At the very center...

THE LIBRARIAN

... of every area of national emphasis
Knowledge . . . understanding . . . education . . . These are the areas of emphasis in the United States today. The need to know is of paramount importance—and learning has come into its own.

Where learning is the means to acquiring knowledge, as in schools, colleges, centers of scientific inquiry—

Where learning is a working tool, as in government, business, or communications—

Where learning is a part of life itself—in communities throughout the land—

The librarian's role is to bring recorded knowledge and people together.

The librarian has intellectual curiosity, imagination, an understanding of people and their wants and needs, and a real desire to serve people in every area of activity.

To be a librarian requires generally a year of library education after completion of four years of college. Salaries compare favorably with those of other professions—with the beginning salary averaging from $4,000–$4,400. Vacations with pay, paid sick leave, pensions and/or social security are among the common benefits.

Librarianship is an uncrowded profession. There is, in fact, a severe shortage of librarians to fill the currently existing positions. With the establishment of new libraries and the expansion and improvement of library services, there will be a continuous demand for young men and women of ability to fill positions in America's libraries.

The librarian's job, in whatever kind of library he works, is three-fold:

He selects the books, periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, documents, films, recordings, photographs, maps, technical reports, and other types of recorded knowledge which make up the library's collection. This involves choosing, from all the materials available, and in terms of his budget, those which will be most useful to the public his library serves.

From his knowledge of the content of these materials, he organizes and describes the library's collection by means of a system of cataloging and classification. This enables readers to find what the library has on a given subject, the books by a given author, or a particular book by its title.

And both of these activities exist to make possible the third—to help each reader, whatever his interest, purpose, education, or reading ability, to find material suited to his need.
There are many kinds of libraries, serving:

citizens of a community, county, region, or state

students and teachers of an elementary or high school, college, university, professional or technical school

officials and employees of a business, industry, government agency, or other organization

patients, doctors, and nurses of institutions and hospitals

members of the armed forces at home and abroad.

There are libraries, and departments within libraries, emphasizing chemistry, physics, biology, or other natural sciences—art, music, literature, or social sciences—engineering, architecture, agriculture, or forestry—banking, business administration, insurance, or advertising—medicine, law, education, or dentistry. There are libraries, or departments within libraries, devoted to the needs of children, teen-agers, adults, and senior citizens, or serving persons with special needs—the sick, the blind, the technical expert, the scholar, the scientist, the teacher, the housewife. Whatever the emphasis of the library, its collection and services are planned to meet the needs and interests of its users.

In addition to these basic responsibilities, which are the librarian’s in any type of library, there are others that vary, depending on the kind of library in which he works. The librarian of a business organization may do the research, translating, and abstracting for his company’s research staff. The public librarian often works with groups as well as individuals. He plans and participates in discussion groups and conducts film showings and music recording programs. The librarian interprets the library to his public through newspapers, campus publications, or house organs, radio and television, by talks to community groups, exhibits, and other public relations techniques.

Many librarians specialize and work in one field of librarianship or with a particular group of individuals and books. In a large public library or a school library, there are librarians who work only with children or with young adults. There are librarians whose specialty may be cataloging or the purchasing of books. Some librarians do reference work in a broad, general area; others may do highly specialized work in only one field, such as economics, technology, medicine, or art. Others provide reading guidance to individuals or groups, or may work in the field of adult education. Some are concerned with films and recordings, as well as books, documents, and periodicals. Librarians may work on bookmobiles, for agencies of the federal government at home or abroad, in hospitals, or colleges. They may practice their profession in museums, factories, banks, radio-TV stations, film studios, or embassies.

Often librarians are also administrators—responsible for the library’s buildings, quarters, and equipment, for its financial affairs, governmental relations, public relations, and personnel administration. In very large libraries, these responsibilities may become specializations also.

There are many persons employed in libraries who are not librarians at all—assistants who charge books out to readers and keep records of books loaned, and others who locate books on the shelves and return them to their proper places after they have circulated. There are typists, stenographers, and bookkeepers, who assist with the business processes of the library. In large libraries there may be artists, printers, editors, bookbinders, and photographers.
To be a<br>LIBRARIAN

Get the Facts

• Discuss it with your parents and teachers

• Consult your guidance counselor

• Talk it over with your librarian

• Find out about the library schools

Write to
The American Library Association
50 East Huron Street
Chicago 11, Illinois