Resistance to Online Catalogs: A Comparative Study at Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore Colleges

Carol Walton, Susan Williamson, and Howard D. White

Surveys of student and faculty attitudes toward proposed online public access catalog use were conducted in 1989 with largely identical questionnaires at two colleges. Support for the traditional card catalog was strong among both students and faculty at both colleges, only Swarthmore faculty gave majority support to the online catalog. A minority of perhaps one in ten may never use the new technology. Resistance to change was proportionately higher in the humanities and lowest in the sciences, with the social sciences in between. Respondents were unsure about waiting for access to the card catalog and seemed equally as satisfied with as little as five more minutes of delay for the online catalog. While unaccustomed to keeping online searches private, they did not like the idea of searching in others' lapses. Perceptions of the online catalog were sometimes positive, many welcomed the idea of terminals in faculty offices and student dormitories. Differences between the two colleges, while not great, may result from Swarthmore's greater experience with computerized cataloging.

The librarians of three well-known liberal arts colleges in the Philadelphia suburbs, Bryn Mawr, Haverford, and Swarthmore, are jointly investigating the possibility of converting from traditional card catalogs to one online public access catalog (OPAC). Academic librarians now recognize the potential for improved access to collections provided by online catalog—for example, the ability to search simultaneously on multiple fields, such as subject, date, and language of publication. However, despite the obvious benefits, the prospect of an online catalog can be daunting, in that questions persist about system reliability, number of terminals needed for adequate levels of service, and user reactions.

Given that an online catalog is viewed by library planners as a solution to a variety of problems, what remains is to reduce some of the unknowns about OPACs. While system reliability and demand for terminals are important considerations, the survey reported here is concerned with user attitudes. No system, however sophisticated, will be adequate if its intended users reject it out of hand or if they cannot use it to get desired information. Although many of the studies of online catalog users report a high degree of satisfaction, only a few studies have surveyed the nonuser.

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group to identify sources of resistance to using an OPAC. Reasons for
nonuse are usually a lack of instruction or a lack of time to learn the new
system.11 In a study at California State University at Chico, some 30
percent of the respondents complained the computer catalog harder to use
than the card catalog.12 The identical statistic was found for nonusers in
the Council of Library Resources’ (CLR) study.13 At Ohio State Univer-
sity, Peone and Gouke identified a group of patrons who tried the online
catalog and then returned to the card catalog because they felt a lack of
confidence in their searching ability on the online system.14
None of these studies attempted, as this one does, to survey the market
prior to installation of an online catalog, so as to identify both potential “resist-
ance” and potential “receptiveness” to the new technology. Yet the results of
interviews with library staff reported in the CLR study suggest that no
library can afford to make such a major transition without first seeking to
understand its clientele, particularly their misgivings. In one study, staff
claimed that “users have more apprehensions about public online cata-
logs and request more instruction than the survey data may suggest.”
These apprehensions are a main concern in this paper. Legitimate or
not, they must be taken into account in the planning and design phases if a
new OPAC system is to be successful. However, we also report positive
views of change—views favorable to OPACs—from patrons who as yet
know little about the new technology. Both negative and positive opin-
ions, we think, are worth perusing by all library planners on whom the
burden of implementing OPAC technology rests.

HYPOTHESES

With the above considerations in mind, a survey was designed by
Wallen and Williamson to gather information on user reactions to pro-
posed OPACs at Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore Colleges. Swarthmore
College has an enrollment of 1,350 students and its library contains
some 600,000 volumes. Bryn Mawr College has an undergraduate en-
rollment of approximately 1,000 and a graduate enrollment of some 800
students. The library holds approximately 750,000 volumes. Library
administration at Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore recommended this
study, which was conducted and coordinated as independent study
projects at the College of Information Studies at Drexel.

Questionnaires bearing largely identical questions were administered at
Bryn Mawr and at Swarthmore in late spring of 1984, under the sus-
pense of the Tri-College Library Automation Committee at Bryn Mawr,
Swarthmore, and Haverford (see appendix A). The questions were in-
tended to bear on the following hypotheses:

1. Users are basically satisfied with the existing card catalog system.
2. Most people would be receptive to using a computerized catalog,
   particularly if it provided more information. Greater resistance is
   expected from the faculty.
3. Users are not accustomed to waiting to access the library’s collec-
tion through the card catalog and would not react well to having to
   wait to use a computerized catalog.
4. Important concerns for the design of an online catalog are that search-
   ing be (a) private and (b) unpressured.
5. Users would welcome remote access to the library’s collections from additional locations on campus and would be willing to wait longer for such access just for the added convenience.

**Methodology**

An attempt was made to obtain representative samples of the campus communities, including faculty, students, and staff. Staff data were later omitted because of the small number of respondents. At Bryn Mawr, samples were taken at the main library (Carnesay) and at the five branch libraries. In addition, approximately 100 questionnaires were distributed to faculty, graduate, and undergraduate mailboxes. A total of 236 were completed—189 by students and 47 by faculty. These returns represent 11 percent of the student body and 23 percent of the faculty.

The method of data collection at Swarthmore differed somewhat. Student responses were gathered by handing out questionnaires in classes, with the prearranged permission of individual faculty members. Large classes across a range of disciplines were chosen to reach a broad cross section of the student body. Faculty members received and sent back their questionnaires by college mail. Some 273 student questionnaires and 97 faculty questionnaires were completed—a total of 370. These figures represent 21 percent of the student body and 41 percent of the faculty.

The data gathering instrument was a self-administered questionnaire. In February 1984 a trial questionnaire was administered to 25 people at Bryn Mawr. Some flaws in the instrument became apparent, and it was subsequently revised. The questions were designed to avoid technical jargon and personal bias. All but one of the questions were forced choice and closed ended. The final draft was pretested on several students and after a few minor adjustments was administered during April and May 1984 at both colleges.*

Limiting respondents to study one answer sometimes caused discomfort. Fortunately, the questions people found hard to answer with only one choice were evenly distributed throughout the questionnaire, and no single question had to be discarded because of too few responses.

After being typed out, the data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences in version SPSS*. Missing values were not figered into the percentages for each question, so that the total N in some of our tables varies slightly.

**Results**

**Background Information**

Respondents were asked to classify themselves in terms of their status at Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore. The breakdown of responses appears in table 1. Table 2 shows the breakdown of respondents by their general

*For those who have discovered that people are not sufficiently motivated to fill out libraries questionnaires, we offer this suggestion: ask an inventor. The incentive for participating in this study at Swarthmore was a drawing for prizes—two $10 gift certificates, one from a local cheese shop and the other from a local ice cream parlor. Both faculty members and students seemed pleased by this opportunity and gladly filled out both the questionnaire and a slip for the drawing.
fields of study. There is an overall similarity in the samples from both colleges, both in terms of status and fields of study. More faculty members are represented in the Swarthmore sample, but this is the only major difference between the two.

Data Analysis

Hypothesis 1. Users are basically satisfied with the existing card catalog system.

Respondents were asked to generalize about their rate of success in locating information with the card catalog. Table 3 shows the results, with 84 percent at Bryn Mawr and 88 percent at Swarthmore indicating successful catalog use more than half the time. Queried further about catalog effectiveness, 80 percent at Bryn Mawr and 63 percent at Swarthmore said that when they were unable to locate materials, the fault did not lie with the catalog itself. Rather, they believed, as table 4 shows, that the catalog merely reflected lack of materials in the collection. A sizable proportion at both schools attributed their lack of success to their own uncertainty about alternative ways to search. (Patrons at Swarthmore appear to be either less confident or more honest in this regard.)

These results generally support the hypothesis of satisfaction with the card catalog as a means of locating information. It is an established technology that users understand reasonably well. The stronger pressure for change to OPACs is coming not from users, but from library management.

Hypothesis 2. Most people would be receptive to using a computerized catalog, particularly if it provided more information. Greatest resistance is expected from the faculty.

The assumption here is that people do not have an aversion to computers per se. However, when asked to choose between a card catalog and a computerized catalog, both containing identical information, 36 percent from Bryn Mawr and 49 percent from Swarthmore expressed a preference for the card catalog (see table 5).

When the results in table 5 are broken down by respondent status (table 6), we see the expected "traditionalism" of faculty. Fully two-thirds of Swarthmore faculty chose the card catalog over its online counterpart. The comparable figure for Swarthmore faculty is 34 percent—a minority, but a large one. Swarthmore faculty may be relatively more
open to computerization than Bryn Mawr’s because of more experience using a campuswide mainframe computer system.

Note, however, that the students at both schools have large “traditional” elements; it is not the case that youth is solidly in favor of technological change. Half of the students at Swarthmore and 53 percent of those at Bryn Mawr choose the traditional card catalog over the OPAC. In fact, the only majority the computer catalog gets is from the Swarthmore faculty, and the result there is not overwhelming.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUCCESS WITH CARD CATALOG</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bryn Mawr</th>
<th>Swarthmore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Success Rate</td>
<td>N = 235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seldom find information</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than half the time</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than half the time</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost always find information</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

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<tr>
<th>TABLE 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PERCEIVED REASON FOR LACK OF CARD CATALOG SUCCESS</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bryn Mawr</th>
<th>Swarthmore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Failure</td>
<td>N = 220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library lacks materials</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear how to search</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusion filing arrangement</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHOICE OF CATALOG</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bryn Mawr</th>
<th>Swarthmore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>System Preferred</td>
<td>N = 233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Card catalog</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer catalog</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student feelings can be gauged from such remarks as the following. At Bryn Mawr an undergraduate wrote, “The serendipity of a card catalog is lost with computerization. I would be at a tremendous loss if the card catalog were removed.” Another student preferred the card catalog “because I’d probably take forever unless I knew exactly what I was doing.” Even those who opted for the computerized catalog expressed concern, such as one who warned, “We’d have to wait for terminals much longer than for drawers. It’s not worth it.” Or another who said, “I don’t want just a computer catalog—as an auxiliary it would be nice, though.” Yet another suggested an alternative: “What would be nice would be a [card] catalog on each floor.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHOICE OF CATALOG BY STATUS OF RESPONDENT</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bryn Mawr</th>
<th>Swarthmore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>System Preferred</td>
<td>N = 180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Card catalog</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer catalog</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At Swarthmore feelings about the two options also ran high. Several students wrote in "very strong preference" when checking an option. Several noted that the card catalog was always available, while computer terminals would not. A student who had done research with an online catalog said, "Overall, the flexibility of the computer is limited and frustrating at times, not to mention frustration at lack of terminals. Yuck!" Ambivalence was common: "This idea of computerization is a good one," a student wrote, "but making it the sole source of sources is the height of stupidity." One interesting question was asked only in the Bryn Mawr version of the questionnaire. Respondents were asked to choose between a traditional card catalog and an online catalog that would provide information in greater depth. Some objected to this question as "too leading." Even so, 17 percent of the respondents overall still chose the card catalog. Note that this figure is similar to the 16 percent of nonusers in two precedent studies and may represent the irredicible core of computerphobes. In the breakdown by status, 12 percent of the students and 30 percent of the faculty would be reluctant to give up the card catalog for the online intruder. These results do not offer strong support to the main hypothesis—that people are generally receptive to an online catalog when first proposed. They confirm, moreover, our expectations of substantial faculty resistance. Some respondents, of course, refused to answer the questions, pleading too little knowledge to make an informed choice. But we were surprised by the amount of resistance from the students, who by now have been exposed to other computer systems and appear to have accepted them.

Our hypotheses we did not conjecture whether respondents would differ by field of study in their acceptance of OPACs. However, as noted in table 2, we could place all respondents broadly in the humanities, social sciences, or natural sciences, and the cross tabulations are suggestive. As one would expect, allegiance to the traditional card catalog is highest in the humanities and next highest in the social sciences (with proportionately more "traditionalists" at both Bryn Mawr). In fact, table 7 shows clear majorities for the computer catalog only in the natural sciences at both schools. It will be recalled that, at Bryn Mawr, 17 percent of all respondents preferred the card catalog to an OPAC even when the latter was presented as richer in information. Within fields,
those with this preference were sciences, 6 percent; social sciences, 18 percent; and humanities, 23 percent.

Hypothesis 3. Users (a) are not accustomed to waiting to access the collection through the card catalog, and (b) would not treat well to having to wait to use a computerized catalog.

The first part of the hypothesis was tested by asking respondents about their experiences waiting to use a drawer of the card catalog. At Bryn Mawr 73 percent and at Swarthmore 77 percent stated that they had never had to wait to use the card catalog. That so many people expect "instant access" must be taken into account in orienting the community to an online system, so as to avoid false expectations of what the system can provide.

To test the second part of the hypothesis, users were asked how long they would wait to use a drawer of the card catalog, as opposed to a computer terminal. Tables 8 and 9 provide their respective answers. The percentage of users "unwilling to wait at all" or "to wait more than a minute" is considerable—about half the sample at both schools. (Student or faculty status does not matter.) Moreover, respondents at various levels of impatience are roughly the same for both the card and the online catalogs. We would infer from this that impatience is not going to be more in evidence if online catalogs are installed. Serious efforts must be made to provide enough terminals to satisfy the demand for quick access.

Related to the issue of waiting is whether patrons are willing to interrupt someone else's extended search at a terminal if they need to do a quick search. At Bryn Mawr only 27 percent said they would be willing to interrupt. The reluctance of the rest—a large majority—would lead to frustration as they wait for access.

### Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Time</th>
<th>Bryn Mawr</th>
<th>Swarthmore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wouldn't wait at all or would return later</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wait about one minute</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wait 2-3 minutes</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wait 3-10 minutes</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Want as long as necessary</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Time</th>
<th>Bryn Mawr</th>
<th>Swarthmore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wouldn't wait at all or would return later</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wait about one minute</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wait 2-3 minutes</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wait 3-10 minutes</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Want as long as necessary</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At Swarthmore, interestingly enough, 31 percent said they would be willing to interrupt a terminal user. The presence of a large Prime computer network at Swarthmore has introduced students and faculty to competition for terminals as limited resources. This in turn may have induced a greater willingness to interrupt someone's ongoing work, rather as happens now at copying machines in many places.

Our data clearly support the hypothesis that users are not accustomed to waiting to access their library's collection. While willingness to wait varies, it also seems clear that large (sometimes majority) groups of users will not use an online catalog if they have to wait for it very long.

Hypothesis 4. An important concern for users of an online catalog is that searching be (a) private and (b) unpressured.

People were asked to state whether they would feel uncomfortable if someone could see what they were searching on the computer terminal. Apparently refuting the hypothesis, 83 percent at Bryn Mawr and 81 percent at Swarthmore said they would not feel uncomfortable. (Cross tabulating by status and by field of study provided no additional insights.) Some of this unconcern may be due to inexperience with online catalogs and may change when innocence is lost. Other studies indicate that privacy is an important concern to OPAC users.

Less surprising is that 86 percent at Bryn Mawr said they would feel pressured to hurry their searches if someone were standing behind them to use the terminal. (This question was not asked at Swarthmore.) Clearly, library planners should take such concerns into account when planning the number and location of terminals. A system that prevents people from completing their searches because of excessive quizzing will generate annoyance and ill will. (In this, OPAC terminals are like automatic teller machines at banks.)

Hypothesis 5. Users would welcome remote access to the library's collection from additional locations on campus and would be willing to wait longer for the added convenience of such access.

Users were asked, "If the library's catalog were accessible through terminals all over campus, where would you prefer to look up information?" Table 11 indicates how students and faculty responded. Modularly, at both Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore, students want terminals to be located in the library. However, at least a third in-room schools welcome the idea of terminals in their dorms. "This I like a lot," or "That would be marvelous," or "A great idea." Faculty overwhelmingly opt for terminals in their offices. Many of the faculty at Swarthmore now have office terminals connected to a Prime computer: this experience has been positive, and probably explains why 81 percent are keen for remote access to the library holdings.

Table 11 shows willingness to wait, by status, for remote access through an OPAC. At both schools, the modal group among students and faculty would wait two to five minutes. Again, however, an interesting difference in impatience appears. Combining categories of those who would not wait at all or would wait only up to a minute, one sees a greater proportion of impatient students at Swarthmore than Bryn Mawr (28 percent versus 22 percent). The same holds for Swarthmore faculty, but more so (46 percent versus 33 percent). We again attribute this to the
TABLE 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Reyn Maier Students</th>
<th>N = 161</th>
<th>N = 46</th>
<th>N = 766</th>
<th>N = 96</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer center</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discontinued</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty offices</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swarthmore Library*</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Reyn Maier option only.

TABLE 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Time</th>
<th>Would Wait</th>
<th>Swarthmore Students</th>
<th>Swarthmore Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Would
\n\n\n\n\n\nlsnt wait or would return | 13%        | 15%                 | 26%                |
| Wait 1-3 minutes        | 9%         | 20%                 | 28%                |
| Wait 4-6 minutes        | 45%        | 29%                 | 32%                |
| Wait 7-10 minutes       | 48%        | 16%                 | 24%                |
| Would go back in library | 15%        | 22%                 | 11%                |

greater experience with campuswide computing at Swarthmore.

It appears that if OPACs are to be installed among persons already accustomed with widespread terminal use and with typical wait times, the percentage of those unwilling to wait long will be higher.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this survey, while not startling, underscore the problems of winning acceptance for an online catalog. Reyn Maier and Swarthmore patrons seem fairly content with the status quo and are therefore hesitant to try something new. Many are concerned that a change to an online catalog will disrupt their ability to find the information they require. Existing online catalogs have in some cases received negative publicity because of excessive downtime, queuing, or perceived difficulty. As one faculty member wrote, "A card catalog never breaks down. The . . . university library computer catalog was broken so often during my daughter's four years there that the library simply closed it down." Such concerns must be taken into account by planning committees as they make their choices.

Our respondents are not accustomed to waiting to access the collection, and few expressed willingness to wait any considerable length of time, regardless of whether the catalog is in card form or online. There must be sufficient terminals to ensure that users have access to holdings within five minutes, or the majority will be dissatisfied.

The card catalog apparently is popular because of its constant availability and the immediacy of access it provides. An unpublished
Swarthmore study reveals that people use the card catalog when they have to—say, an assignment, exam, or lecture. Much of this use is unpredic-
table as to period of day, and there is no reason to assume that online
catalog use will fit into more predictable patterns. Users are understand-
able concerned about having any types of limitations placed on their cat-
alog search behavior. As one student put it, “Specifying hours of use
would be very limiting.”

The survey also clearly pointed out many people's reluctance to learn-
ing something new. The greatest vote of confidence the OPAC received
was only 36 percent (Swarthmore faculty). Students at neither school
gave it a majority, and fully two out of three Brain Mason faculty were
skeptical. People in the humanities appear to be most likely to prefer the
traditional card catalog, at least when the OPAC is still new, an idea
Perhaps one person in six will always prefer the card catalog to the OPAC.
If libraries are going to switch, the staff must be prepared to launch a
vigorous educational campaign—one that goes beyond sticking direc-
tions on the terminals—or else be resigned to a system that will have many
of the more timid or computer-hostile users.

Instruction will be necessary, furthermore, because of the mechanics of
the new system. Prace and Gondek found that, although most patrons
came to prefer the online catalog, they were often unable to make full use
of its retrieval power, compared to a skilled searcher. Problems searches
will require additional instruction or direct help.

Library planners must also anticipate users' feelings. While our re-
spondents did not appear concerned with someone's being able to see
what they were working on, the great majority were sensitive to the im-
ple of pressures of others waiting to use the same equipment.

The library must be prepared to offer users some substantial improve-
ment over a manual catalog. Given a choice between two databases, one
manual and one computerized, close to half of our respondents chose the
former, as we have seen. Yet if the online catalog contained additional
information or if users could access it from the convenience of their of-
fices or dorms, many would welcome the change.

The experience of libraries that have switched is that users' expecta-
tions are raised considerably; they are no longer content with the same
information that was accessible with a card catalog. They routinely want
access to circulation data, to process files, and to areas of the collec-
tion poorly covered in card catalogs, such as periodicals and government
documents. Once users' expectations are raised, they may not only want
more, but with less delay in processing time. While an online cata-
log may seem a panacea to hurried librarians, they will probably find
that it creates an entirely new set of pressures. We would hope, however,
that this paper identifies some of the problem areas, so that planners can
begin efforts, through publicity and education, to forestall complaints and
cultivate allies.

REFERENCES

12. Matthews, Lawrence, and Ferguson, Using, p. 95.
13. Fort and Waters, Online, p. 137.
14. Ibid.
15. Matthews, Lawrence, and Ferguson, Using, p. 98.
18. Matthews, Lawrence, and Ferguson, Using, p. 93-99; Fort and Waters, Online, p. 137.

Appendix A
Byrn Mawr College Library Survey*

1. Category of respondent (please check one)
   [ ] undergraduate student
   [ ] graduate student
   [ ] faculty
   [ ] other, please specify ________________________
   [ ] not applicable

2. How many courses are you taking this semester? specify number __________

3. What is your general field of study? (please check one)
   [ ] arts and humanities
   [ ] social sciences
   [ ] natural sciences and mathematics
   [ ] other, please specify ________________________

4. Which of the Bryn Mawr College Libraries do you use most often? (please check one)
   [ ] Cantabrig
   [ ] Pangborn
   [ ] Math/Physics

*Editor's Note: The questionnaire used for the Swarthmore College Library survey requested essentially the same information but was not personalized for that institution. It has not been reproduced here because of space constraints.
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1. Chemistry/Geology
2. Biology
3. Art and Archaeology

5. If you checked Canaday or the Art and Archaeology Library for the above question, have you ever used any of the science libraries?
   Yes [ ]
   No [ ]

6. If you checked Canaday or one of the science libraries for question number 4, have you ever used the Art and Archaeology Library?
   Yes [ ]
   No [ ]

7. On the average for this semester, how often have you visited any of the Bryn Mawr
   College Libraries for any reason? (please check one)
   have not been to any BMC library this semester
   less than once a month
   once a month
   a few times a month
   once a week
   about every other day
   once a day or more
   about every other day
   about once a week
   about every other week
   about once a month
   about every other month

8. Do you generally visit the BMC Libraries? (please check one)
   have a quiet place to study
   to see the card catalog
   to see the reference materials
   to see the reserve materials
   to see the Xerox machines, or
   to socialize?
   other, please specify ____________________

9. Approximately how often this semester have you used the card catalog in any of the
   BMC Libraries? (please check one)
   have not used
   hardly ever
   about every other week
   once, maybe twice a week
   more than twice a week
   more than twice a week

10. During the week, when do you prefer to use the card catalogs in the BMC Libraries?
    (please check one)
    opening to 11 a.m.
    11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
    2 p.m. to 5 p.m.
    5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
    8 p.m. to closing
    seldom use during the week

11. On the weekends, when do you prefer to use the card catalogs in the BMC Li-
    braries? (please check one)
    opening to noon on Saturday
    Saturday noon to 5 p.m.
    Saturday 5 p.m. to closing
    opening to 5 p.m. on Sunday
    Sunday 5 p.m. to closing
    seldom use on the weekends

12. Do you use the card catalogs more (please check one)
    before the semester begins
    in the first month of the semester,
    just before an exam or paper,
    consistently throughout the semester, or
    in the last month of the semester?

13. Do you think that you find what you’re looking for in the card catalogs? (please check one)
    seldom
    less than half the time
14. When you can't find what you want in the card catalogs, is it generally because:
   a. the library doesn't seem to have the materials you need,
   b. you're not sure if there's another way to look up what you wanted, or
   c. the arrangement of the cards in the catalog is confusing?
   [ ] a
   [ ] b
   [ ] c

15. When you're in the libraries, do you generally consult a library staff member:
   a. before you start to use the card catalog,
   b. only if you haven't been able to find what you needed in the card catalog, or
   c. to help clarify what you found in the catalog?
   [ ] a
   [ ] b
   [ ] c

16. Have you ever had to use a specific drawer of the card catalog?
   [ ] yes
   [ ] no

17. Do you often have to wait to use a specific drawer of the card catalog?
   [ ] yes
   [ ] no

18. When you use the card catalog in any of the libraries, do you more often look for:
   a. a specific title of a book or journal,
   b. a particular person's name, or
   c. a subject or topic, such as United States history?
   [ ] a
   [ ] b
   [ ] c

19. On the average for this quarter, how much total time have you spent each time that you consulted the card catalog in any of the BMC Libraries? (please check one)
   [ ] less than five minutes each time
   [ ] 5 to 10 minutes
   [ ] 10 to 20 minutes
   [ ] over 20 minutes

20. Excluding times when you must use a specific drawer of the card catalog as soon as possible, how long would you be willing to wait for a drawer before you felt uncomfortable? (please check one)
   [ ] wouldn't wait around at all
   [ ] about a minute
   [ ] 2 to 5 minutes
   [ ] 5 to 10 minutes
   [ ] as long as it took
   [ ] would come back later

21. Have you ever used the OCLC terminal that sits in the area by the phone directories in College Library?
   [ ] yes
   [ ] no

22. When you used the OCLC terminal, did you:
   [ ] reach yourself from the instruction next to the terminal,
   [ ] read the instructions and then ask someone to help you begin,
   [ ] ask someone if necessary how to use it without having read the instructions, or
   [ ] ask for help only if the terminal didn't respond as you expected?
   [ ] yes
   [ ] no

23. Have you ever asked someone to explain something that you found on the terminal?
   [ ] yes
   [ ] no

24. Have you ever had to use the OCLC terminal?
   [ ] yes
   [ ] no

25. As far as you're aware, the OCLC system contains (please check one):
   [ ] information about all the books that Bryn Mawr owns
   [ ] information about some of the books that Bryn Mawr owns
   [ ] information about some books that Bryn Mawr owns and some books that other libraries own
   [ ] listings of books by subject
   [ ] no idea what it contains
26. If you've never used the OCLC terminal in CatCard, is it because: (Please check one)
   [ ] you haven't felt it was necessary for what you wanted,
   [ ] you aren't sure what information is available from it,
   [ ] you would rather not use a computer terminal,
   [ ] you didn't know it was available for general use,
   [ ] you weren't sure how to begin,
   [ ] you never heard of it before, or
   [ ] you seldom visit CatCard Library for any reason?
   [ ] not applicable

27. If you were able to get the information you currently get from the card catalog only from a computer terminal, how long would you be willing to wait to use it before you felt inconvenient? (Please check one)
   [ ] wouldn't wait around at all
   [ ] about a minute
   [ ] 3 to 5 minutes
   [ ] 5 to 10 minutes
   [ ] as long as it took
   [ ] wouldn't come back later

28. If you were given a choice between two systems that contained identical information, would you rather say
   [ ] a card catalog, or
   [ ] a computerized catalog?

29. If someone were using a drawer of the card catalog for an extended period of time and you needed to check one item in that drawer very quickly, would you feel comfortable asking to interrupt that person's search for one brief moment?
   [ ] yes
   [ ] no

30. If someone were conducting an extended search with a computerized catalog and you needed to check one citation very quickly, would you feel comfortable asking to interrupt that person's search for one brief moment?
   [ ] yes
   [ ] no

31. If you were given a choice between a card catalog and a computerized catalog that provided broader access to the same information (ability to limit searches by language, year, etc., of publication) and provided more types of information (whether book was on order, checked out, etc.), would you rather use
   [ ] a card catalog, or
   [ ] a computerized catalog?

32. Would you feel you had to hurry if someone were standing behind you waiting to use a computer terminal?
   [ ] yes
   [ ] no

33. Would you feel uncomfortable if someone could see what you were searching for on a computer terminal?
   [ ] yes
   [ ] no

34. If the library's catalog were accessible through terminals all over campus, would you prefer to look up information? (Please check one)
   [ ] in the library
   [ ] in the computer center
   [ ] in the dormitories
   [ ] in faculty offices
   [ ] other, please specify

35. If it were possible to dial up the catalog from outside the library but it took more time to get a response than it would in the library building itself, how long would you be willing to wait for a response?
   [ ] wouldn't wait around at all
   [ ] about a minute
   [ ] 5 to 10 minutes
   [ ] as long as it took
   [ ] wouldn't come back later