

# Education and Training for the Book and Information World

Maurice B. Line

Paper presented at the UK Serials Group Annual Conference in April 1989

## Introduction

I do not propose to give a wide-ranging paper on all aspects of education and training for the book and information world: this would make the subject of at least one entire conference. Rather, I shall consider the feasibility of education courses with common elements across the book and information world, in the light of a study I have been doing on a BNB Research Fund grant over the past few months.

It hardly needs saying that the book and information world is changing rapidly. It is difficult to say where the greatest changes are taking place: in publishing, in bookselling, in libraries or in information broking. The pace of change is so great that some people in all sectors are finding it quite hard to keep up. The main catalysts of change are new technology, economic pressures, and political pressures. There is increased pressure on the private sector to compete and survive - indeed, to swallow or be swallowed - while in the public sector continued restrictions on public funding are forcing libraries to look at their operations far more critically than ever before. This critical look includes a ruthless examination not only as to where costs can be cut and economies made, but also as to where money can be earned.

Political pressures are pushing in the same direction. Indeed, the economic pressures on the public sector, in the United Kingdom at least, are no more than political pressures applied in economic terms: there is no strictly *financial* reason why libraries should not be better funded. Political pressures are forcing the public sector to emulate the private sector more and more.

Information technology is just as great a catalyst of change across the whole book and information world. It makes possible things that were not possible before, from the almost routine preparation of union catalogues and on-line access to them to the storage of digitized text on CD-ROMs which can be leased or sold to libraries or individuals. These developments have their own political and

economic impact, in that costs are more visible and can also be more easily identified. For example, even if a library wished to charge individuals for reading articles in its journals, it would be very hard to find a practical way of doing this; but it is easy to record automatically on-line use of electronically stored text, or for that matter searches of bibliographic databases. Not only can the use of information be more easily charged, but since the costs are more visible charging becomes psychologically and socially easier. Moreover, since these services, if offered through libraries, usually involve substantial extra costs, many libraries feel that they cannot afford to give them except for money. The idea that information is "free" is fading rapidly, and information is being seen as a commodity which can be costed and charged for like any other commodity.

One major result of all these changes is that the distinctions between different parts of the book and information world are becoming increasingly blurred. Some things that were traditionally done by libraries, like the supply of bibliographic references or text, can now be done without the involvement of libraries. It is as easy to access BIOSIS from a laboratory as it is from a library, and there is no reason in principle why it should not be equally easy to access digitized text in the same way. In retrospect, perhaps this change began with the growth of xerographic reproduction, which enabled people to build up large collections of article copies in their offices or homes, whereas previously they had to consult the journals in the library or borrow them and make a few notes.

Similarly, information brokers are now offering services that used to be offered through libraries. It is true that in order to give such services information brokers may have to use one or more libraries; the point is that the direct service is coming from the broker rather than from the library. Some libraries, realizing this, are beginning to offer services similar to those given by information brokers, namely the packaging of information specifically for particular users. Since

activity of this kind on this scale is impossible to give within the library's ordinary resources, charges have to be made.

In their efforts to earn money, more libraries are publishing material. Most of this activity is on a very small scale, but research libraries have the potential to publish a good deal, for example facsimile reproductions of rare and beautiful books. Often they enter into partnership with commercial publishers in doing this, thus further blurring the boundaries. Library publishing of a more modest kind is now much easier because of desk-top publishing systems, which can produce professional-looking books entirely on in-house equipment.

Joint enterprise has been a matter of some study, and indeed action, in recent years. Information brokers and libraries were mentioned earlier; there is no reason why they should not enter into profitable partnerships, the library allowing the information broker to use its resources in privileged ways not available to all users, and the information broker exploiting the library's resources for the benefit of users. Payment could be made to the library by the broker either in the form of a regular fee for the use of the library, or as a percentage of his income.

There is less overlap between booksellers and other sectors of the book and information world, but here too changes can be expected in the future, with the possibility of more direct selling from publishers to libraries and individuals, especially of short run editions where the profit margins are small and it saves money to cut out an intermediary. Teleordering and EPOS (Electronic Point Of Sale) are bringing publishers and booksellers even closer together. The creation of the UK Serials Group several years ago, and more recently of the National Acquisitions Group, is a recognition of the close relationships between publishers, booksellers and journal agents, and librarians, and the need for still closer ones.

### **An A Priori Case for Common Education?**

If these trends continue, as one would expect - and even if they do not - it makes less and less sense to educate people going into the various sectors in totally different ways. If a librarian is going to perform some activities that might be done by the commercial sector, or indeed to carry out traditional activities in more commercial ways, it would benefit him to learn some of the skills that the commercial sector is expected to have. Likewise,

since a very large part of the book and information market of the commercial sector consists of libraries, a greater understanding of that market must be beneficial.

In fact, although there is no formal provision at present for common education, a significant proportion (perhaps 10% or so) of the products of library and information studies (LIS) schools or departments goes into the commercial sector. I do not know how many people working in publishing, bookselling, information broking and database production and hosting have been through an LIS education, but the figure cannot be small. It is largest in large library suppliers like JMLS (formerly John Menzies) and Burchell and Martin, and in database producers and hosts such as INSPEC and Pergamon Financial Data Services, but publishers and other booksellers have their share. Thus existing LIS education clearly has some relevance to the commercial sectors.

On the face of it, there seems to be considerable scope for common education. The question is, how much is there in common between the educational requirements for the various sectors, and is it enough to justify a common course of any kind? If so, what kind of course - a short background course, a common core course, continued education, or what?

### **The Study of Educational Requirements of the Commercial Book and Information World**

Last year the BNB Research Fund Committee gave me a grant to look at the feasibility of a common core or background course for the book and information world. The study was to involve the interviewing of a substantial number of people in sectors of the book and information world other than libraries, whose needs are fairly well documented if not wholly agreed, and are in fact already provided for - how well is a moot point. I also undertook to look at existing courses relevant to publishing and bookselling. The final part of the study was to consist of an analysis of existing LIS courses, to see whether and where a common core or background course, if one proved to be feasible, might best fit in. In fact, time and the research grant have run out on me, largely because the interviews have proved more time-consuming to organize and carry out than I expected; it was therefore agreed that the examination of existing LIS courses should be omitted.

I have interviewed over 30 people in various parts of the book and information world, and looked

more or less closely at the courses in publishing and bookselling given by Oxford Polytechnic, Napier Polytechnic, Watford College and Book House Training Centre (which makes the only provision for courses in bookselling as well as publishing). The publishers (of both books and journals) interviewed range from very large academic and general publishers of both books and journals to small and specialized publishers; the booksellers and journal agents from major library suppliers and bookshop chains to local branches and second-hand booksellers. I have interviewed two information brokers/consultants, and five database producers/hosts. I have also talked to the relevant officials in the Publishers Association and the Booksellers Association; the latter has incidentally undertaken a total revision of its training programme in the last year or two.

A general picture began to emerge fairly soon. There was a surprising extent of agreement among nearly all of those interviewed.

The interviews consisted of two parts. The first part was completely open-ended: the interviewee was asked to say what skills or knowledge he thought were required for entry into his particular sector at graduate or managerial level. Very early on I compiled a check-list, and subsequently used this for the second part of the interview, where I went through it and asked for reactions to aspects that had not been covered in the first part. The balance between the first and second parts varied greatly, but overall it was about two-thirds first part to one-third second part. The variation was because some were much better able to articulate what they thought was needed than others, who found it difficult to think without some prompts.

In most cases I interviewed senior people in firms, but in some cases those interviewed were lower down the hierarchy, in one or two cases because they were the ones to whom I was directed, but in most cases because I chose them. For example, I deliberately interviewed branch managers of two bookshops in London, both young and fairly new to the job, to see whether their views were different from those of top people.

The book and information world is of course far from homogeneous. Within sectors, there are large differences between, for example, academic journal publishing and trade book publishing, and between a high street bookseller and a journal subscription agent. Movement does however occur between these subsectors. Jobs also very widely: there are specialized jobs like systems design and

commissioning editing, where there tends to be little movement, and "mainstream" jobs such as production, distribution and marketing, where there is quite a lot. A similar variation occurs in libraries

### Findings

The first element that most interviewees mentioned as important for entrants was financial knowledge and management. This includes a knowledge of the commercial world, ability to think in terms of profit and loss, the setting up and control of financial systems of expenditure and income, the preparation and reading of balance sheets, and so on. Obviously in commercial organizations there has to be someone, often several people, concerned with the details of finance; but the general view was that all staff over a certain level should think in commercial and financial terms, including those in specialized areas of work.

Economics in a broader sense was also thought to be desirable: the economics (and dynamics) of the whole book and information system and market, and indeed some knowledge of how the City works.

The next element mentioned by almost everyone spontaneously, and agreed by those who did not, was staff management. Staff management includes organizational structures, management styles (e.g. directive or participative), motivation, staff development programmes, delegation, sensitivity, teamwork, and so on. Many said that they had only recently fully appreciated the importance of staff management, and the skills needed for it; this is probably true of British management generally. Publishers in particular recognized that their management of staff had in fact been amateurish, and that little attempt had been made to develop or motivate staff. In some cases, potential staff problems had been sidestepped by disallowing trade unions, rather than tackled by creating a corporate spirit and an atmosphere where it did not matter whether trade unions existed or not. There was an awakening sense that far too little effort had been directed to getting the best out of staff in middle and junior management and, even more, those on the shop floor.

A smaller aspect of management, which was rarely mentioned spontaneously but which was agreed to readily when interviewees were prompted, was office management - the establishment of effective systems of filing and paper control, the introduction and effective use of office machinery, and so on. Those who had good office management recognized its importance, whereas those who did

not nearly all said they recognized the need to do something about it.

Stock control was another aspect of management, not relevant to information brokers and database producers/hosts, but certainly important for publishers and booksellers. Booksellers were hoping that EPOS would help them to maintain better stock control, but most of them had more or less elaborate systems at the moment. Practice differed between different booksellers; some exercised fairly strong central control, whereas others left local stock entirely to the local shop manager. Stock control in the case of publishers is partly a matter of warehousing, which is very often contracted out; but control over how much stock is held is still retained by the publisher.

Distribution is also of equal interest to publishers and booksellers, one from the producing and one from the receiving end. Several publishers recognized that they had a long way to go before distribution was as efficient as it should be, a view that would be strongly agreed by most booksellers. Teleordering has speeded up ordering but not distribution.

Another area of major common interest to all commercial sectors was marketing, in its widest sense. There has been a gradual shift from sales to marketing over the last decade or two, and more effort is now commonly directed to marketing than to mere selling, though the skills required for the latter are not underestimated. Major market surveys are usually contracted out, but, as with finance, the general view is that marketing attitudes and skills should be widely distributed over the organisation. That is, there should be a general awareness of markets, a sensitivity to market opportunities, and an ability to communicate with markets. For example, the systems designer should bear in mind the consumer when designing his systems, while the commissioning editor is in close touch with many individuals - authors rather than consumers, certainly, but still important contacts with the outside world; also, a commissioning editor needs to ensure that books are not commissioned that will not sell. This requires not only conventional marketing skills, but also interpersonal skills of quite a high order. Indeed, interpersonal skills emerged at various stages of most interviews - not surprisingly, since they are necessary for dealing with other members of staff as well as dealing with customers.

Marketing takes different forms for database hosts, publishers, library suppliers and ordinary

bookshops; marketing a service is not the same as marketing a product, nor is wholesale marketing the same as retail marketing. The basic principles may be the same, but the applications are different. Bookshops market their wares by the way they display them. At this point, marketing spills over into display and publicity, and another area of common interest was the design of publicity material. Also related is the ability to present a case in public, whether by lectures and seminars or in ordinary interaction at conferences. Public speaking skills were rated as quite important.

Minor aspects in common were legal matters: contracts, copyright, and so on. In some cases these are restricted to one or two people in the organization, but it was generally agreed that a more widely spread awareness would be of great assistance.

All the elements mentioned up to now of interest throughout industry and business of whatever kind. There are however special features of the book and information world that make it useful, to say the least, to have courses that explain their relevance and importance to these sectors. For example, stock control for a vegetable retailer has differences from stock control in the book world, where one is dealing with large numbers of different items rather than large volumes of a small range of items. Again, most organizations in the commercial book and information world are small, and managing a staff of ten or thirty is very different from managing a staff of 300 or 400; for one thing, it is possible in most organizations in the book world to know all individual members of staff, whereas this is certainly not true of much industry.

Perhaps more to the immediate point, all of the elements identified above are now recognized as of major interest in the library world. This would not have been the case ten or perhaps even five years ago, but libraries are now recognizing the importance of accurate costing, budget analysis, performance measurement, stock control, staff management, marketing, design and publicity. I would venture to say that if librarians had been educated in all these aspects they would be handling their problems rather better than some of them appear to be doing today. It is surprising how long librarians took to wake up to the importance of *managing* their resources, in particular managing their staff. Customer orientation (a better term than "user assistance") has also been a long time in gaining recognition. If libraries are to justify their present budgets, if they are to make a good case for better budgets, and above all if they are to make

money, they have to think far more in managerial and commercial ways than they have done hitherto.

A few publishers, while agreeing the importance of management and related skills, thought that it was not wholly appropriate to include them in a course aimed at new recruits, on the grounds that they would not be called upon to exercise these skills until later in their careers. This was not the general view, and no bookseller made such a comment, because new entrants are often put in charge of a local bookshop, where the skills are definitely needed. The argument that management is something that is for senior staff only has been used by librarians. However, even at junior management level staff are usually managing something or somebody; a cataloguer, for example, is managing resources of time and equipment, and a cost-effective approach to his work can hardly fail to be beneficial. In any case, it is surely useful for staff to learn early attitudes and skills that will be needed later, rather than to enter a job with one set of assumptions and then have to change them for another set later.

The above elements were not the only ones that emerged during interviews. Among publishers and booksellers it was generally felt that a general knowledge of book-making and production was important. This would include the history of the book, how and why there has been such a great expansion in book and journal production, how books are made physically (paper, binding, etc) - and so on. This area was recognized to be important but not major, if I can make this distinction; that is, it was thought that it ought to be covered but that all that was necessary could be covered in a few days.

Of more specific importance was electronic technology: what developments were occurring, eg in CD-ROMs, how they worked, what the implications were for the storage, publication and use of information, what use was being made of them, and so on. Slow though the book world has been to take up much new technology, all publishers are aware that it is lurking round the corner, and that there may be opportunities there to be taken or missed.

The same applies to bibliographic databases. Several publishers now construct their own databases, some of them putting library catalogues to shame in the information they contain; for example, some of them have excellent subject abstracts, which are in machine-readable form and can be searched by keywords; some are now using

BookData to do so. All publishers produce lists anyway, so that in that sense they are all concerned with databases. Many booksellers also produce catalogues. Whether or not they construct their own, and whether or not they are in machine-readable form or not, a knowledge of what entries should look like, how they should be indexed, and how they should be produced, is of great and growing interest. Not only that, but use of other people's databases is of great importance, an importance which will increase with the growing use of EPOS. Several booksellers doubted whether they were making anything like fully efficient use of the bibliographic tools (manual as well as on-line) that existed, whereas several publishers thought that they could produce better lists more efficiently with better knowledge. Bibliographic databases are of course of fundamental interest to database producers and hosts, even though not all their databases are bibliographic ones. Information brokers too need to use them, so this is a specialist element that cuts right across the whole book and information world.

Nearly all thought that they ought to know far more about other parts of the book and information world than they did; journal agents were even more conscious of this than others. This was partly because of a need to know more about markets, but it went wider than this. Booksellers, for example, thought they knew far too little about how publishing and publishers worked, and how libraries and librarians worked; and publishers felt the same about booksellers and libraries. Even journal agents, who nearly always include some library-educated people, felt that they were in the dark as to why and how decisions were made on journal purchases and cancellations (some librarians may feel the same). Information brokers needed a wide general knowledge.

I would argue strongly that librarians need to know far more about publishing and bookselling than they do, and also about the commercial information world. Indeed, I myself have been educated in the course of conducting this study. I knew a fair amount about publishing, but I know a great deal more now; and I had not realized how rudimentary my knowledge of bookselling was. If I were still running a library, I would be able to bring to it several new ideas from my better knowledge of the commercial book and information world.

I have not stressed the interest of libraries in knowledge of books and how they are made, new technology and bibliographic databases: these are all obvious, and are covered more or less

adequately in existing LIS courses. This is an area where librarians are in the lead, but publishers and booksellers now have an almost equal interest.

There are other more general needs that several publishers and booksellers identified: the ability to write clear and accurate English; basic numeracy; a wide general knowledge, particularly of English literature, but preferably spanning the whole range of knowledge apart from specialized science and technology; an inquiring mind; and a wide range of sympathies. This may sound like the well-rounded Oxbridge graduate who has traditionally been attracted into publishing and whom publishing has wished to attract, but the need is a genuine and indeed obvious one. Uncultured and half-educated people are no more desirable in publishing or bookselling than in librarianship.

It will be apparent that there are many elements of common interest across the book and information world. The elements of common interest to publishers, booksellers and libraries are greater than those that are of interest also to the private information sector, though there is a good deal of overlap here too. Emphases differ between sectors, but this is a relatively minor matter. There are some elements that are specific to publishing, bookselling, or whatever, but a totally integrated course was never envisaged. There are also elements that are needed for libraries that are not relevant to other sectors, but most of the elements identified above should constitute a high proportion of any course intended to equip librarians for the present world.

### **Existing Educational Provision for the Commercial Book and Information World**

Education for the commercial book and information world does exist, as mentioned earlier. There are two full-blown courses in publishing at degree level, at Oxford and Napier Polytechnics. Views among publishers as to the quality of these courses vary; they are patronized heavily by some, and neglected or avoided by others, often apparently on the basis of impression rather than actual knowledge. The numbers of students they take in are quite small (some 30 each a year), and they are over-subscribed - in the case of Napier very heavily. Watford College has a six-month course which is highly intensive and heavily oriented to production (if anyone wants to see an impressive range of production and reproduction machinery, I commend a visit to Watford, though Napier too is very well equipped).

However, most people at present in publishing, and those going into publishing now, have not come in via these channels at all. Publishing has had a tradition of bringing on people from inside; people who started as secretaries at eighteen may find themselves managing directors twenty years later. Experience is enhanced by moving around different firms. The bigger firms have their own training programmes. However, several publishers expressed the view that whereas this system of recruitment of unskilled people who then received in-house training had worked quite well in the past, they could not any longer go on in such an amateurish way, but must aim to recruit people with professional knowledge and skills. A similar view was expressed by some booksellers, who tend to recruit young graduates (often at salaries that make library pay look generous). Probably the majority of those working at managerial or professional levels in publishing, and many of those in bookselling, have been on one or more of the courses put on by Book House Training Centre. These occupy from one day to a week, are given by practising publishers and booksellers, and inevitably vary in quality somewhat; however, they are undoubtedly both valuable and valued. Some publishers use them heavily. However, once again it is recognized that these are not a substitute for a coherent structured body of knowledge with which people enter the trade.

Information brokers, of whom there are very few real ones in the UK (most of those who do some kind of broking do other things as well), come from a variety of backgrounds, but perhaps most have been through LIS courses. Database producers and hosts recruit from computing, accounting and so on, but many working here too have had an LIS education.

### **Reactions to the Concept of a Common or Core Course**

How did publishers, booksellers and the private information sector react to the prospect of a course with common elements? No-one rejected it out of hand, though there were a few who were doubtful. The responses of the rest ranged from enthusiasm - two or three asked when such a course could start - to considerable interest. The proof of the course would be in its products, but nearly all of them said that, if they had a choice of a graduate with a subject degree and a graduate of the kind envisaged, they would at the very least look very seriously at the graduate of the book and information course, and, other things being equal, they would almost certainly prefer him. From the

relatively small number of people I have interviewed, there seems no doubt at all that there would be a market for the products of such a course.

How big is the market? This is a difficult question to answer. Something like 1,000 students a year seem to go into librarianship. The best figure I can obtain for those going into bookselling each year at the managerial or graduate level is 500. I have been unable to obtain an estimate for publishing; guesses range from 400 to 1,000. To these figures one can add maybe 100 or 200 in the database producer/host sector. In all, the total market for the book and information world is probably somewhere between 2,000 and 2,500. Much of this will of course continue to be met by existing means. My study suggests that there is sufficient interest for at least two institutions to start a course of the kind envisaged and produce, say, 30 people a year each. If the courses were good ones, my guess is that the 60 products would be snapped up very quickly.

### **The Nature of a Common Course**

What might a course aimed at the book and information world look like? To my surprise, most of those interviewed plumped strongly for an undergraduate course. Such a course might have a first year entirely in common; towards the end of the first year students would choose which stream they wished to pursue, and after that they would specialize, although there would still be some lectures in common. This would have the great advantage that such a course could recruit for the book and information world, rather than recruiting would-be librarians, would-be publishers and so on. Students would not therefore have to decide which sector they wished to go into when taking up the course. As a result, one might expect some people to go into libraries who had not thought of it as a likely profession. The right kind of course could attract a wide range of people. An inferior alternative would be to decide early on which stream students were going into, and then to have some areas in common throughout the course.

Several interviewees, particularly publishers, thought that the course should contain some practical experience. Ideally, there would be a sandwich year, though the problems of sandwich courses are understood. A pre-school period of practical experience would be possible, but this would mean that students would have to commit themselves to publishing or whatever before they entered the course. A practical period of three months, which could probably be fitted in during a vacation, might answer this need.

There was doubt among some publishers, and in particular among booksellers, as to whether what they needed to know would occupy three years. Some of them found it hard to understand why what librarians needed to know required three years of study. A joint honours degree, say with economics or history or a language, would be a possibility, but the fact that the Napier and Oxford courses are not in any way padded out suggests that there is no problem in filling the three years.

Quite a few interviewees said that they wanted an educational rather than a training course, and that it should be as intellectually rigorous as a more obviously "academic" course. There are dangers in trying to make something academic that is basically not; some LIS courses may have done this. However, even if it were not a joint honours degree, there should be sufficient academic content to make the course a real discipline.

An alternative to an undergraduate course would be a postgraduate course. It is rather harder to see how this would work. One could have a first three months in common, and then specialization; or specialize from the first stages, with many lectures in common. This sort of course would be suitable for a commissioning editor in publishing; particularly in science, he needs to have subject knowledge, possibly to a quite advanced level. For example, a commissioning editor for an academic publisher in physics would ideally need to have a physics degree as well as another qualification.

Whatever kind of course was established - and it is not a case of having to choose between undergraduate and postgraduate courses, since there is no reason why they could not exist side by side - the contents and programme would have to be carefully worked out. The logistics alone are not simple.

### **Benefits of a Common Course**

What benefits would there be in a common course? First, personal contact between different sectors at the student stage would promote not only professional but personal understanding, and probably lead to lifelong contacts. Secondly, as stated above, at present people can move from libraries into publishing because no qualification is required, but they cannot move from publishing or bookselling into libraries unless they already have a library qualification. A common qualification would make for much more freedom of movement across various sectors of the book and information world, movement which could hardly fail to be healthy. Thirdly, librarians, including (I am tempted

to say especially) those in the public sector, would benefit greatly from the commercial components and emphases in a course with common elements. This presupposes that the course would be acceptable to libraries (and the Library Association); there is no reason why the library stream in it should not be, but ideally the other streams should be as well.

A course of this kind would turn out different products from existing LIS schools, if only because the balance would be much more weighted towards management. This might leave less room for technical skills and theoretical aspects. It would certainly have implications for the staff of LIS schools.

It may appear that the main benefits would be for librarians, and this may indeed be so. But it seems clear from the over-subscription of the two existing degree courses in publishing as well as from my interviews that there is going to be a growth of courses in publishing, and the question is then whether these should be separate and distinct courses (though one would expect some would-be booksellers to take advantage of them) or combined in some way with LIS courses. It seems that the book and information world would prefer them to be combined.

There are several LIS schools, for example Loughborough, that have courses that are partly or marginally relevant. With the student bottle-neck about to hit LIS schools, several of them might be expected or persuaded to take a keen interest in such a course. However, for the course to work commercial knowledge and experience would be needed; some of this might perhaps be provided by a business or management school in the same institution, but that would not include publishing or bookselling experience. A town where there was a flourishing book trade could offer help; there are several major centres of bookselling (for example, Birmingham and Edinburgh), but there are very few that have much publishing outside London and Oxford.

A wide range of equipment would also be essential; Napier and Watford had much of theirs given to them by publishers and equipment manufacturers, but their generosity may now be exhausted. Alternatively, one of the two polytechnics with publishing courses might be interested; it would be little harder for them to add library studies than for LIS schools to add commercial book and

information studies, and they would have the great advantage of their equipment. It is a pity that neither of these courses is in a town, let alone an institution, that has an LIS course. A third alternative is to start a new course from scratch, but this would be difficult and wasteful, and it would not help the LIS schools with their coming problems of under-recruitment.

A minor but quite difficult problem is in deciding what a common course might be called. A degree in "book and information studies" does not sound quite right. "Communication studies" is not right either; there are several existing courses with this title, and they mean something different.

It goes without saying that a course aimed at introducing people to a range of jobs does not educate them for life. Continuing education is another story. But there is no reason why there should not also be continuing common education courses across the book world. If initial courses of the right kind were set up, continuing education courses on similar lines might well follow almost as a natural consequence.

## Conclusion

The conclusions of my study are:

- there are many elements in common between the educational requirements of the various sectors of the book and information world;
- they are mainly in the area of management and related skills, but also cover more specialized knowledge in, for example, information technology and bibliographic databases;
- there are distinct benefits to be gained by all sectors in being educated alongside one another, and that libraries would probably benefit most of all;
- there is considerable support and a sizeable market for an undergraduate course, and quite probably also a postgraduate course; and
- it should be possible to devise a suitable course, building on an existing LIS or publishing course.