September 1991

Library School Communication

Jerry Seat

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>

Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Seat, Jerry (1991) "Library School Communication," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 3: Iss. 4, Article 6.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.1197>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

You Gotta Go To School For That?

as related by Jerry Seay (Planet Earth)

Our library school student speaks again! We hope this becomes a regular occurrence. Ed

Whenever I see my brother, he eventually asks, "So, what have you learned in library school lately?" Immediately my mind races through all of the latest nifty academic theories of librarydom that I have heard, read, diagrammed, and otherwise soaked up. Of course, I know that he is not the least bit interested in academic theories of librarydom (who, outside of academic librarydom, is?). So, I know better than to spill the beans all at once and say casually, "Well, dear brother, I've just learned how to positively react to my outer patron environment so that I can anticipate patron needs and wants, and thereby affect an appropriate positive feedback loop that justifies my existence and benefits the community as a whole!"

So, instead, I relate how I am learning about neat stuff like CD-ROMs, online databases, classification schemes, management techniques, local area networks, ethics, acquisitions, MARC records, reference sources, censorship, sensible shoes, and why you don't have to have a tight bun (on your head) to be a librarian.

"That's nice," he would say, "but have you learned to check out books yet?"

I too used to think that the library was just a place where free books hung out and the librarian was a nice lady (with her hair in a bun) that sat behind a desk and checked out books. It has been my

experience, however, that most library school students today have free flowing hair, are quite attractive, and do not have time to sit down.

I guess some folks have trouble understanding what it is that li-

brarians do because of the language barrier. In the last *Against the Grain* I mentioned the "secret knowledge" that librarians have and the special code in which librarians communicate. Well, now they tell me those things I have been shelving all this time are not books. They are monographs. Is this awesome or what? (The next thing you know they will be telling me a new name to call magazines.) I think that maybe this is one little piece of "secret knowledge" that is too good to keep under wraps. Why don't we just go wild and tell everybody what books really are! Think of the implications. Folks who read a lot would no longer be

called "book worms." They would become monograph worms. We would have monograph mobiles that would bring monographs to rural areas. Every home would have monograph shelves with monograph ends. Students would carry monograph bags to school. And Hawaii Five-O reruns would be reedited to have Jack Lord say, "Monograph 'em, Dano."

This new knowledge is not just benefitting me. I am beginning to think that my revealed experiences at library school are actually starting to positively effect parts of my family. Just the other day my brother-in-law, Alan, surprised me.

Alan, a Navy man, was recently stationed at a reserve center in Columbia, SC. He called me long distance from there. "Jerry," he said, "guess what?"

"This is a collect call."

"No," he said, "even better than that. You would be proud of me. They made me reserve center librarian."

He actually sounded proud to be the librarian. It made me feel good to think that a person I knew in the real world thought it was great to be a librarian.

"That's great," I told him. Then I thought a devilish thought. "Hey, Alan," says I, "have you learned to check out books yet?"

"Naw," said Alan without pausing, "you gotta go to school for that."