SESSION I  Equipment - Use and abuse

Robert Wilson, A-V and Y-A Specialist, Cuyahoga County Public Library, Mayfield Regional Branch

Robert Wilson opened his talk with remarks concerning the objectives of the A-V program and decisions one must make about whether or not, and to what extent, media fits into the library's philosophy and physical facilities. He followed these remarks by outlining points for consideration when purchasing or working with A-V equipment.

Record players:
1. Purchase the simplest and strongest design possible, especially if the patron is going to use the equipment himself.
2. Turntables should have fixed spindles.
3. The needle cartridge should be fixed in the tone arm.
4. Consider purchasing record players with only one playing speed (33½). (If this is done, there should be at least one player on hand that can handle 45's and 78's.)
5. Decide whether or not to have fixed or portable machines.
6. Buy a machine that can be used with speakers and not just with a headset.
7. Have machines at table level.
8. Have record players firmly fixed to avoid jostled tone arms.

Cassette players:
1. Again, purchase the simplest possible design.
2. Consider buying a machine which requires a complete stop before being shifted into the fast-forward or rewind positions.
3. Keep the playing heads clean.
4. Have one machine that can be used with speakers.

Electronic Video Tape:
Mr. Wilson warned that problems of standardization within the electronic video tape industry have yet to be resolved so that the prospective buyer of electronic video tape hardware and programs must be careful about buying equipment that may shortly become obsolete. Another warning: "...that if libraries and schools don't keep ahead of electronic video tape we're going to fall so far behind as to be in danger as to our actual existence...Unless we stay ahead of this game we've had it!"

After a description of several of the exciting programs and projects Bob has developed at Mayfield Regional such as in-library concerts both rock and classical, a coffee house, a lecture series, and his roving band of library ambassadors, he ended his excellent talk with a reminder that in this electronic age we had better pay our electric bills.
Business meeting

Minutes of meeting, May, 1971, read by Constance Walsh, Ohio University, Athens

Future of MLO

Possible affiliation with OLA:

Miss Sarah Cody, president of the Ohio Library Association, spoke briefly about the history and purposes of the state organization, outlining current reorganization plans which would make another classification of membership available in OLA, that of affiliate membership for a group such as MLO. If this proposal is adopted, MLO would be able to join in 1973 upon payment of dues, the amount of which is still to be determined, and would have one vote in the group. MLO would be welcome to share in conference facilities, use the services of the office and executive director of OLA, schedule meetings concurrently, and hopefully, provide input on matters of mutual interest. Miss Cody mentioned the area of statistics unique to music collections as one specific need (disc vs. record album; microforms).

(The response of those attending the May 3rd meeting, as indicated on the questionnaires distributed, was heavily in favor of affiliation with OLA.)

Miss Olga Buth, Ohio State University, Columbus, reviewed what MLO has already accomplished: 1) Questionnaire concerning problems librarians would like assistance on, 2) Workshops such as the one given at this meeting. The guidelines for statistics would be especially helpful statewide and local for libraries to prove budget needs.

Chairman for the next meeting, 1973: Robert Filgate, Oberlin Conservatory of Music.

SESSION II Selection of rock and popular recordings

Mrs. Marney Nordstrom, Toledo-Lucas County Public Library

(The complete text of Mrs. Nordstrom's talk is appended to this report.)

Classification and cataloging of records

Mrs. Barbara Schur, Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library

When cataloging recordings, give as much information as possible. Make use of Anglo-American Cataloging Rules and Library of Congress proof slips for information. Standard forms of names and titles help in filing and keeping like pieces together. Added entries and extensive tracings help patrons find recordings they desire. In essence, provide as much information as possible in the card catalog.

Classification of recordings could be done using Dewey Decimal or Library of Congress systems. Non-classification systems would include the use of accession numbers. This approach would require more extensive information in the card catalog. Other systems mentioned by Mrs. Schur were Brodart's ANSCR and New York Public's alphabetical system. Whichever system is used, keep it simple to help circulation.
Circulation of recordings
Mrs. Katharine R. Owen, Cuyahoga County Public Library, Mayfield Regional Branch

The goals of record circulation should be the same as for books. Put the terms of circulation and the borrower's responsibilities in writing on the recordings which should account for the following:

1. Which records are to circulate and which are to be reference. (Keep currently needed recordings on Reserve.)
2. Who may borrow recordings. (Generally, one who may borrow books ought to be able to borrow recordings. Dividing recordings into juvenile and adult sections may help in policy-making.)
3. Number of recordings which may circulate to one person at a time. (This decision is influenced, of course, by the size of the collection.)
4. Period of loan. (One week seems to be sufficient. A longer loan period should be established for special materials such as language instruction records.)

Other considerations:

1. Fines. (Similar to fines for books.)
2. Circulation statistics. (Decide whether to count albums or discs.)

Phonorecords and cassette tapes
Mr. Stephen G. Matyi, Cleveland Public Library

Concerning care and circulation of recordings, Mr. Matyi outlined the procedures used at the Cleveland Public Library. Recordings are protected by plastic covers or reinforced with tape on the edges. Information concerning the care of records and the borrower's responsibilities are in print on the records. Before checking out any recording, it is checked to determine its condition, and this information is kept by the librarian. When the recording is returned, it is cleaned and checked again. The borrower is fined for any additional scratches, breakage or losses.

Cassettes are checked out through the librarian, and are monitored when returned to assure that they haven't been erased. Plastic cases are used to provide protection, and any information concerning the tape is xeroxed and inserted. The original information sheets are kept by the librarian in case the xeroxed copies are lost or destroyed. Comparable fines are also charged here for whatever damage may be done. Mr. Matyi, along with samples of the type of plastic record cover and cassette case used by CPL, provided a cassette player for those attending the meeting to inspect.

MAY 3RD QUESTIONNAIRE

Suggestions received from the May 3rd questionnaire concerning topics for further workshop meetings revealed the following 5 areas to be of greatest interest:

1. The cataloging and classification of music materials.
2. More specific information on A-V hardware and software.
3. The selection and acquisition of music materials.
4. Score collection development in the public library.
5. Programming and use of library facilities for music events.
OHIO LIBRARY ASSOCIATION MEETING, MAY 13TH

Re: Affiliate Membership

On May 13th, Clara Steuermann and Bob Filgate, representing MLO, attended a Junior Members' Round Table sponsored open OLA meeting in Columbus the purpose of which was to provide a forum for the discussion of "A Proposed Plan for Reorganization of the Ohio Library Association." Of particular interest to MLO is section IV of the proposed plan which states:

In addition to the present six classes of membership, there shall be established a seventh class, specifically, Affiliate Members.

Any library association or similar association in the state of Ohio may, upon payment of appropriate annual dues, be entitled to an affiliate membership. The purpose of this class of membership is to provide a vehicle which shall allow closer cooperation among certain associations of the state, e.g., Ohio Association of School Librarians, Society of Ohio Archivists, etc.

The governing board of any affiliate member organization may from time to time designate in writing a representative to cast its vote at any Association meeting, but individual members of affiliates must be active members in the Association in order to vote at Association meetings. Affiliate members shall be able to seek advice of the Executive Director and to share conference facilities, but shall not enjoy the individual privileges of other classes of voting members.

(Other specific benefits of affiliation with OLA are outlined earlier in this newsletter: see "Future of MLO" above.)

The forum was very successful with many varied opinions concerning the reorganization plan being discussed. Changes were suggested here and there throughout the document but "Section IV" was not challenged or changed.

The reorganization study will be presented to the full OLA membership at the membership meeting, Thursday, October 19 (2:00 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.) at the annual OLA conference, October 18-21, to be held at the Netherland Hilton Hotel, Cincinnati.

SEE YOU IN MAY, 1973
THE DEVELOPMENT OF A YOUNG ADULT "ROCK" COLLECTION

Perhaps I should have followed through on my first impulse to utilize our modest audio equipment to bring you a tape of some of the recordings in our Young Adult collection; that's the "fun" way to describe the collection, and it doesn't seem natural these days to just talk without some help from the hardware.

However, even if I had tried to put together a "state of the art" tape, I couldn't have cornered the records I needed. They are not only out all the time, they rarely get even a short rest on the shelves because of extensive reserves on them.

The problem of reserves really illustrates the few words of wisdom I have today: don't advertise what you can't produce - in duplicate, triplicate, quadruplicate, etc.

We've learned the hard way that the difference between turning on and turning off that potential young borrower, who only too often falls into that gap between children's programming and traditional adult services, is having what he wants when he wants it. This may seem an obvious tenet, but it's at least as necessary with pop-rock records as with popular books to carry extensive duplication of one title. With most other types of recordings and most other borrowers, a different version of the desired work or a different album by the desired performer will be acceptable. Many browsers are perfectly willing to take what they find today and wait for what they don't find. More young adults might be willing to take what they find if they could just find something. The problem is that with approximately 450 records in our YA Collection, there are usually not more than ten on the shelf. These borrowers react more strongly than anyone else to eye appeal and often lack the patience to even ask for what should be there. If their first encounter with the rock collection that we have advertised and their friends have promoted is to see an old Lesley Gore and not much else, it can be a bad experience. There is an interest in "moldy oldies", or whatever you wish to call them, since we are currently in a re-discovery cycle, but you must be able to prove that the collection is also up to date.

We handle this problem by using a printed list of the rock collection - updated monthly, and encouraging borrowers to make reserves from that list. Encouraging is an important word here - the staff must be willing to approach the kids, no matter how hairy, to make certain that they have seen a recent copy of the list and understand the reserve system. We can't sell anyone what they don't want, but we can show them that what they do want is available, if not visible.

The staff members' willingness to approach the kids doesn't help if they don't have some awareness of the pop-rock-jazz scene. If we respond with "Who?" whenever a certain star is requested, the kids don't have much faith in us. I have to make special efforts to see that all the staff see the new records as they come in; I will even hand them specific ones to take home. We have had a couple of brief staff workshops, even utilizing quizzes, to discuss problems and spread the news about up-and-coming "hot items". Just how foreign the youth culture can be to a staff member was illustrated, unfortunately, when I overheard some young blacks ask a librarian for soul music and she hunted up Johnny Mathis and Nat King Cole - and then couldn't understand why they weren't thrilled. I don't expect everyone to like James Brown, or Alice Cooper or Kris Kristofferson,
but a general knowledge of who has what kind of appeal, and respect for that appeal, is vital.

All staff members should be aware of the content of some records - such as Abbie Hoffman's Wake up America, or the Mothers of Invention - so they will be prepared for possible parental objections.

Of course, the person selecting these materials needs more than that general knowledge and needs a lot of help. Reviewing sources are well represented in the lists you have all received today - the only comments I would add are that Rolling Stone can play favorites and carry on personal wars - their reviews are best used in conjunction with something else such as Stereo Review.

The only source that really lets you in on a hit before it happens is Billboard. Their album previews are commercially and radio-oriented, but help you get the new Grateful Dead that you know will be in demand no matter what the critical consensus may be. Of course, a periodic check of Billboard's Top 100 listings is a quick appraisal of your collection, as are their annual lists of Best Artists, Best Albums, etc. of the year.

You may not be familiar with Listening Post - published by Bro-Dart, which brings together many reviewing sources, with unbiased annotations and ratings and special articles - such as background on electronic music, and a "Rounding out the Collection" feature.

A couple of good basic discographies were published late in 1971 - "The Best of the 1970's" - from New York Times - reprints available free. From American Libraries comes "Songs and Sounds of the Sixties" which gives a good "state-of-the-art" survey.

Last summer, when we first contemplated the separate young adult collection, we felt that the best approach to knowing what the kids wanted was to ask the kids. So we put together a basic list using Art-Music division's books for older "classic" titles, and asked the library's pages to look it over and give suggestions. Their response was enthusiastic and helpful - their requests were sometimes surprising - such as asking for the Lettermen.

Once the word spread that someone at the library was receptive, other volunteers with a special interest, say in blues or jazz, came to talk and make suggestions. We always make suggestion for purchase forms handy and still find weak spots that way.

Of course, it helps to listen to the radio, especially if you can get a good FM pop station - and we always keep an eye on the local radio stations Top 50 lists, and one local "underground" FM station traded us free announcements for displays of their posters.

One of my best sources for knowing what is locally appealing is a record store - just stand around and watch what the kids are buying. Not only do I get tipped off by the management, but they also give me great publicity. Many kids end up hearing or taping our copy before they buy their own.

Not that a collection should concentrate only on the big hits - obviously that won't result in a very well-rounded collection. We've had excellent results with the records that received good reviews but not many sales - kids are willing to try something different - but it helps if a staff member can say "Hey, have you heard this?" and give some clues as to style, etc. A look at our list will probably show you some names you don't recognize, such as Rasmussen; some of these records were gifts, but they all circulate. Incidentally, one of the most popular items is the "History of Rhythm and Blues", in 6 volumes, which contains original recordings from 1947 to 1964.
One point to keep in mind when selecting for a rock collection - the age group which will be attracted is quite wide and the college students have greatly different, usually less hard-rock, taste than seventh graders. Bobby Sherman, Jackson Five, Partridge Family, and the Osmonds may be more useful in a children's collection.

Our rock collection is identified by the addition of a smile sticker and is kept in separate browser bins mostly in order to be able to create eye appeal with posters. The separation also keeps the kids from having to plow through many, many racks of so-called popular records, including Doris Day and Lawrence Welk, which only give the impression that we just have "old stuff". Since the YA records are classified as popular (MA in the ANSCR system), film scores (L), folk (P), etc., records can be easily moved in and out of the YA collection without changing anything but the sticker and the penciled note on the shelf-list. Neither do we have to decide if something is "rock"; it's usually just "popular". Anything that has primary appeal to kids, including Bob Dylan, the score from Easy Rider, some jazz, goes in the YA collection.

I would never advise getting such a rock collection very far away from the regular collection, since there is considerable crossover of borrowers. The middle-aged businessmen usually tell me that they are taking Blood, Sweat and Tears home for their son, but don't believe it. Kids certainly broaden their horizons too; Emerson, Lake, and Palmer do an electric rock version of Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition which has greatly increased the demand for the original.

Also, these records have attracted many new library users, both young and old; many kids have to get a library card because of the records in their hand.

As far as the physical problems of handling a large rock-pop collection, they exist but the response is well worth the effort. In a year, I haven't actually lost or replaced more than a dozen records. Sometimes a thief has been kind enough to drop the plastic jacket off in the book return box-complete with card so I know what has been taken. With all the usage, the records do wear out a little faster than some other types, but not all of them will have to be replaced. Something new and different is often as desirable.

In closing, I'd like to quote from a recent editorial in Listening Post:

Pop is a complex and volatile field, full of genius and full of sham. There is the shoddy, the meticulous, the beautiful and the crass. The commercial appetite of Top 40 radio which demands fresh fodder for the mike each week has created the completely erroneous impression that all pop music is ephemeral...There are great artists who should be collected in depth, and there are lesser known artists who should be present in part, there are classics which are indispensable, and minor classics which add substance; there are eras and forms and styles...that means the collector has an obligation to learn the field and develop guidelines of taste and discrimination...Popular demand cannot be ignored either and it may occasionally run counter to standards of quality...No matter what your personal feelings may be about pop music, bear in mind that pop music is a reflection of the mores and attitudes of the times...Liking is never mandatory in library selection, but respect is essential.

Listening Post, February 1972:2

Marney Nordstrom
Head of Records Service
Toledo-Lucas Co. Public Library
Toledo, Ohio