Transcending Widgets

Janet Swan Hill
Ohio Library Council Technical Services Division
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Why do we feel the way we do about ourselves? Why do others feel the way they do about us?

We are in the minority, and have a minority of librarians
The message we get from library schools is not complimentary
We are different
   Puzzle people
   Pattern seekers
You can count what we do and don’t do.
We buy into the view that others have of us, and we play into their hands
   We talk about rules, fields, programs, data, cost, efficiency,
      numbers, time, output
   Instead of principles, capabilities, information, value,
      effectiveness, resources, service, outcomes

What are libraries about and how does Technical Services fit in?

Bibliographic Control is the sine qua non of librarianship
We serve the core values of librarianship
   The connection of people to ideas; unfettered access to information
Technical Services is public service
We create the single greatest public service tool
It is proper to consider our work in terms of value, not just cost
What are the consequences of a bad image?

Low Morale
Difficulty recruiting; Difficulty retaining
Difficulty making an effective case
Difficulty getting needed resources
Diminished ability to do what needs to be done
Diminished user services
Diminished creativity, initiative, imagination, flexibility
Low expectations fulfilled; Expectations lowered farther
Loss of focus, diminished understanding

What can we do about it?

Understand our place in librarianship
Understand and serve our own institutions
Get involved with the library as a whole
Don’t speak in dialect
Be on the watch for ignorance
Challenge slights and misunderstandings. Don’t denigrate Technical Services or its personnel, even in jest
Be aware of the professional aspects of the work, and don’t connive in its de-professionalization.
Widen our horizons