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LIBRARY ACCESS, LIBRARY USE AND USER EDUCATION IN
ACADEMIC SIXTH FORMS: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT

by

Lawrence Stenhouse

I take an autobiographical account to be simply a recollection, as opposed to a 'retrospective analysis' in which recollection is verified against documentary evidence and the recollections of others. (Peshkin, Wise, Singer, Altschuld and Berk, 1977).

The project which is the subject of this autobiographical account was funded under the title which stands at the head of this paper, but we use the short title 'Library Access and Sixth-form Studies' (LASS). LASS is funded by the British Library Research and Development Department as part of its programme of research in user studies. The proposal was written by me and is dated June, 1979. The project runs for two and a quarter years from January, 1980, and the budget is £47,850.

Members of staff from the following institutions are working on the project: Centre for Applied Research in Education of the University of East Anglia; Centre for Research in User Studies University of Sheffield; Crewe and Alsager College of Education; and Keswick Hall College of Education (now the School of Education of the University of East Anglia). Five free-lance researchers are also involved. I am the 'Head of Project' (BL's term) and the Co-ordinator of the Project is Beverley Labbett, both of the Centre for Applied Research in Education.

The proposal originated in the following way. I was unaware of the existence of the British Library Research and Development Department until they sent me a proposal to referee. The proposal was 'illuminative' in style, and it cited my book on curriculum as the source for its design. Another similar proposal followed, and then an invitation to speak at a conference on library research, at which I was, to my surprise, introduced as one whose work in curriculum was "revolutionising" research on library user studies!