inter- and intra- group relations. However, the major explanatory schema used to address outcomes in relation to diverse groups tends to

privilege the cultural primacy models² dispensed in the 1960s (Blauner, 1972; and Eitzen, 1986). Others have suggested that in the 1990s racial and ethnic groups have come to take one another for granted within specific work sites, such that culture has taken an even more diminished role than once perceived (Wilson, 1980), and that professionalization has become the major interpretive model for working relations in professional settings. This is not to say that race and ethnicity have lost importance (as Wilson has argued) but rather that as more racial group members have experienced social mobility into professional settings, neither segregation arguments nor racial cultural differences work to explain group relations.

This tentative conclusion is exemplified by a statement made by the most outspoken of my informants with respect to work with colleagues regardless of racial membership:

A few of my [non-ethnic librarian colleagues] are especially intelligent, clear-headed and forward-thinking individuals...[As for my racial/ethnic librarian colleagues]...we are more or less on the same level and we are cordial and collegial with each other.

In conclusion, this study provides a glimpse into the views and work lives of racial/ethnic librarians whose jobs

²According to cultural deficiency theorists all problems experienced by minority groups are the results of inferior cultural membership, racial membership, minority values, and cultural poverty.

are demarcated by their management skills, their knowledge of the institutions and libraries, and their racial membership. Although this study has limitations, it provides an important entry to an underexplored area of study. As universities reflect the changing demographics and social developments of the United States, racial/ethnic librarians and racial/ethnic collections will find a place within the institution and will become an important new area of intergroup relations. The need for a diverse library staff and diverse collections will persist. Libraries may provide an important setting in which to explore both a growing scholarship of university faculty and student research interests as well as a work site that inevitably provides for fascinating inter-group situations.

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APPENDIX A

Call for Participants

If you are a racial-ethnic librarian who works with an ethnic collection within a university library, you may be able to help me.

I am a graduate student in the master's program in the Library School at San Jose State University. As part of my final work for my master's I must complete a thesis.

My study focuses on racial-ethnic librarian management practices in ethnic libraries. I am interested in two dimensions. First, the management practices among same group staff. Second, management practices with staff of different racial-ethnic group membership, where these are defined as minority, i.e. African American, Chicano-Latino, Native American, and Asian American.

The characteristics necessary for a subject of my study are: being in charge of an ethnic collection (African American, Chicano-Latino, Native American, or Asian American) housed within a university main library, being a racial-ethnic librarian, and having at least one colleague, who is also racial-ethnic, and in charge of an ethnic collection. My study is based on a questionnaire which I would send you via email.

If you do not meet these characteristics, perhaps you know someone who does. I greatly appreciate any help you can give me in identifying participants or in being a subject yourself. Please contact me at:

Kathryn Blackmer Reyes
blackmer@uclink3.berkeley.edu
Chicano Studies Library
510 Barrows Hall #2570
University of California

APPENDIX B

Letter of Information

Dear Librarian:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study. In my first call I received input which led me to recast my study and caused the delay in sending you the questionnaire.

I have made an effort to arrange the questionnaire so that in the event that you download it the format would not be lost. I suggest that you print the questionnaire from the email you so that you have a hard copy to refer to.

I hope I have made your involvement as uncomplicated as possible. I recognize that your time is valuable and I thank you for your time. I have made your involvement as uncomplicated as possible.

Please return your questionnaire by November 2, 1995. A consent form will be mailed to you for your signature. You will also receive a copy by email to review. Your answered questionnaire will be kept confidential.

My thanks again and should you have any questions or need clarifications please write.

Kathryn Blackmer Reyes
blackmer@uclink3.berkeley.edu

APPENDIX C

Letter of Consent

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION

KATHRYN J. BLACKMER REYES
Chicano Studies Library
506 Barrows Hall #2570
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720-2560

My name is Kathryn J. Blackmer Reyes. I am a graduate student in the master's program in the School of Library and Information at the California State University at San Jose. As part of the final work for my master's I am completing a thesis.

I would like you to take part in my research project tentatively entitled: "Inter-racial personnel management in selected academic ethnic collections."

All the information that I obtain from you during the research will be kept confidential. I will not use your name or identifying information in any reports from the research without your written consent.

After this research is completed, I will save the notes for possible use in future research. The confidentiality guarantees given here will apply to future use of materials.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to refuse to take part, and you may refuse to answer any questions. I thank you in advance for your time and cooperation.

I have read this consent form and agree to take part in the study.

Signature

Date

THIS FORM WILL NOT CONSTITUTE PART OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

APPENDIX D
Questionnaire

This study focuses on racial/ethnic librarian management practices. I am interested in two dimensions. First, the management practices among same group staff. Second, management practices with staff of different racial/ethnic group membership, where these are defined as minority, i.e. African American, Chicano/Latino, Native American, and Asian American.

I. General Information

1. Respondent's name(optional):
2. Degree(s) held/from which schools:
3. Name of University:
4. Name of ethnic collection or name of library:
5. Length of employment at current university:
6. Your supervisor's(name optional/give supervisor's title & location):
7. Length of time with current supervisor:
8. Current size of collection (area of responsibility):

II. History of Your Collection

9. When was this collection/library established? (Briefly describe how the collection/library was established. Please identify any key individual(s) involved; student, staff, or professor initiated, etc. - if promotional literature exists that provides this information please include that documentation.)
10. When was your position created?
11. Was your position created to develop the ethnic collection?
12. Are there other staff members working in your collection? Yes No

31. When you do consult with them do you feel your point or issue is understood? Yes No Why? elaborate
32. If action is necessary do they take appropriate action within a standard length of time? Yes No elaborate
33. Are there any issues that you have needed to consult with racial/ethnic librarians about that make you feel uncomfortable?
Why? What are the issues?

V.III The following questions pertain to your practices or beliefs as a librarian

34. Do you feel comfortable in supporting cultural events which are not of your own racial/ethnic focus?
Yes No Why?
35. Do you feel comfortable in supporting non-ethnic cultural events?
Yes No Why?
36. Do you feel comfortable asking a different racial/ethnic colleague to support a political or cultural event? Yes No Why?
37. Do you feel comfortable asking a non-ethnic colleague to support a political or cultural event? Yes No Why?

V.IV The following questions pertain to committee practices

38. When a committee of racial/ethnic colleagues are the minority and the committee is working on non-ethnic issues do you and the other racial/ethnic colleagues tend to work together?
Why or why not?
38. When a committee of racial/ethnic colleagues are the minority and the committee is working on ethnic issues do you and the other racial/ethnic colleagues tend to work together? Why or why not?
39. When a committee of racial/ethnic colleagues is defining common goals: difficult, moderately difficult, moderately simple, simple?
Why? elaborate
40. Have you ever experienced inter-ethnic conflicts?

Yes No How? explain

41. When a committee of racial/ethnic colleagues discusses general issues or actions is the committee process useful? Yes No Why?
42. When a committee of racial/ethnic colleagues discuss issues that affect your area of responsibility do you feel the committee acts with your interests at heart? Yes No Why?
(provide specific examples such as budget, personnel, space, etc.)
43. When a committee of non-ethnic and racial/ethnic colleagues discuss issues that can affect your area of responsibility do you feel the committee acts with your interests at heart? Yes No Why?
(provide specific examples such as budget, personnel, space, etc.)
44. When a committee of non-ethnic and racial/ethnic colleagues discuss issues that affect your racial/ethnic colleagues, what role do you play? Specify?
45. When a committee of non-ethnic and racial/ethnic colleagues discuss issues that affect any of the ethnic collections, do you and your racial/ethnic colleagues support each other? Yes No elaborate

V.V The following questions pertain to relations with colleagues

46. Have you ever worked under a person of the same ethnicity as yourself?
Yes No elaborate
47. Have you ever been a supervisor to a person of the same ethnicity as yourself?
Yes No elaborate
48. Have you ever worked under a person of a different ethnicity (non white)?
What ethnicity (ies) was/were the individual(s)?
Yes No elaborate
49. Have you ever been a supervisor to a person of a different ethnicity (not white)?

61. Are there other ethnic collections on campus? Please name.

Thank you for your comments.
Should you wish to make additional comments please do so.