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Cover: The University of Louisville’s $14.2 million, 42,500 square foot expansion to the William F. Ekstrom Library was opened March 20, 2006.
From the President

Southeastern Library Association members had a marvelous time in Memphis in early April as we explored The River of Knowledge. Tulips were in bloom, barbeque was smoking and Tennessee Library Association pulled out all the stops to make SELA members feel welcome. On Tuesday afternoon, a group of volunteers chatted about library and personal events as they packed materials for attendees. It was a wonderful way to meet many members of the TLA Conference Program Committee and to thank them for their relentless hard work. Lead by TLA President, Cathy Taylor of the White County Public Library and TLA Executive Director, Annelle Huggins of the University of Memphis and Conference Co-Chairs Leah Allison of St. George's Independent School and Jennifer Cowan-Henderson of the Upper Cumberland Regional Library, their year long efforts were visible in every facet of the program.

SELA Vice-President/President-Elect Faith Line from Sumter County Public Library in South Carolina led the SELA volunteers. Faith worked tirelessly on the last three joint conferences. In addition to her Memphis efforts, she also served on the planning committees for Charleston and Charlotte. Faith brought a wealth of expertise and experience to her work with the planning committee.

Memphis was also the site of the first American Library Association Regional Library Institute. There were members present from our state, regional and national library organizations. This three hour program was designed to assist librarians and library supporters develop grassroots advocacy efforts. In addition, there were numerous valuable pre-conferences dealing with topics including leadership development, statistical information, medical reference materials, cataloging and professional image.

In a letter of welcome, the Honorable Harold Ford, Jr. who represents the 9th congressional district in Tennessee noted, “This conference attests to the importance of libraries as a tool of education and cultural advancement in our community…You, the participants in this conference, understand and respect the integral role of libraries in fostering community development and acting as the primary resource to the public for knowledge and information.”

In addition to networking and exploring continuing education opportunities, SELA members also took the time to celebrate member achievements. Olga “Dee” Wood of the University of Kentucky representing the resolutions committee thanked all involved for their hard work preparing the excellent conference and also recognized Kentucky Library Association for their centennial.

The 2006 recipient of the 2005 Ginny Frankenthaler Memorial Scholarship, Leah Mickens was in attendance along with the 12 recipients of the 2006 Frances Coleman/Thomson Gale Conference Grants. They are Bradley Brazzeal (MS), Courtney Bruch (AL), John Crawford (KY), Shirley French (KY), Deana Groves (KY), Christina Hull (SC), Michael Jason Martin (FL), Bethany Skaggs (AL), Lisa Vardaman (AL), Shaundra Walker (GA), Susan Wilkins (KY) and Amy York (TN).

The Birmingham (AL) Public Library received the Outstanding Southeastern Library Program Award for BPL @ Your School. For the project, “each of the Birmingham City K-8 Schools is partnered with a nearby branch of the Birmingham Public Library. A Birmingham Public Library card is issued for each classroom (grades 4-8) in each of the participating schools.” In the application it was noted that the “ultimate desire is to build future readers by inspiring students to read for fun and to read often.”

Doug McNamara, President of Munford Library Books, Inc. was the recipient of the SELA President’s Award. The letter of nominations read, “Doug McNamara is well known among political and professional leaders, peers and colleagues, as one who is extremely qualified and unconditionally committed to the causes, and the effectiveness of libraries throughout the Southeast region of our nation.” Upon receipt of the award, he noted that the plaque will be “prominently displayed” in his office and said that the recognition was “quite meaningful” to him. Although Mr. McNamara was the last recipient of this award; the
honor is not disappearing. In 2008, the SELA President’s Award will become the Charles E. Beard Award. Named after the late distinguished Georgian, Charles Beard served as SELA President and was a strong advocate for libraries and a mentor for library workers on the local, state, regional and national levels.

The announcement of the 2006 Rothrock Award recipient was greeted by acclaim. Ann Hamilton, Past-President of SELA from Georgia Southern University graciously accepted the plaque and discussed her personal history with SELA and the Rothrock Award. The nomination letter noted that “As a colleague, she networks to share new and pertinent library develops occurring not only in the Southeast, but across the nation. As a mentor, she offers encouraging words and an enthusiastic welcome to new librarians…As a friend, Ann is willing to take the time to assist an individual through a dilemma, a crisis or just lend a friendly ear.”

SELA continues to look to the future. The board unanimously approved the new committee structure as outlined in the Leadership Conference documents at http://sela.jsu.edu/Conferences.htm. This new organizational model will be effective January 1, 2007 with the start of the new biennium.

Thanks again for making Memphis a memorable joint conference.

All the best,

Judith Gibbons
SELA President
From the Editor

Where does the time go? Seems like one issue of *The Southeastern Librarian* is completed, then it’s time to begin work on the next! I believe you will find that this issue covers a variety of interests, both practical and insightful.

Patrick Valentine offers a brief history of antebellum colleges throughout the south. Mark Brothers and Dianne Richardson outline a successful bibliographic instruction program at a small college library while Newkirk Barnes addresses ways to promote patron use of the government documents collection. Annabel Stephens traces the roots of various Alabama libraries and the ways communities rallied to support the creation of libraries. Jodi Poe offers a brief history and sketches the components of a successful information and referral service program. Newkirk Barnes addresses ways to promote patron use of the vast amount of information available in a government documents collection while Anne Salter describes the way to use a grant in order to bring access to the rich resources of a university archives. Use of the sampling method for gaining insight into reference use statistics was researched by Sarla Murgai. Sara Swain briefly describes the use of CONTENTdm for accessing a specific collection at the University of South Carolina. The issues to consider for developing a school library e-mail newsletter are summarized by Roxanne Spencer. In a thought-provoking article, Sheila Ayers addresses the ways the homeless use the library and the responsibilities of libraries to homeless individuals.

Whew…I’m exhausted just looking at this issues content! I hope you enjoy these articles and if you wish to submit articles for consideration by *The Southeastern Librarian*, please refer to the guidelines at the end of this issue.

Perry Bratcher
Charles E. Beard Scholarship

Through the support of friends and colleagues of the late Charles Beard, the Georgia Library Association has created the Charles Beard Scholarship. The scholarship is given to an individual enrolled in a graduate library program. The current award is for $1,000. Once full funding is reached, the annual scholarship award will be $3,000.

If you would like to help in reaching the goal for the Charles Beard Scholarship, please complete this form and return it by mail with your check to the address below.

Thank you!
GLA Scholarship Committee

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Patrick M. Valentine, Ph.D.

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What role did antebellum college libraries play in the development of the South? National studies rarely mention southern institutions, while institutional histories neglect the role of the library. Yet the history of southern antebellum college libraries should be of special interest because this was often their initial formative period. There were few college libraries in the South prior to 1800 but many were founded in the following decades. It was in the last decades before the Civil War that the South first became really aware of the need for widespread education. At the same time, southern colleges were in many ways different from their northern counterparts and therefore deserving of separate study. 1 This history of college libraries in the South will set a context for institutional histories while supplementing national studies by illustrating “many of the conditions … peculiar to that region.” 2 This paper is not meant to be exhaustive or encyclopedic but merely suggestive.

Most white southerners were rural, cash poor and little interested in books while it was impossible for blacks to attend college. Educational and public institutions remained feeble after the Revolution. Private manufacture of alcohol flourished more than local production of science or literature. But improved transportation and communications, especially a growing if inconsistent network of roads, steamboats, and railroads lowered the cost of books and expanded the opportunity for education. Communities and denominations established numerous common (i.e., public) schools and private academies by 1860. 3 Nonetheless, low population density, civic boosterism and the diversity of religions encouraged a thin scattering of often small and short-lived colleges. 4 During this same period, states also established a few larger but still elitist universities.

Library historian Haynes McMullen has counted

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about 183 college libraries in the South by 1876, of which only a few existed before 1800. The South’s earliest college library was that of William and Mary, founded in 1693. It was from the beginning considered “a common Library,” that is, open to the public. Also in Virginia, Hampden-Sydney and Washington (later named Washington and Lee) have early roots but “rose to college stature” only after 1800. Even fifty years later professor Charles Martin admitted that Hampden-Sydney had “a miserable excuse for the library of a literary institution.” The library at Washington College only began improving after 1837 when a small library fee was instituted; then, during the Civil War, its “books were, to a great extent, destroyed or carried off.” Another early school was the College of Charleston, founded in the early 1790s, but James Warley Miles, its librarian and an eminent Southern theologian, acknowledged in 1857 that the library “was for many years totally neglected, there having been no Librarian…. The existing portion, indeed, of the old Library is little more than a wreck from the original collection.” Even at its oldest colleges, therefore, the South had little tradition of creating or maintaining great libraries.

Maryland had a number of small, early colleges, perhaps most notably St. John’s College in Annapolis and Washington College on the Eastern Shore, but they “led a precarious existence.” Franklin College (which later became the University of Georgia) bragged in 1818 that “The Library now contains more volumes of the approved Historians, Poets, etc., than will be read by any student whilst in college” although the noted historian E. Merton Coulter points out that the library was never important enough to have its own building or librarian.

The South’s first state university was the University of North Carolina, which opened in 1795. Its library began with a couple bookshelves and two hundred dollars. Like most colleges, north and south, it relied more upon the generosity of donors for books than upon a collection plan. One professor admitted, “We find much difficulty in procuring books.” On the other hand, the University of South Carolina’s library started with a $5,000 appropriation for books, while the University of Virginia enjoyed a relatively generous selection of books for some years. Alabama would vote $20,000 for library books in 1830—a year before the university actually opened—and Mississippi appropriated $1,700 for its fledgling flagship university in 1848. These were notable efforts but the University of Nashville’s library, begun in 1809, more characteristically was “a beggar from the beginning.” Mercer University in Penfield, Georgia, allowed that “available funds … have hitherto been devoted mainly to the purchase of [scientific] apparatus and the erection of buildings, whilst the library has remained nearly sta-

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4 Miles estimated the library contained seven thousand volumes. He gave his own books to the library in 1857. J. W. Miles, First Annual Report of the Librarian of the College of Charleston (Charleston: Steam Power Press of Walker, Evans and Co., 1857), 3-4, 11, 21. See also J. H. Easterby, A History of the College of Charleston … (Charleston: College of Charleston, 1935), 41, 81, 91, 116-17. Miles, an Episcopal priest and holder of the chair of the history of intellectual philosophy and Greek literature at the College of Charleston, had written widely but upon becoming the librarian “sank into relative inactivity, contented to be among the library’s books pursuing without interruption his favorite studies of literature and languages.” He was said to have a reading knowledge of over thirty ancient languages. American National Biography (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), v. 15, 443-44. Miles was even more dismissive of the college library in his private correspondence. Ralph E. Luker, A Southern Tradition in Theology and Social Criticism, 1830-1930 (New York: E. Mellen, 1984), 103-04.
6 Coulter, College Life in the Old South, 52-53, quotation 52.
8 Daniel Walker Hollis, South Carolina College (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1951), 133, 136
When colleges did have money, they often had to select books based on very inadequate announcements in estate catalogs or newspaper advertisements. But this was not surprising since, according to one historian, American college libraries as a whole, “were even less stimulating of intellectual vigor than were their parent institutions.” Of the state universities, only South Carolina enjoyed relatively steady if modest appropriations after opening. Even the University of Virginia went through a “torpid interval” after the death of Thomas Jefferson. Roanoke College in Salem, Virginia, was unusual in setting aside as much as $5.00 per student for library books in the 1850s.

Library fires were devastating. The South’s first college library suffered the first fire. William and Mary lost its initial collection in 1705 and waited over two decades before starting a new one. Nonetheless, in the 1780s the Marquis de Chastellux extravagantly praised the library. By 1797, according to historian Louis Shores, “With the exception of Harvard, it is unlikely that a better college library could be found anywhere in the new world.” Fire also destroyed the University of Georgia library in 1830 or 1831. Transylvania University in Kentucky, originally a Presbyterian seminary, which opened in 1798 as the first western college, lost most of its books to fire in 1829. A fire in 1827 left Washington College with only 170 undamaged books and three decades later fires ruined libraries at Bethany College and, again, William and Mary.

The anemic state of affairs is illustrated by the University of North Carolina’s moving its library to a new building in 1854: the library was mainly used for dances and receptions and hardly at all as a depository for books and knowledge. Likewise, the University of Georgia library “was kept in some spare room … and migrated around as necessity required.” The University of Tennessee did not allocate much room for a library until 1892 and only constructed a free-standing library with Carnegie funds in 1911. In similar fashion, not until 1892 did the University of Maryland build a two-story building “to serve as a library and gymnasium.” This was all in sharp contrast with South Carolina, which in 1840 built the first American university building to be used exclusively as a library. The University of Alabama’s library has been described “as one of the greatest architectural achievements of early-nineteenth-century America.” In terms of original distinction of design, however, its predecessor, Jefferson’s rotunda at the University of Virginia, must stand in first place. Even so, the purpose of library buildings was not to serve as centers of study, research or reference but at best to house “books in tolerable supply.” Reference as a service provided for students or teachers awaited developments in the 1870s and 1880s.

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College libraries generally had little furniture although many had a separate reading room, probably drafty and unheated like the one at Davidson College. When Wake Forest College opened its doors in 1835, “No book cases were provided” and books “probably were piled on tables or on the floor.”22 In 1856, however, when the College of Charleston built a library with assistance from the state legislature, careful attention was given not just to cataloging and indexing the collection but also to having “suitable tables for the convenience of students consulting the books.”23 Scientific apparatus overshadowed the library at some colleges, for instance at the universities of Georgia and Mississippi.24 More often, as at Emory, colleges emphasized bricks and mortar rather than book collections.25

Most colleges had literary or debating society libraries as well as, and sometimes instead of, the official library. These societies dominated much of campus life. Debating gave an intellectual stimulus that contemporary education, largely dependent on rote memorization, lacked while debaters needed books and the information and rhetoric in them to help prepare for matches. In the case of Virginia, where there were no debating libraries, the Y.M.C.A. began providing current books and periodicals in 1860.27 A student at Hampden-Sydney wrote that the literary societies there “have bought splendid libraries and fitted their halls beautifully” and that members “get the use of all the most useful and interesting books in the world.”28 Donations often played a significant role in building these libraries, as at the University of Georgia, somewhat less so at Washington College.29

Most college libraries, like William and Mary’s, doubled as community libraries. In some places, however, the colleges depended on community libraries to provide for their students. Transylvania College in Kentucky, for instance, enjoyed use of the public subscription Lexington Library, founded in 1795, without, apparently, paying for the books.30 In New Orleans, the semi-public Fisk Library served the College of Louisiana until the 1880s.31

Students ran the debating society libraries but who manned the college library? Little is known about most of them.32 It appears that a professor might be appointed the library guardian, such as James C. Courtnay and Jasper Adams at the College of Charleston, 1828-1830 and 1830-1833 respectively. Thomas Park, professor of languages at what became the University of South Carolina, served as librarian for years before the salary was raised from $100 to $400 a year. He complained that “The position gave him much responsibility and no authority, since each trustee had a key to the library.”33 Often the librarian would be a student. At the University of North Carolina, graduate-tutors usually served as librarian as part of their duties. Or, for what is admittedly an extreme example, the janitor at the University of Mississippi also served as librarian from 1877 to 1882.34

Despite the fact that women had to attend separate but often unequal colleges, some of their libraries were surprisingly good. The Salem Female Academy in North Carolina amassed

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23 The librarian had to add, however, “the Library … has been too little used to warrant here any analysis of the classes of books most frequently demanded, or of the relative proportion of the different classes of students consulting the books.” [Miles] First Annual Report, 9, 13.
24 Coulter, College Life in the Old South, 52; Stanley M. Guralnick, Science and the Antebellum American College (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1975), x.
27 Robert Dabney, March 16, 1837, quoted in Pace, Halls of Honor, 68.
28 Only subscribers could check out books which, however, were housed in the college seminary building. Timothy M. Harris, “A Source of Useful Information: The Lexington Library, 1795-1810,” Kentucky Libraries 61 (Summer 2001), 14-19.
30 Powell, “Development of Libraries,” 123. This was often true in the North too. See, for example, Ravelli, “An historical analysis … New Jersey,” 39-40.
31 Hollis, South Carolina College, 45.
1,800 volumes by 1857, a strong collection for such a small school. The Female Institute in Columbia, Tennessee, founded in 1839, reported an amazing 3,500 volumes less than twenty years later. In the same town Jackson College had 3,500 and Franklin College 10,000 volumes – quite a lot of books for a county with fewer than 18,000 white people in 1860. 35

Southern colleges well knew that their book collections were meager compared to their northern counterparts and so were reluctant to publish statistics. Centenary College of Louisiana admitted its library was small but insisted it was “continu-ally receiving valuable accessions.” Chowan Female Collegiate Institute claimed it had “a small select library,” while Wofford in South Carolina opened in 1854 with 1,000 volumes. 36 Even as wealthy a college as Davidson bemoaned its collection while celebrating its selection of encyclopedias. 37 The lack of libraries helps illustrate the paucity of southern literate culture.

Little is known how libraries organized their books. Some of today’s colleges maintain an “Original Library” in which many of the original books or copies are shelved but not necessarily in the original manner. South Carolina College “arranged [its books] in three great classes – of Memory, of Judgment, and of Imagination; or History, Philosophy, and Poetry.” The Euzelian Society of Wake Forest sensibly arranged its books “according to appearance.” The University of North Carolina library responded to a questionnaire by noting how many of its books were bound as folios, quartos, octavos, or little duodecimos, which suggests that its books were arranged by size as in medieval libraries. 38

Nonetheless, over the decades some of these book collections gradually became organized libraries. The College of Charleston published a thirty-six page catalog in 1849 with the books arranged by author in alphabetical order, with no subject classification or index: “Ainsworth’s Dictionary, 4to” through “Zophiel, 18mo.” Its collection, although unorganized, was relatively large, with a reasonable mix of classical and modern works, history and science as well as theology, most in English but also a good number of Latin and French titles. In 1857, as interest in the library and the size of its collection increased, the books were re-arranged by subject in separate alcoves and cases. “The suitability and convenience of this arrangement,” said its librarian, “…is at once obvious.” 39

This survey has been brief but even so it is quite evident that not much attention was paid to college libraries in the South during the antebellum period. Most southern colleges were meant to produce a literate elite adorned with a smattering of classical and Biblical learning. Despite a few attempts to equip libraries and colleges with scientific learning, society as a whole, including legislatures and the churches and communities that sponsored colleges, invested little in libraries. Nor do we see much evidence of major innovations by librarians or, indeed, of any training of librarians. The developing national network of quicker communications should have made collection development easier but this scarcely seems to have happened.

College libraries in the South were symptomatic of the region’s cultural and institutional development. Although they grew in size and number, the South remained behind the North in wealth, urbanization and formal education. Much of the education impulse was drained instead into building multiple small colleges, based on regions and regional interests, rather than on developing larger institutions and libraries. The continuity of college libraries did, however, set an

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example that could be built upon in subsequent decades. As Edward Campbell wrote to his younger brother David, starting out as a teacher but later the governor of Virginia, “There is nothing so necessary to the attainment of a liberal education as a good library…. It is too expensive for every individual to purchase a library suitable for studying the different branches of learning.”

No one imagined a college without a library, and as colleges expanded and developed in the Southeast, so did their libraries.

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* Edward [Campbell] to brother David, 20 July 1804, Campbell Family papers, Duke University, Perkins Library Special Collections.
Bibliographic Instruction: A Cooperative Approach

Mark Brothers
Dianne Richardson

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Introduction

Are you a librarian at a small college campus with a small staff trying to promote the library and its services? Perhaps like me, you accepted a position at one of the many small, limited-staff colleges that dot the landscape of the American Southeast. As one of the four librarians on campus involved in bibliographic instruction, I find myself having to wear many hats. As Public Service Librarian, one hat I wear is working with the freshman bibliographic instruction (BI) classes, which was a unit of Freshman Studies 100. One might even find himself or herself with the problem (and the opportunity) of solely teaching all of the freshmen orientation classes. This daunting task can make anyone feel overwhelmed and confused. Although many Southeastern librarians grapple with this task, a limited amount of literature exists on the subject. Therefore, in order to encourage and guide all individuals who work at small Southeastern college libraries, I seek to highlight a few tips from my adventures in teaching library instruction at the University of West Alabama (UWA).

Background

UWA stands as the smallest public four-year college with a graduate school in the state of Alabama. The college enrolls approximately 2,000 students, with a majority majoring in education. UWA also has an active online program that enrolls over 700 students in graduate classes. Founded in 1835 as a private church school for girls, UWA later became a coeducational college and has undergone many name changes. UWA also hosts the most diverse student body of any college in Alabama with almost fifty percent white and fifty percent African American students.

The people at UWA feel like family, and UWA is a wonderful place to study or work. The traditional strength of the university lies in teaching, and the motto “the student comes first” captures the spirit of the school.

As a part of this mission library instruction, in one form or another, has always taken place at the college. However, when I accepted a position as a Public Services Librarian in 2001, I wanted to do my part in maintaining a very proactive, systematic bibliographic instruction program that had been well established at the university for many years. I came to UWA with the MLIS degree and a Masters in Education as well as teaching experience and a desire to serve. Upon arriving at the university, I began receiving requests to conduct bibliographic instruction.

Fortunately, shortly after my arrival, the library constructed an instructional computer lab with a projector and thirty computers that enabled students to have hands-on practice. The university also implemented a freshmen orientation class, UWA 101, which required most of the new students to come to the library for bibliographic instruction. In conjunction with the freshman studies program, I wanted to develop an instrument that would give feedback from students and faculty on the effectiveness of bibliographic instruction.

As I worked with the challenge of developing an instrument, I sought to answer fundamental ques-
tions concerning bibliographic instruction: “What did you gain from this experience?” and “What should I change in the format?” I found an education professor who helped me develop effective instructional techniques. She brought all of her classes to the library for instruction for several semesters, and she worked with me to develop a style that I have used ever since. She retired from teaching in K-12 schools before she became an education professor who teaches other people how to teach. She patiently showed me how to organize my instruction and to conduct a class as I made sure that the students learned the key points in a fifty-minute period.

The library already had a form in place for requesting instruction and a form for the professors’ evaluation of the instruction. The education professor however, whose specialization includes educational research techniques, created a new rubric for student and faculty evaluation forms that I customized for the different subject areas and databases (Appendices 1 and 2). Collaboration with her resulted in successful methods for teaching library skills as well as an efficient way of assessing library instruction. Many innovative ways for offering library instruction exist, including web tutorials. However, based upon the evaluations conducted with the faculty and students, human-powered library instruction when carried out according to sound principles of teaching appeared to be the most appropriate to the goals of a small, student-centered college like UWA.

The twenty-nine teachers’ evaluations, which represent about a third of UWA’s professors, were favorable with most choosing “Good” or “Excellent” as their responses. Teachers thought that the level of material was “Good;” and most teachers thought that the pace of instruction was “Just Right.” I slowed down after one teacher asked me to do so. I always repeated myself and gave direct instruction whenever a student raised his or her hand. When asked, “What aspect of our library instruction did you find most beneficial?” most people responded that having a knowledgeable librarian with good communication skills who cares about the students and walks them through searches was most beneficial. When asked, “What other information would you like to have included in bibliographic instruction?” most people said nothing. Individuals who did offer suggestions said something very basic and easy to add, such as “Make sure you tell them the hours you’re open.”

In gathering feedback from students, I chose two hundred as the sample size because it seemed to offer a large enough group to represent our two thousand students well and, being a multiple of one hundred, it made the calculations easier. Ninety-six percent agreed or strongly agreed that they could use the library catalog to find and renew books, etc. Ninety-seven percent agreed or strongly agreed that they learned how to use the library’s databases to find articles. Over ninety percent also learned to identify the elements in a citation, use descriptors to get information, seek articles by author, find a particular journal, determine which journals are peer reviewed, and print and email an article. Over ninety-four percent of people agreed or strongly agreed that they learned some new search methods from bibliographic instruction even if they were frequent library users. Perhaps the most important result was that ninety-nine percent responded that they felt free to ask for help from the library staff. That insight is important because it shows that after bibliographic instruction people feel more comfortable coming to the reference desk to ask questions. Most of them do and call me by name.

I had many hardships to overcome and much to learn when I started off as a library instructor. The adjustment in hours to fit a library schedule and evening classes added some requirements for a more flexible work schedule. Also, I had to adjust to working with students more directly and in a more personal setting. The following are a few practical lessons that I learned that can help colleagues in similar circumstances.

Suggestions for Small University Library Instructors:

1. Take Advantage of the “Down Home” Atmosphere of Your Campus.

Small colleges are like small towns where most people know each other. They emphasize the human touch and ample guidance for the students. In most small colleges, the professors care
deeply about the students’ academic success and will usually welcome library instruction for their classes in order to truly help their pupils. Thus, although you may feel that large campuses furnish more support for bibliographic instructors, remember that a small campus also offers a promising and receptive atmosphere for library teaching. Because the smaller environment may provide greater opportunities for bibliographic instruction, start promoting your program!

2. Get to know the Teaching Faculty by Visiting the Hot Spots on Campus.

Nothing helped me more in my work with library instruction at UWA than face-to-face conversations with teaching faculty. Emails and fliers just do not work as well as personal contact. Do not wait for them to come to you to ask for instruction, go and ask them. A campus cafeteria, or other centers of campus social activity, serves as a good place to meet the faculty. Also, remember that faculties often receive many emails and fliers, but a librarian who approaches them in person stands out in their minds much more. By talking with them, you will have the chance to answer any questions that they have about library instruction and perhaps even schedule a session.

3. Ask Teaching Faculty for Help in Refining Your Teaching Style.

As the public services librarian, I found I needed help from faculty in the specific disciplines to help me identify what resources to teach their students to use. I found teaching faculty to be very helpful in this area. In other words, I not only collaborated with faculty in constructing the content of the sessions but also in developing techniques of library instruction and assessment. I had a strong interest in building an effective program and the opportunity to gather data about library instruction. An education professor with knowledge of pedagogical practices offered suggestions. She also drew upon her social science training to construct a sound survey that I could distribute to students after the session. This success in collaboration suggests that librarians elsewhere in the Southeast might find potential collaborators in the teaching faculty on their campuses, particularly education faculty.

4. ”Target” the Required Courses at First.

One action that will boost your instruction program is making every effort to integrate library instruction into a required class similar to UWA 101. These classes will ensure that you reach the largest number of students and that you will reach them early in their college experience. Offering instruction through elective courses represents a less effective outcome, but you should begin where the opportunity exists.

5. Don’t Take Any of Your Students for Granted.

Help anybody who appears to need help. Seek to reach students at any level of learning through your program. The UWA evaluations of my BI sessions indicated that the overwhelming majority of professors and students value library instruction and believe that it teaches them skills that help them in their research. This belief proved true even for the veteran library users. Everyone can benefit from library training. Reach out to all levels of users on your campus.

6. Offer Human-Led Instruction

The results of the evaluations performed at UWA reveal the effectiveness of traditional classroom instruction as the best delivery method in a close-knit environment with a sizable number of first generation college students. Many students like a traditional classroom setting as opposed to the anonymity of a web tutorial or a workbook. They appreciate the opportunity to meet a friendly librarian and feel comfortable asking for further help. The chance to build a rapport with a librarian proved to be the greatest benefit of UWA’s library instruction program. You will want to get to know students so that they will feel more comfortable approaching you later!

At larger universities, web-based tutorials may offer a viable option because they provide for cost-effective, mass instruction (Neely, et al., 1999; Hull & Lawton, 2001; Kelsey & Lenares, 2002). At a small public university that emphasizes a personal touch like UWA, however, tried and true “librarian-to-the-rescue” instruction often provides the best way of reaching students,
particularly first generation college students. Librarians in similar circumstances may do best to focus on human-led instruction and not feel pressured to implement web tutorials.

7. Plan to Evaluate.

It might be tempting to rely only upon oral accolades made by your audience, but written evaluations can often shed light on areas for improvement. For example, I learned to talk directly to my audience and be sure that everyone could hear me effectively. I also learned to move around among the group and instruct from a variety of positions in the laboratory environment. Faculty and student evaluations will help enhance your sessions, and this potential for continual growth makes it essential to administer evaluations. Evaluations can also help demonstrate the effectiveness of library instruction to administrators. Feel free to use the evaluation forms included in the appendices of this article.

Conclusion

In the “small town” environment of UWA, bibliographic instruction reaches almost all of the students. While I focus more on the Freshman Studies Program, I also work with other librarians in conducting bibliographic instruction for most majors, both graduate and undergraduate. I have found that collaboration with colleagues within the library and in other departments is an essential ingredient for success.

The professional literature seems to offer much on the innovative instructional programs taking place at many large universities (Neely, et al., 1999; Hull & Lawton, 2001). However, I also think we need to keep in mind the small-scale environment and limited resources of librarians at the numerous little libraries in the Southeast. These librarians often profit most from learning about the “classic” ways of teaching library classes that have proven successful over the years.

One final tip for the other small staff librarians out there: Remember that you are not alone! If you are a public services librarian who feels alone on your campus when trying to perform library instruction, I hope that this article has offered you many straightforward, practical ideas as well as some comfort in knowing that others have had to face the same challenges and learn how to overcome them. Teaching faculties, as well as fellow librarians at similar institutions, are willing to help.
Further Reading


Appendix 1: Evaluation form for students

Library Instruction Survey Librarian:
Date: __/__/__
Demographic Information:
_____ Male _____ Female
Age: _____ 18-30; _____ 31-40; _____ 41+
Race: ________________________________________________________________
Class: ___ Freshman; ___ Sophomore; ___ Junior; ___ Senior; ___ Grad
Concentration or major:
Number of times you have used the library or a library database in the last six months: _____ 0; _____ 1-5; _____ 6+

Survey Information: Directions: Please select the number from the Likert scale that best indicates your opinion of the library orientation service:
1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = no opinion; 4 = disagree; 5 = strongly disagree

1. _____ I am able to access the library web page.
2. _____ I can use the library catalog to find and renew items.
3. _____ I know how to obtain an interlibrary loan.
4. _____ I learned how to use the library databases to find articles, etc.
5. _____ I can identify the elements in a citation.
6. _____ I can use descriptors to get the information I need.
7. _____ I can seek articles by author.
8. _____ I know how to find a particular journal.
9. _____ I can determine which journals are peer reviewed.
10. _____ I know how to print and email an article.
11. _____ I can use the Ebsco database adequately.
12. _____ I can use the Proquest database adequately.
13. _____ I can utilize meta-search engines to find web pages for research.
14. _____ I can determine which web pages are suitable for research.
15. _____ I have learned some new search methods.
16. _____ I can use the computer to do research.
17. _____ I feel that this orientation was extremely useful.
18. _____ I can use this information to improve my work in many of my classes.
19. _____ I feel free to ask for help from the library staff.
20. _____ I was able to ask questions during the orientation.
21. _____ I needed this orientation session.

It is OK to use my answers in research to improve bibliographic instruction.

Signed _____________________________

If you have any comments or suggestions, write them below or on the back. Thanks!
Appendix 2: The evaluation form that professors fill out

The University of West Alabama

Julia Tutwiler Library

Bibliographic Instruction Evaluation

Name: ________________________________________________________________________

Course: _______________________________________________________________________

Date of instruction: _______________________ Time of instruction: ______________________

Library staff member who led instruction: ___________________________________________

(Please circle one response)

Course Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Material</th>
<th>Too Elementary</th>
<th>Too Advanced</th>
<th>Just Right</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pace of Instruction</td>
<td>Too Slow</td>
<td>Too Fast</td>
<td>Just Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Application</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instructor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge of Material</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged Participation</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used Class Time Well</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Material presented logically and understandably

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material presented logically and understandably</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Teaching Effectiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Effectiveness</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What aspect of the library instruction did you find most beneficial?

What other information would you like to have included in this instruction session?

Do you have any other comments or suggestions to make about our bibliographic instruction?

Newkirk Barnes

Newkirk Barnes is an Assistant Professor/Reference Librarian at the Mitchell Memorial Library at Mississippi State University. He can be reached at: NBarnes@library.msstate.edu

Introduction

Since its creation in 1860, the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) has supplied the nation's Congress, federal agencies, and citizenry with the information they need to carry out their daily activities (Morehead 1999, 15). Through its Superintendent of Documents programs, the GPO produces and disseminates the largest volume of U.S. government publications in the world (U.S. Government Printing Office 2003).

The most widely publicized of the Superintendent of Documents programs is the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). Authorized by Title 44 of the United States Code, the FDLP provides the American public with information resources from the legislative, executive and judicial branches of the federal government. Through this program, nearly 1,300 libraries in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the territories, serve as federal depositories. The GPO distributes its various publications to these participating libraries at no cost. The libraries, in turn, maintain these publications as part of their collections and provide patrons with free and unrestricted access to them. In this way, citizens throughout the country can obtain information from the federal government in a local setting with assistance from library personnel. Furthermore, they can find information on a variety of subjects, such as economics, health and nutrition, law, education, technology, and social programs (U.S. GPO 2003).

While some argue that the growing abundance of U.S. government information on the Internet creates competition for depositories, this same phenomenon actually adds to the services depository libraries provide. These services include free, unrestricted access to federal government information in both traditional and electronic formats and in a wide range of subjects; specialized instruction in locating this information from documents librarians and other depository staff; and assistance with using computer hardware and software to find this material (U.S. GPO 2002). These services, especially those related to online resources, are vital to ensuring public access to U.S. government information, given the chaotic Internet environment. By increasing public awareness of the benefits of continuing to use depositories to obtain federal government information, these libraries can improve public access to this information.

This article discusses how librarians and other depository staff can develop programs to promote their services and resources. It suggests various promotional activities that depository library personnel can implement within their institutions and throughout the surrounding communities, using examples from the Mississippi State University (MSU) Libraries’ Government Documents Department where applicable. The article gives particular attention to government documents instruction and depository web pages.

The FDLP in Transition

Traditionally, the GPO has sent its information tools to federal depositories in tangible formats, namely paper and microfiche (Barkley 1998, 74). Since the early 1990s, however, in response to the
rapid development of the Internet and other communications technologies, the GPO has shifted its focus to electronic media (Heintz 2003, 482). Additionally, Congress has directed the GPO to progress toward an almost entirely electronic FDLP. In 1993, Congress passed the GPO Electronic Information Access Enhancement Act, which conveyed its expectation that the GPO would incorporate more electronic formats into its services, in order to provide the American public with broader access to federal government information (U.S. GPO 2004). This legislation eventually led to the Office’s 1996 “Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program” (U.S. GPO 2004).

Since that time, the number of tangible documents the GPO distributes through the FDLP has significantly decreased. For example, as of February 2005, the GPO had distributed a total of 14,274 online and tangible publications for Fiscal Year 2005; ninety-two percent of these were electronic, when multiple formats of the same title were removed (U.S. GPO 2005). At the same time that the FDLP has become more electronic, the American public has witnessed an explosion of federal government information on the Internet, mainly in the form of agency web sites. In 2003, for instance, the General Services Administration reported that the widely acclaimed FirstGov search engine provided access to over fifty-one million web pages of information from the federal government (Heintz 2003, 482). This phenomenon has dramatically reduced the volume of materials that the GPO directly controls, since some of the information that various federal agencies include in their own electronic collections does not circulate through the GPO and is therefore not formally distributed to participants in the FDLP.

The proliferation of online federal government information has two major implications for public access to this information. On the one hand, the open web platform can potentially increase public access to federal government information; users can obtain this data remotely and during hours that their nearest depositories may be closed (Aldrich, Cornwell and Barkley 2000, 285). Furthermore, users can access online publications from individual federal agencies more quickly since the information does not have to pass through an official centralized channel like the GPO. On the other hand, the continuous migration of U.S. government information to the Internet may actually hinder public access to this material, due to its sheer volume, disorganization and transient nature (Heintz 2003, 484).

The increasing availability of U.S. government information on the Internet makes it imperative that depositories actively promote their unique collections and services to the American public (U.S. GPO 2002). If users are able to obtain federal government information from their home or office computers, they may choose not to visit depositories. Therefore, depository personnel must increase public awareness of the many benefits their libraries offer. One way they can do this is by creating a formal program to promote their collections and services.

**Developing a Plan for Depository Promotion**

Promotion programs can take various forms, depending on the size and type of the organization involved and on the nature of the products or services it wishes to promote. Regardless of what form the promotion campaign takes, it should begin with a plan. This plan should outline the purpose or goals of the promotion program, the products or services it will advertise, the program’s target audience, the types of promotion it will utilize, and how it will be evaluated (Anthes 1993, 175).

The first step that depository staff should take in developing a program to promote their collections and services is to identify their primary objective or objectives for implementing such a program. Generally speaking, the goals of depository promotion are to increase public awareness of the wide variety of formats and types of federal government information; to increase users’ knowledge of specific collections of government information within a particular depository; to provide instruction on how to effectively locate, access and use the information contained in these collections; and to expand delivery of this information to as many user groups as possible (Anthes 1993, 174).
Next, depository staff should determine what they wish to promote through their program. They may choose to advertise their collections as a whole, calling attention to the various formats of government information. Some of these formats may include reference books, monographs, microforms, maps, pamphlets, online journal articles, patents and trademarks, technical reports, laws and regulations, treaties and court cases (Miller 2004). Library staff may wish to focus on specific collections; they may even want to highlight certain titles, agencies, departments, subjects, or events (Singleton 2003). Staff might also wish to feature their many services, especially those related to accessing online federal government information. Ultimately, the choice of which elements of the depository to promote depends on the needs of the depository’s primary users; staff should increase awareness of those materials and services that would be most useful to their main patron groups.

After deciding what to promote, depository staff should choose the audience or audiences they wish to reach with their promotional efforts, those whom they believe will benefit the most from their awareness campaign (Anthes 1993, 174). This decision depends on the makeup of the depository’s user base. In a college or university setting, for instance, the target audiences may be faculty, students, researchers, or campus administrators. In a public library, the target user groups may be library directors, trustees, elementary and high school students, business and government leaders, or other members of the depository’s Congressional district (Anthes 1993, 176; U.S. GPO 2002). Regardless of which user groups depository staff choose to target, they will be most successful with their promotion program if they tailor it to these specific groups. The staff should take into account the average age, technological skill level, and information seeking patterns of these patrons, as doing so will help them to choose the most appropriate forms of promotion through which to reach the patrons (Anthes 1993, 176). Additionally, depository staff should consider the different types of information their users require, such as statistics, current research, legislation, trade agreements, consumer information, speeches or manuscripts (Miller 2004).

Promotional Activities in the Library and Beyond

Once depository personnel have chosen what they wish to promote and to whom they wish to promote it, they need to decide which types of promotional activities their program will incorporate. In order to effectively promote the depository’s collections and services to their target audiences, staff should choose the forms of promotion that are most appropriate for those audiences. They may wish to utilize several different types of promotion in order to reach different audiences, or they may choose to focus on just a few types of promotion in order to reach specific groups (Anthes 1993, 176). The various forms of promotion can take place within the depository, around its parent institution, or throughout the surrounding community.

Within the library, depository personnel can promote their collections and services through a broad range of media. For instance, they can use print tools, such as bookmarks and brochures, to provide their audiences with basic information about the depository, and they can supplement these with either print or electronic subject bibliographies or pathfinders to provide a more in-depth guide to their collections (Singleton 2003; Hopcroft 1998; Shumaker 2001). Depository staff can also reach their audiences online, for example, by sending out notices of new materials of interest via departmental e-mail lists or listservs, or through the library’s electronic newsletter (Anthes 177; Singleton 2003). For example, the MSU Libraries’ Government Documents Department provides signs to point out some of its physical resources, including topographic maps and tax forms.

In addition to utilizing these more traditional methods of promotion, staff can also reach their audiences online, for example, by sending out notices of new materials of interest via departmental e-mail lists or listservs, or through the library’s electronic newsletter (Anthes 177; Shumaker 2001). Then, in order to provide a
more personal introduction to their depository’s resources, staff can conduct tours of the collection areas or make presentations at meetings for the various library departments and committees (Anthes 1993, 176; Shumaker 2001). Most importantly, they can provide training sessions for selected audiences in which they instruct them how to effectively locate, access, analyze and use federal government information in its various formats (Shumaker 2001). The MSU Libraries’ Government Documents Department, in collaboration with the Instructional Services Department, offers “Talking About the Government” seminars that teach these very skills.

 Depository staff can apply these same methods of promotion to target users and potential users in the areas surrounding the library, particularly in the case of depositories located within academic libraries. They can place displays, exhibits, posters, brochures, handouts, or guides in areas of high visibility throughout the campus or other parent institution; these can provide a general overview of the depository or highlight specific publications in subject areas of interest to the user community (Singleton 2003; Shumaker 2001). For instance, various personnel from the MSU Libraries set up informational booths at strategic campus events like the Graduate Student Information Fair and the MSU Student Involvement Fair; the booths include materials that describe the Government Documents Department’s resources.

 Staff can also advertise the depository through articles in campus newspapers or departmental newsletters; through e-mail to students, faculty, or other user groups; through postings to various listservs at the institution; and through letters to department heads and administrators (Anthes 1993, 177; Shumaker 2001). Finally, depository staff can make presentations for, or offer instructional classes to, student and faculty organizations throughout the parent institution (Shumaker 2001); they may even wish to contact faculty to discuss how to incorporate government documents instruction into their courses, both onsite and through distance education (Marquez 1998).

 In order to promote the depository’s resources to the larger community, be it the library’s Congressional district or the general public, staff can increase awareness of the depository through several channels. These include phone book or newspaper advertisements, radio announcements, and community newsletters (Anthes 1993, 177; Marquez 1998; Shumaker 2001). Depository personnel can also generate e-mail lists of interested individuals and groups in the community and reach both old and new patrons this way. Such contacts may lead to opportunities to make presentations at meetings of local business, government or service organizations, or to offer classes or workshops for the entire community (Shumaker 2001). Staff may wish to extend this form of promotion to professional organizations at the local, state and national levels, including those with a library focus (U.S. GPO 2002).

Government Documents Instruction

Whether promoting the depository’s collections and services to the library community, members of the library’s parent institution, or the public at large, depository personnel can use instructional sessions to teach target audiences how to effectively utilize the myriad federal government publications available to them. While the content of the various instructional sessions will vary according to the user group, some general guidelines still apply. First, the staff member leading the session should explain the significance of federal government information in general and its usefulness for that specific audience (Anthes 1993, 178). Second, the instructor should emphasize the features and applications of key resources rather than trying to cover too many publications. Third, the instructor should provide a clear research strategy for the audience. He or she may begin this portion of the session by introducing background sources such as handbooks, directories, and encyclopedias, and then move to access tools like FirstGov.gov and the library’s online catalog (Anthes 1993, 180). The instructor may also want to cover indexes to periodicals or technical reports from specific departments or agencies, if applicable. Then, he or she may wish to distinguish among government publications from state, regional, national and international
jurisdictions. Most importantly, the instructor should remind the audience of the need to critically evaluate all government information they retrieve, as this is a skill they can apply when using other types of information resources.

**Depository Web Pages**

The depository’s web page is another form of promotion that staff can use to target patron groups both within and outside the library; in fact, this is probably the most relevant promotional tool, given the public’s growing reliance on the Internet to find all types of information. However, in order to effectively promote the depository’s resources to target audiences, staff should follow some general guidelines when creating and maintaining the web page. One of the first steps the page creator must take is to decide the contents of the page, which should reflect the government information needs of the depository’s various user groups (Hopcroft 1998). The page creator should consider, for example, the social and demographic makeup of the depository’s Congressional district, frequently asked reference questions concerning government information, and local and national issues or topics of particular interest to the user community (Gaines 2001; Hopcroft 1998). After determining what types of information the depository’s users would find most helpful, the page creator can locate the sites that fall into these various categories. Then, he or she can choose the arrangement of this information on the page. For instance, the page could contain a section for general information about the depository and the FDLP, including e-mail links and telephone numbers for staff; a section for guides to government information, both within and outside the depository; a section with major sites like GPO Access, FirstGov, and THOMAS; a section that lists local, state, national and international sites; and a section that features selected topics and current events in the news (McMullen 1997). The depository web page creator can then sort the various links he or she finds into the appropriate subject categories. He or she should check all these links regularly to make sure they still work properly, and also update the contents of each section in accordance with user needs (Glenn 2003).

Once the page creator has chosen what to include in the depository web page, he or she can then plan its design. Generally speaking, the web page should be simple in its design. For example, it should not contain an excessive amount of graphics or multimedia, as these require more staff time to create and maintain, and they may take longer to load, which may deter patrons from using the page when seeking U.S. government information (Gaines 2001; Hopcroft 1998). The page should contain a relatively limited amount of information, making it more manageable for both the page creator and for users, who desire expedient access to federal government information. Furthermore, the page should be easy to find; ideally, the Library’s home page is clearly displayed on the parent institution’s home page, and the Government Documents department’s page is prominently displayed on the Library’s page. In this way, users can reach the depository page quickly, without having to wade through several layers of links to find the federal government information they need. By facilitating user access to the depository’s page, the page creator encourages users to revisit the site and thereby improves their access to federal government information.

Regardless of the contents and design of the depository’s page, its creator should use this tool to maximize the depository’s promotional efforts. A depository Web page has the potential to reach not only selected target audiences, but the general public as well, so the page creator should explore ways in which to incorporate as many user groups as possible. Establishing reciprocal links with other departments within the parent institution, and with organizations outside the institution, is one approach (Marquez 1998). For example, the page creator can contact other depositories to create reciprocal links to various internal and external subject guides held at each depository. Additionally, he or she can try to set up common links with academic departments, especially on individual instructors’ course pages, and with public institutions such as school districts, chambers of commerce, and cultural centers (Marquez 1998). The Web page creator may even wish to contact media outlets or private businesses to discuss opportunities to share each
others’ resources. Such contacts may lead to closer collaboration between and among these entities in the future and will also facilitate public access to federal government information.

**Conclusion**

Once depository staff have designed a plan for a promotional program and implemented that plan, they should evaluate the results of the program’s activities. Doing so allows staff to identify those activities that worked and those that did not (Anthes 1993, 178). This, in turn, allows staff to create future promotional projects that will be more successful in reaching their various target audiences, thereby increasing public access to federal government information. Thus, staff should regularly assess the outcomes of their promotional efforts in order to modify them according to users’ government information needs. Examples of tools used to do this include questionnaires, evaluation forms, and comment sheets. Staff may also gather user statistics on such items as in-house use of depository resources, interlibrary loan requests, and Web page hits (Hayes 2002). They may even wish to keep track of how many new patrons or referrals their depositories receive.

As more and more federal government information becomes available on the Internet, depository personnel must continue to proactively promote their collections and services to individuals and groups in their respective libraries, parent institutions and extended communities. While the ongoing migration of U.S. government publications may, in some ways, improve public access to these documents, it may also create barriers to access due to the chaotic nature of the Internet medium. This phenomenon provides depository staff with more opportunities to increase public awareness of the benefits of using depositories to seek federal government information, which include instruction on how to effectively locate, access and use federal government information sources in both print and electronic formats. By promoting the resources offered by members of the FDLP, depository personnel can connect the American public with the information to which they are entitled as citizens, and which they need to fully participate in our democracy.
References


Bricks, Books, and Metaphor:
The Place of First Libraries in Alabama Communities
Annabel K. Stephens, D.L.S

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While reading various histories of public libraries in Alabama, the writer became fascinated with what they revealed about the place of these communities’ early libraries, in both the literal and the metaphorical sense. These histories include intriguing details about the buildings where libraries were first housed, few of which were originally built to be libraries, and about Alabama citizens’ dedication to creating and maintaining community libraries.

Due to conditions of extensive poverty, illiteracy and poor education, and the rural nature of most of its communities, the majority of Alabama libraries were established much later than those in other parts of the country. By 1850 there were 1,064 social and subscription libraries in the New England states, where the public library movement began and flourished, but contrary to the Alabama experience, relatively few such libraries were started after 1890 as more and more towns established locally-funded public libraries. By 1896 there were over one thousand public libraries in the country as a whole.

In Alabama, as late as 1920, local government officials had established only one library with tax revenue. Almost all of the thirty-two libraries in existence in the state in 1921 began as private subscription libraries, which only later were given financial support from local governments. The same factors that delayed the formation of libraries in the state, however, certainly increased the need for them and may well have increased the citizens’ motivations for establishing and maintaining libraries when they became possible.

Information Gathering

During a 1997 sabbatical, the writer acquired a small number of library histories from the files of the Alabama Public Library Service (APLS). Letters requesting their histories were then sent to the rest of Alabama’s more than two hundred public libraries. The responses to these requests, along with visits to twenty-one of the state’s public libraries, resulted in a total of sixty library histories.

The writer sent out a second request in October 2003, and a third in November 2004, to the public libraries that had not responded earlier. Seventy-seven additional histories have been received thus far, for a total of 137.

The Early Libraries

The histories obtained by the author reveal that some sort of library or library system was established in Alabama communities in the 1800s and the 1810s and during each of the decades from 1870 through 2000. The number of libraries founded in each of these decades is listed in Table 1. For the four libraries in Hale County, Monroe County, Columbiana, and Camden, we know only that they were established “pre” 1920, 1927, and 1939 and “after” 1939, respectively. Those libraries established in the earlier decades would have begun as private association or subscription libraries. Most eventually became legally-recognized and locally-funded public libraries.

The 137 histories the author analyzed include information on the physical buildings that housed the libraries. They also contain numerous and

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4 “Hale County Library.” [Material for this history was borrowed from “Historic Hale County” edited by Randall Curb and from notes and minutes of the Library Board of Trustees’ meetings.]; Turner, Frances. 1988. “History of the Monroe County Library.” [typescript]; “A Short History of the
very telling details indicative of the strong desire of local people for libraries in their communities and the generosity and hard work that brought these libraries into being. All across the state, in towns large and small, citizens gave of their money, often of their own books and magazines, and equally as important, of their time and labor, to establish libraries as places for the children and adults of their communities to read, become inspired, learn, and grow. The libraries’ “metaphorical place” refers to the citizens’ awareness of the importance and need for local libraries and their extensive efforts to create libraries for their communities.

The Libraries’ Physical Places

Communities housed their first libraries in all sorts of buildings. Many were either quite small or in disrepair; a few seem rather strange places to use as libraries, as described in the following account. However, the people had such strong desires for libraries within their communities that they worked to make the buildings as attractive as possible.

As one might expect, many libraries were housed in city- or county-owned buildings. Fifteen of these were in city halls, some in “tiny rooms,” and one in a hallway. Others were adjacent to, or even inside, mayors’ offices. In Hueytown, an office used by the mayor in the morning was open for library use in the afternoon. Carbon Hill created a library in the rear of the city hall’s auditorium, but reserved the right to hold public meetings and all elections in this space as well. The library in Midfield was in a building adjacent to the jail, while Pelham’s library was in a building that still housed a jail, separated “by only a thin wall.”

Thirteen of the libraries were in courthouses. Scottsboro’s probate judge even granted permission for use of his jury room, while a ladies’ club in Livingston leased a former probate judge’s office for its library. Libraries were also started in city- and county-owned community houses and activity buildings located adjacent to courthouses. Housed in two small, damp rooms in the basement of a community house, Pleasant Grove’s library had standing water when it rained.

Twelve of the libraries were given space in schools, some of which were still in use at the time. Birmingham’s superintendent of schools established a library in a room adjacent to his office, creating the “acorn which took root and grew” into the state’s largest library system. In rural Walker county, a superintendent allowed teachers to use his personal collection and bought a supplementary collection, which he then housed in his office and circulated among the county’s teachers and children. Rainbow City’s library was located in the renovated lunchroom of a school that had burned. Public libraries in Cullman, Troy, and Florence were first located in colleges; Troy’s remained a joint public/college library for eleven years. Started by the school’s librarian, the joint public/school library at Marion County High School in Guin remains today as the state’s only such joint-use library.

Fourteen of Alabama’s early libraries began in houses; in a few cases their founders continued to live there. A Geneva lady shared her personal library with the town, and “… both young and old gathered at her home to read, discuss and borrow her books.” Fairhope’s library began when a local lady initially invited people into her home to use her own personal library; she later had a small building constructed on her property which

Columbiana Public Library” [undated typescript]; “Jones, Margaret and Godbold, Mary Scott. “Camden Study Forum.” [undated typescript];
“History of the Carbon Hill Library.” [undated typescript].
9 “History [Walker County Library].” [undated typescript].
10 1995. “Rainbow City Public Library.” [typescript].
13 “Emma Knox Kenan” and “Geneva Library Association—During the 1920’s.” [undated typescript].

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served as the community’s library for many years. When this benefactor and librarian “left the scene of her happy labors…” her funeral was held in the library building “that had so long been the object of her care and affection.”

Community buildings, such as banks and Masonic halls, often housed libraries. Twelve libraries were either upstairs over, or located within, offices and stores such as dentist’s offices, hardware, and furniture stores. Opelika’s library was in a small upstairs room inside a clothing store, and Roanoke’s was in a corner of a ladies’ dress shop.

An old pump house was used as a library in Oneonta; the librarian’s chair was placed on a board over the hole where the pump had been. Arab’s library was described as having been “in a small building by the old mule bar”; Irondale’s was in half of a one-room building “beside the railroad tracks.” Hotels housed early libraries in Florence and Citronelle. Sheffield’s library was in a Red Cross building, and the Camden Study Club used an American Legion hall for its library.

Two libraries were in churches, with the one in Brewton still being used for worship. The Evergreen library was in a storeroom at the rear of an old Baptist church. This building leaked so badly when it rained that it was hard to find a dry place to keep the books; there was also the problem of sharing the storeroom with rats. Slocomb used an old army barracks for its first library. Libraries in Eva and Moody started out in retired bookmobiles. A group of ladies in Arley purchased a trailer, while a “modular home” was bought for use as a library in Green Pond.

Early libraries in Anniston, Bessemer, Decatur, Montgomery, Selma, Talledega and Troy were housed in buildings donated by the Carnegie Foundation. The Carnegie Foundation donated a total of thirteen library buildings to Alabama communities.

Most of these 137 libraries have moved many times throughout their histories, usually to larger more functional buildings. New buildings specifically designed as libraries eventually replaced many of the earlier buildings; these were funded with Library Services and Construction Act grants, money from local governments, and donations, often quite large, from private citizens and organizations.

The Libraries’ Metaphorical Place in their Communities

The following section and accompanying case studies provide information on the occupations of some of the individuals and the types of organizations responsible for founding the 137 libraries. The citizens’ efforts to fund, furnish, and acquire materials for the libraries are evidence of their strong desire and willingness to create and maintain libraries for their communities.

The Founders

From reading the libraries’ histories, it is quite apparent that they began as dreams in the minds and hearts of their founders. Usually one person, a small group of individuals, or members of a local organization realized the need for a library and worked very hard to involve other citizens and groups in bringing their dreams to fruition.

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Sometimes particular people are named as the motivating force. Among these are mayors, presidents of men’s service clubs, teachers, school librarians, county school library supervisors, school superintendents, a radio announcer, a dentist, a minister, and others whose occupations are not provided. The histories often merely credit a group of “interested” or “dedicated” citizens or “several citizens [who] met to try to make their dream a reality.”

In some communities, individual Lions and Rotary Clubs, Jaycees, Chambers of Commerce, Exchange Clubs, community development organizations or committees were responsible for establishing their town’s first libraries. In others, several or even all of the local community organizations worked together to create libraries. At times these organizations were merely the catalyst; organizations also sponsored the libraries. Often organization members served on library boards; slots on boards were at times designated specifically for a member or members of the organizations.

Women’s clubs and particular, sometimes named, club members were the driving forces behind many of the state’s libraries. The histories relate how members of women’s clubs worked to motivate their local governments to establish libraries. In Rainbow City, for example, several ladies appeared before the town council and expressed an interest in starting a public library.

Forty-one of the 137 histories credit women’s clubs with founding libraries; the majority continued to sponsor these libraries for many years. At times club members took turns serving as librarian; some of the libraries were housed in club members’ homes. Often the clubs raised money to hire a librarian, buy books and furniture, and pay rent; some clubs leased buildings and club members went door-to-door collecting books. At some point in the clubs’ histories, the club women opened “their” libraries to the public and/or turned them over to local governments. Most of these civic organizations continue to support the libraries with gifts of time and money.

The histories of these libraries reveal how deeply committed and involved many local citizens were in creating and working to maintain libraries for their communities. Many of the buildings mentioned earlier, meager though they were, were either donated or provided rent-free by citizens. To finance these early libraries, citizens hosted variety shows, Halloween costume parties, street carnivals, barbecues, oyster suppers, and ice cream socials. They sold cookbooks and candy, collected soap wrappers, sponsored basketball teams and Lyceum courses, ran a tearoom, held garage and bake sales, quilt shows, Christmas bazaars, and conducted numerous other fundraising activities attended by local citizens.

The Tennessee Valley Authority donated books to some libraries; others received books from discontinued army camps. Citizens collected books by holding book teas and showers, by going door-to-door, and even by driving in a caravan to the state capitol to borrow them from the state library agency. Citizens who were grateful to have places to go to read and materials to take home often willingly paid membership and book rental fees. They also signed bank notes; donated books and magazines, money and land; loaned money (interest free) and buildings; painted and cleaned, built shelves, tables and chairs; and moved books into their new libraries.

Case Studies

The following eleven case studies provide illustrative details of citizens’ efforts in founding and maintaining Alabama’s public libraries. Arranged chronologically by date established, the case studies describe libraries started over a period of 110 years, from as early as 1893 to as recent as 2003.

**Tuscumbia**

The Helen Keller Public Library in Tuscumbia, Alabama’s “oldest library of continuous service,” was chartered in 1893. Six ladies met to organ-
ize a “reading circle and library,” invited other interested woman to join and make contributions, and secured a charter. Helen Keller and Annie Sullivan were designated as “life members.” Townspeople donated books and bookcases, and Miss Keller received donations of books from her many out-of-town friends. Each member of the “Helen Keller Library and Library Association” paid fifty cents each year for dues and also took her turn as librarian; a small rental fee was charged for each book checked out. When the library outgrew its room in the Deshler Female Institute, members of the association and the community purchased a former opera house. The association was responsible for funding and operating the library, including paying a librarian for many years, until the city began appropriating six hundred dollars per year in 1947. In 1956, the association pledged twenty-five thousand dollars toward the construction of a new library building. In 1958, after sixty-five years of service, this group ceased to operate the library when it became a member of the regional system. Members remained (and still remain) interested and supportive of the library.

**Selma**

Selma’s first library was begun in 1894 when an agent for a struggling publishing company persuaded each member of the community who bought books from her company to also pledge money toward establishing a library. She gave the community some bookcases and about three hundred books. Subscribers paid three dollars to select books up to that amount, also pledging one dollar and fifty cents to defray the library’s expenses. Gifts from various sources furnished a room for the library on the ground floor of a hotel.

In 1903, a ten thousand dollar grant was obtained from the Carnegie Foundation to build a library. The citizens of Selma raised five thousand dollars to purchase a lot, and the city pledged to provide at least ten percent of the library’s financial needs each year. On June 22, 1904, a barbecue was held to celebrate the library’s opening and benefit its book fund. All the downtown businesses closed so that workers could take part in the celebration.

Selma’s current director Becky Nichols believes that “the heritage of being a Carnegie library has remained a cornerstone for the present library....” She describes the Selma library of today as “truly the center piece of our downtown community, as well as the hub for programs, activities, and resources.”

**Geneva**

The Emma Knox Kenan Public Library in Geneva began in 1901 as a subscription library. Mrs. Kenan and the ladies of the “Geneva Library Association” received many donated books and bought others by selling subscriptions for one dollar a year. In 1904, Mrs. Kenan agreed to help Geneva’s school principal organize a library for school children “on one condition, that it be open to the public…. A meeting of the heads of families was called in the Kenan home to make plans.”

Over the next twenty years, the ladies of the Geneva Library Association worked to raise money for a permanent building for the library. They gave dinner parties, sponsored girls’ basketball games and Lyceum courses with famous speakers and entertainers, served a dinner made of food contributed by nationally advertised manufacturers, held fashion shows, Halloween costume parties, and a series of street carnivals and fairs, and sold handmade items and homemade ice cream. By 1925, the ladies had raised almost enough money to purchase the one thousand dollar lot they wanted. A banker and several other businessmen “donated generously” to pay the rest, and Mrs. Kenan’s son-in-law donated his company’s equipment to build the library services and supervised the construction.

**Livingston**

In 1905, the Primrose Club, “feeling desperately the need of a library for Sumter County,” worked diligently to form their county’s first library. Incorporated as “The Sumter County Library Association,” club members held “entertain-
ments” and suppers, leased and redecorated a brick building formerly used as the probate judge’s office, bought tables and chairs, a desk, and bookcases, and supplied books and magazines. The club paid fifty cents a day to members who served as librarians and maintained the library for thirty-three years before transferring it to the county in 1938. From then on, the county paid the utility bills, the cleaning service, and the librarian’s salary in addition to furnishing some books, but the club continued to buy books and magazines and make significant contributions to the library.

**Sylacauga**

Sylacauga’s first free public library “was launched” by its Rotary Club. Members of twenty-three civic organizations met and agreed to work together to create a library. All of the organizations donated money and books, and the library opened in 1936 with 164 books donated by local citizens, two hundred and fifty dollars, and the promise of fifty dollars a month in support from the city. In 1937, the county voted an appropriation of fifty dollars a month, which was soon raised to one hundred dollars each month to support the library.

**Goodwater**

In 1943, the newly organized Rotary Club “brought to the attention of the citizens of Goodwater the need for a library in the town.” The club’s first president, a state legislator, told the Rotarians that any town that wanted a library could have one by securing state aid. The club chose the library as their first project and began raising local funds required for a match by the state. The library opened in 1944 with 441 books. The state library agency loaned the library many of their books, while interested citizens also donated books and magazines. In 1973, a new library built with Library Service and Construction Act assistance was opened and “tribute was paid to all those zealous, devoted people who dreamed a dream that at last became a reality.”

**Arab**

Although a library “had been talked about and dreamed about for a long time,” Arab was without one until 1964. An announcer at radio station WRAB called a meeting in the city hall, and a committee was appointed to explore the possibility of creating a library. A committee member offered to store any donated books at his home until a permanent place could be located and made ready.

Soon a businessman agreed for the library to use a small building he owned rent-free for its first year. Two men, one of whom was a committee member, brought their Boy Scout troops to paint the building, and a vocational agriculture teacher and the boys in his class built book shelves. Committee members installed the shelves and built tables and benches, and a lumber company donated a front door, which a committee member installed. Electricians wired the library at no cost; a lady made drapes; and a man loaned his typewriter. Citizens also donated an air conditioner, an awning, and a desk.

Every organization in the community gave money for books, and the library opened with a collection of five hundred books, each cataloged by a librarian at the local high school. A local florist donated floral arrangements, and the Arab High School Band played for the library’s opening.

**Adamsville**

In 1972, the president of the local Lions Club encouraged his club to start a community library as its project. Club members asked several local residents to serve as board members, and the town annexed the property of a former school librarian, who lived just outside the town limits, so that she could serve on the board. Today a place on the Adamsville City Library’s board is perpetually reserved for a member of the Lions Club.
When the nearby county library was destroyed by a tornado in 1974, Walker County officials offered to set up a branch library in the tiny town of Arley, if the town would furnish a librarian and a place to house it. Busy with having a water system set up, the town council asked the Arley Women’s Club for help. Since no building was available, the ladies decided to have a trailer built for two thousand nine hundred dollars. They raised eight hundred dollars with bake sales and road blocks, requests for donations, and other fundraising activities. A dozen ladies signed a note to borrow two thousand one hundred dollars. A man offered use of his lot, and another paid for having lights installed. A trucker brought shelves and books from the county library, and a local man installed the shelves. The club hired a woman to work as librarian. The town council paid the utility bills and a small per capita appropriation. Later they began paying the librarian, but the club continues to pay the insurance and repair bills and to purchase any needed equipment.

In 1982, a Hoover couple invited twenty-three friends to their home to share their vision of starting a library for their fast-growing community. Three months after drafting bylaws and obtaining incorporation papers, the group became the Friends of the Hoover Library. The Friends circulated petitions asking the mayor and city council for support. They hosted a membership coffee, and obtained the promise of one hundred thousand dollars in financial support from the city, an additional 124 members, and the commitment of five citizens to serve as board members. The Friends raised funds by creating a cookbook, hosting a “tasting fair,” and collecting dues. They also received donations from many individuals and civic organizations. The library opened in 1983, only fifteen months after the initial meeting of friends, and is now one of Alabama’s busiest libraries.

One of the state’s newest libraries, begun in 1996 and legally established in 2003, is in the tiny community of Green Pond, population 2,500. A retired schoolteacher instigated several town meetings, found other townspeople who wanted a library, and “minus one red cent in our coffers, four citizens set out to establish a library.” One of the four pledged his personal balance so that the committee could borrow two thousand five hundred dollars from a local bank. They purchased a twenty year old modular building that had been used as a portable classroom. A citizen prepared the community-owned lot with his bulldozer. A couple contributed bathroom fixtures, and citizens plumbed the building, built shelves, painted and wall-papered the inside, made curtains, and built decks around the building. A local painter gave them a huge discount on painting the outside. Libraries and people in surrounding counties sent books for the library, and citizens and businesses donated furniture, computers and printers, videos, paint, and, occasionally, cash.

These descriptions of citizen involvement in local library development are but a few of the many detailed accounts that illustrate how highly motivated many of Alabama’s citizens were to have a place in their communities where people could come to read, obtain materials for home reading, and meet together to discuss important issues. All of the written histories obtained thus far reveal that many people gave of their time and money, working strenuously and cooperatively to create public libraries for their communities.

Sadly, many of the conditions that delayed the library movement in Alabama still exist in parts of the state. Although this article has concentrated for the most part on the founding and early years of the libraries described, many of the histories also describe library services and programs provided more recently, many of which are designed for at-risk patrons and economically disadvantaged communities.

“Arley Library.” [undated typescript].
“Hoover Library.” [typescript].
“Friends of the Hoover Library.” [typescript].
“Green Pond.” [typescript].
As in the libraries’ early years, citizens who are able are often involved in funding and working with library programs to benefit those in need. Together the libraries’ histories show that what often began as merely a dream and a desire in the hearts and minds of a few, exists today as places where all of a community’s citizens can seek refuge, learning, and ways to improve their quality of life.

**TABLE**

**Number of Alabama Libraries Founded in Each Decade from 1800 to 2000:**

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What is information and referral (I&R) service? The most widely accepted definition of I&R is “the active process of linking a person with a need or problem with a service which will meet the need or solve the problem.”

For example, this type of service would provide detailed information, including contact information, mailing address, telephone number, etc., about where a person could go to receive childhood immunizations. There are three basic requirements of an I&R service: creation of a resource file, distribution of the information, and updating the file.

I&R services were originally created to serve the disadvantaged members of underserved areas, but few actually served this population exclusively or even primarily.

I&R is similar to the library’s reference service transaction. One element of an I&R service is finding information in anticipation of user needs. Another element is helping the user find information. The final element is advising the user. Librarians are trained to perform all of these elements; they perform them in reference services every day.

Librarians have a number of characteristics that make them an ideal host for I&R services. As stated earlier, librarians are trained to find and organize information so users can access it. Libraries, through their location and hours of operation, are usually easier to use than other agencies. Members of a library’s staff are usually trained in a consistent manner, so getting the information is easier. Public libraries serve an entire community, which means that the “unserved” groups have access to the information. Libraries strive to be “neutral” organizations, so hopefully users will not feel any political, cultural, or ideological expressions implied in the materials. Finally, libraries generally have a large number of resources available that supplement the traditional I&R resource file.

For these reasons, libraries “borrowed” the concept of I&R from the social service delivery systems. Another reason libraries are providing I&R service is to reach a larger part of the population. This would mean getting to the disadvantaged members of the underserved areas that I&R was originally created to help.

Few I&R services existed before 1900. After World War II as people moved into the cities, most either lacked the skills necessary to perform city jobs or the knowledge essential for survival in the city, or were poor. These people also faced another problem: their inability to find needed information. These problems demonstrated the need for I&R services. Such services began to grow, but they were not I&R specific. The majority of these services was normally a result of another service and concentrated on a specific group or subject, which left a larger group and numerous subjects uncovered. Because of the lack of full subject and group coverage, I&R services were unfamiliar to the general public. These issues led people to consider that public libraries should provide I&R services.

In 1968, the Enoch Pratt Free Library and the University of Maryland’s library school, both in Baltimore, began researching the possibility of

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4 Ibid., 110-112.
6 Advances, 110
providing I&R services. In 1970, the research became reality when the Public Information Center opened. Unfortunately, the project failed and closed four years later. The project failed for a number of reasons. For instance, some of the services were not prominently placed in the library; they were not offered alongside regular reference services and information activities; there was inadequate staffing; and the users had to visit the physical library. The Detroit Public Library began its I&R service in 1970 called The Information Place (TIP) service. The library administrators attempted this service in response to funding problems. They anticipated that providing this service would bring the library more community attention, which would increase the library’s impact on the community and funding. Detroit learned from the mistakes made by Enoch Pratt. For instance, the Detroit library staff was trained to collect and provide better information; they incorporated these services into the other services; and publicized the service. After three years, the service was working and growing, and became the model for other libraries to follow.

Also in 1971, the University of Illinois held a conference on this type of service. The “is I&R library work or social work?” conference was the first formal and nationwide meeting dealing with this topic. Although the question was not answered, the I&R movement grew.

The next major step in I&R services occurred between 1972 and 1975. During these years, the Office of Libraries and Learning Resources and the U.S. Office of Education funded a huge I&R service project. Five public libraries from large cities participated in the project, called the Neighborhood Information Centers Project. As a direct result of this project, the number of libraries providing an I&R service steadily grew. In 1977, 296 libraries reporting that they were involved in some sort of I&R service.

Despite the growth of I&R services, there are a number of problems associated with libraries providing I&R services. Librarians are trained to isolate a user’s need and then provide the most appropriate resource. With I&R, most users are looking for general information about a service that can solve a particular problem or need. The mission of a library can also clash with an I&R service. Most libraries’ mission emphasizes collecting and providing access to documents, print or electronic, and answering reference questions. An I&R service requires an addition to that mission since answers to questions are obtained using a resource file, containing information about agencies, organizations, etc. in the community that provide services and their contact information, instead of materials libraries hold in their collections. Another problem is that the librarians are removed from the agencies, organizations, etc., that provide services detailed in the I&R resource file, which could lead to erroneous information if the file is not regularly updated.

Another example of problems with librarians providing I&R is the philosophical attitude of the profession. Most librarians are trained and are more comfortable using bibliographic tools and techniques to find the information. The driving attitude, “I am only as good as my sources,” tends to make librarians promote books or electronic resources as the sources of information rather than themselves. Librarians should try to break free from this attitude. They should promote themselves as the best source of information. Other problems with I&R services often occur because of bad planning, for example, lack of proper training, lack of standards for the I&R resource file, lack of criteria for staffing configurations and qualifications, lack of understanding the difference between coordinated and cooperative I&R services, and poor funding.

Libraries that are going to offer I&R services must first determine what they can do to assist their users. Investigating the community to determine what information services exist usually is the first step. Librarians must check their findings against what they already offer in the collec-

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tion. The final step is to determine how to provide access to this information. In performing these steps, librarians must keep their community and users in mind. The service provided must be considered the best way to serve the whole community.\(^{17}\) Another consideration librarians need to address is the additional requirements they must undertake. Reference librarians, in most libraries, had two prime responsibilities: collection development and instruction/reference work. With the implementation of an I&R service, reference librarians began doing all of the requirements of library work including acquisitions, cataloging, and maintaining files and/or records.\(^{18}\) The reference librarians would need to make sure the agencies listed in the files were still active, update the contact information if needed, and remove any agencies that were no longer active.

I&R services have several component services. These components are usually present in the “linking” process. It is important to remember that each component is not mutually exclusive. The components include a resource file, the question/answer element, a clarification aspect, follow-up, assessment, advocacy, feedback, and assistance.\(^{19}\)

A resource file, which is a directory or listing of agencies, organizations, services, etc. outside the library offering some service to the community, must be created and provided to the public. The file can be in any format, printed document, index card, microform lists, computer files, loose-leaf notebooks, etc.\(^{20}\)

The question/answer component can occur in three different ways. The “simple-information giving,” which occurs when a user asks a direct question and the librarian provides the information about a service outside the library. The “simple referral,” occurs when the librarian refers or directs the user to an appropriate resource. The “complex referral” occurs when the librarian contacts the service provider directly for the user.\(^{21}\)

The “clarifying the need” component is what occurs when the librarian tries to determine if there are needs other than those expressed directly. Librarians should perform the “follow-up” component to ensure the user has received the appropriate resource and help they need.\(^{22}\)

Librarians can often complete the “advising – resources” component by providing an assessment of the outside resource. The “advocacy” component may be performed if the user has problems getting assistance from an outside agency. A librarian may want to perform the “reporting” component, which means providing feedback about the agencies. Finally, a librarian may complete the “arranging for related services” component to assist the user in following through with the information. This assistance could involve providing transportation to the agency, providing a place for the user to meet with the service provider, etc.\(^{23}\)

Librarians must be very careful when informing a user about a service provider. They must treat the information in the resources file as they would materials in the collection. Librarians should not rate the service or remove the agency from the resource file if the agencies are not performing to the user’s or librarian’s satisfaction. This may cause the resource file to be slanted or otherwise incomplete. In addition, users should also be given more than one service provider when possible. This should be done in order for the user to make up his or her mind who to use to ensure that the library is not promoting one provider over another.\(^{24}\)

As with other aspects of the library’s services, such as circulation and cataloging, I&R can use computers to facilitate use\(^ {25}\) It is much easier to organize the information, make that information accessible, and especially update the information using computers.\(^ {26}\) Libraries began using computers for I&R services in 1985 and this use has led to specific formats for sharing the data.\(^ {27}\) If a

\(^{17}\) Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science (New York, NY: Marcel Dekker, Inc., 1978), 24-314
\(^{18}\) Reference, 180
\(^{19}\) National Commission, 6-7
\(^{20}\) Ibid., 6-7
\(^{21}\) Ibid., 6-7
\(^{22}\) Ibid., 6-7
\(^{23}\) Ibid., 6-7
\(^{24}\) Croneberger, 1986-1987
\(^{26}\) Woods, 394
\(^{27}\) ALA Yearbook, 171
library has more than one branch that uses a resource file or makes the file accessible to the public, individuals entering the information should be using the same formats in order to ensure the information is reachable in the same manner by all interested parties. The computerization of I&R services has had a significant impact. Also, computers will increase the quality and service of I&R in the future.28 As formatting standards become mainstream, individuals will be able to obtain the information they need from one library’s resource file just as easily as they can from another library’s resource file. In addition, as more libraries move this type of service online, individuals can use the files no matter where they are located, what time of the day it is, or if the library happens to be closed.

Most libraries have incorporated I&R into their normal library services, specifically reference services. The success of the Detroit Public Library’s TIP service, which incorporated their I&R service into existing services instead of having it stand alone, and the failure of the Enoch Pratt Free Library’s I&R service illustrate that incorporation is essential for an I&R service to succeed.29 The incorporation of an I&R service into current services would also explain the lack of recent literature relating to I&R. A current trend in providing I&R services is the creation of community networked services. Community networks or community information systems use computers to establish an electronic method for sharing information. These networks require collaborative efforts between librarian, other service providers, and the citizens of the community.30 There are several potential difficulties involved in a community network. One is learning how to collaborate effectively with all parties. Since collaboration is essential in providing quality content and services, this obstacle must be resolved.31

Businesses and non-profit organizations in Westchester County, New York, have undertaken the development of this type of I&R service and have created FIRST (Family Information and Referral Service Teams). During the process of creating this service, the businesses and non-profit organizations realized they had much in common. They also realized that they had similar goals and problems. They discovered that one party could solve the problems of the other. This collaboration worked so well that the groups are attempting to establish a nationwide information and referrals telephone number, 2-1-1.32 According to the 2-1-1 site, “2-1-1 serves approximately 119 million Americans - over 40% of the US population 156 active 2-1-1 systems covering all or part of 31 states plus Washington, DC.”33

In order for librarians to create successful services and programs, they must be periodically evaluated. I&R services are no different. I&R services must be evaluated to assess effectiveness. This ensures the integrity and quality of the information provided. The services must also be evaluated to ensure they are reaching the individuals who need the information. Evaluation can also demonstrate where or how services can be improved or widened to reach more people.

With all the importance placed on evaluating services, there should be a standard process in place for I&R. However, no process currently exists to evaluate I&R services. Most I&R service evaluations are subjective, for instance, most librarians agree that the best measure of a service is if the public uses it and finds it helpful.34 Measuring the effectiveness of a library’s I&R service can include counting the number of users that have used the service, the number of service contacts in the resource file, if the resource file is up-to-date, and how often the file is actually updated. Librarians can also use other categories or elements to measure the effectiveness of their services.35

28 Woods, 394
29 Childers, 2-5
35 Zweizig, 54
Creating a standard process for evaluating I&R services is essential. Standards would ensure equality in assessment and that the individuals would receive accurate and current information. Users must remain the focus of the service.

It is also important to note that even with the emergence of the Internet, I&R services are still extremely important. There is still a technological divide. For instance, some people do not have readily available access to computers or the experience to use technology effectively. In addition, this type of service is needed by groups with special needs, such as recent immigrants or non-English speaking individuals. For some in the underserved areas of communities, this service is the only method they have for obtaining needed information.

It is apparent that information and referral services are extremely important. These services provide an important resource to communities. Since libraries are in the business of providing resources and services to their communities, I&R will remain an important part of public libraries. The resources provided through I&R services can reach individuals that would not normally use the library. By reaching out to these underserved populations, libraries will also be improving their image, which could be beneficial to libraries during budget discussions. Whether libraries use an automated I&R service or rely on printed formats, patrons will find this resource extremely useful and necessary.

The growing popularity of Google and Yahoo illustrates how easy it is to find information. Unfortunately, this information is not always accurate. In addition, there are areas of the population that do not have access to or the knowledge to use technology to find their information. Since the main goal for libraries is to help people find accurate information, our importance should be more apparent. Regrettably, some people do not consider libraries as a source for the type of information provided by an information and referral service. I&R services are essential in order to bring communities together and to help the people in a community to obtain solutions to their needs and/or problems. By collaborating with outside agencies, libraries will unite individuals and organizations in a common goal and increase the public’s image of libraries as well.
Bibliography


Using a GHRAB Grant to Reclaim a University Archives

Anne A. Salter

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Introduction

College and university archives are rich and dynamic resources of campus history. Without a clear sense of mission and programming, they can be overlooked as research destinations. A well-defined program linked with funding sources is one means of connecting these collections to the campus community. Through the assistance of a GHRAB (Georgia Historical Records Advisory Board) grant, one college archives evolved into a viable research destination. The process is outlined in this paper.

Methodology

Until recently, an abundance of materials relating to the rich cultural heritage of Oglethorpe University was not accessible. A program designed to open the archives housing these resources made it a research destination for the campus. The program included developing an inventory of the collection, storage and housing of its contents, cataloging, and preservation. A key component in the success of the opening of the archives was the receipt of a GHRAB Grant, obtained for the purpose of microfilming the student newspapers. Upon completion, access to the newspapers was made available and a vital record of the campus history was permanently preserved. Also, the grant brought notoriety and credibility to the archives.

The Project

The project began in 2001 and consisted of several stages: inventory and storage, accessioning, funding, and public relations/marketing. Each stage built on the strength of the previous. Several decisions made at the inception of the project proved to be keys to success. These included devoting library funds and staff time to the project and seeking a source of outside funding. Fortunately, two major resources were already in place: an archives room and research level collections.

Oglethorpe University’s archives enjoyed a strong foundation from which to launch the project. The library building renovation of 1991 included an archives room with work space and collection storage. Additional equipment purchases included proper shelving, file cabinets, furniture, and a computer. Documents dating back to 1835 and numerous other materials had been collected by the college and stored in the archives. Continuing the acquisitions program was easy given the excellent head start. Specifically the collections included student newspapers, correspondence, yearbooks, photographs, manuscripts, etchings, drawings, and papers of the past presidents. The colorful history of the campus was well represented.

Campus History

Founded in 1835 in Midway, a town near Milledgeville, Georgia, Oglethorpe University is one of the oldest liberal arts colleges in the South. The campus closed during the Civil War and reopened in the 1870s only to fold because of financial set backs. Thornwell Jacobs successfully opened the school again in 1916 when the campus was relocated to its present site on Peachtree Road in Atlanta, Georgia. President Jacobs utilized his extensive imagination to attract patrons to the campus. Under his guidance, Oglethorpe, like Harvard and Princeton, was one of the first institutions of higher learning to bestow honorary degrees on famous Americans, including women. His idea for a time capsule – the Crypt of Civilization – preserving examples of 20th century life, attracted national and international attention. Such an interesting history of campus life needed to become a more well-known feature on campus.
The next step was to complete the proposed project and open the archives to the campus.

Collection Inventory

An inventory of the archives was necessary before cataloging and projects for securing outside funding could be established. The task was especially arduous because many of the records had been separated from their original collection. In several instances no documentation existed to qualify the relationship of the item to the history of the campus. Fortunately, the school newspapers had been retained. These papers, with their detailed reporting, provided answers to many questions related to identifying archival holdings. Acid free folders and document boxes were an expensive but important investment for proper storage.

Accessioning

Completion of the inventory provided an excellent catalyst to the next step – the creation of accurate accession records. The accession record provides donor information, a description of the gift, and a unique number composed of the year of donation to identify the material. This information was transferred into a searchable database by donor name and accession number. Collections were stored on the shelves in accession number order for easy retrieval.

Funding through GHRAB

The decision to apply for a GHRABgrant proved to be an excellent strategy. GHRAB offers a number of opportunities not available through a national granting agency, including a workshop, an on site visit, and free publicity. GHRAB’s focus on Georgia records also eliminates the lengthy narrative the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts require to prove a proposal merits national interest. GHRAB provides funds for the organization and care of Georgia records made available to the public. Grant applicants are expected to match at least twenty-five per cent of the grant request up to the maximum award of $5,000. The match may be in kind and can include staff time, supplies and other related expenses.

Prior to applying, interested parties attend a half day workshop that enables them to understand more fully the types of projects funded throughout the years and the importance of providing public access to these materials. The session also provides a perspective of the types of grants that others are considering. The workshop is a unique opportunity to meet interested participants and share ideas. In addition, GHRAB provides an on site visit to each applicant and their archives.

This on-site visit is a productive experience, especially for institutions undecided about which of their worthy projects to fund first. Such was the case with the Oglethorpe University archives. Three major projects were at the top of the priority list for funding – preservation of the school newspapers, scanning of the visual arts collection and preservation photocopying of historic clippings file. The opportunity to participate in an on site visit with a member of the Georgia Archives allowed staff time to interact with an expert and formulate an educated decision within the context of the entire archives.

After the visit and ensuing discussion the project selection became clearer. Based on the criteria of preservation need and importance of content, the student newspapers were selected for microfilming. In addition, a follow-up grant to index the papers seemed a logical application for a future grant. The visual arts scanning project was put on hold. The preservation photocopying was completed using student assistants. The major expense for the latter project was the purchase of acid-free photocopying paper. Three-hundred pages of clippings were accurately copied, dated, and filed in appropriate subject categories. Consequently, the students became excited about the archives and its holdings, and news about the archives began to travel.

1 The GHRAB grant is funded by the Georgia Historical Records Advisory Board which makes funds available to non-profit organizations throughout the state. Funds are provided from a variety of resources including the NEHPRC (National Historical Publications and Records Commission).

2 For more information see the web site www.sos.state.ga.us/archives/ghrab/grants/grants.htm
In 2004 the GHRAB grant application was written and a grant of $5,000 awarded to cover the university’s cost to microfilm the student newspapers. Easy record keeping, excellent reminders about quarterly reports, and constant contact as needed with granting officials are some of the hallmarks of GHRAB’s operation. A local filming company was interviewed and accepted the job. They provided both pick up and delivery of the papers. Preparing the papers for filming, creating filming targets, checking the chronological order, and checking the film quality kept staff and student assistants busy for the duration of the grant period. Thanks to the GHRAB grant, the newspapers are now a preserved, viable resource for the campus community. The microfilming of the papers became the first step in a full-fledged preservation program for the archives.

Public Relations

As an added bonus, GHRAB provides local publicity for grant recipients. In addition, any organization receiving a GHRAB grant is eligible to apply for a year-end award. The award ceremony held at the Georgia Archives includes a presentation to representatives of the institution. State senators from districts receiving awards are invited to attend. Award winners receive a plaque specifically designed for their project and photo opportunities with the Secretary of State. The ceremony and awards are an excellent way to promote collections and network with other participants and members of GHRAB.

The GHRAB grant also created positive residual effects. The process of prioritizing collections for outside funding raised awareness of the great potential the archival holdings had for various components on campus. For example, the photograph collection serves as an excellent resource for departments creating web sites and news flyers. University units frequently request photos and information on the history of the campus. A student internship provides hands-on experience with archival processing. The Alumni Office includes the archives on its annual campus tour. Campus exhibits utilize images and artifacts from the archives. The archives is an appreciated resource.

Summary

Campus archives are often a resource disregarded or even ignored until a well structured program can link its collections to campus-related activities. Devoting time, energy, staff and budget to making it a reliable and active unit is well worth the effort. Good public relations associated with the archives and its resources combine to make it an important part of the campus community. Finding the right grants to assist with the effort pays off in many ways, including notoriety for the institution and funds to complete these goals.
While librarians at the reference desk find themselves even busier than before helping the patrons with their information needs, the reference desk statistics show a decline in the number of patrons served. In 1997-1998 the Reference department at University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC) handled 17,132 questions. In 2000-2001 academic years the number had dropped to 12,068 questions. During the years 2002-2003 and 2003-2004, number of reference questions has increased a little to about 14,585 and 15,754, but not to the same level as 1997-1998. This decline is consistent with the nationwide trend reported in the Chronicle of Higher Education indicating that students are deserting campus libraries to work online from home. The statistics also support students’ preference for electronic resources rather than traditional print library resources (Carlson, 2001). Kyrillidou & Young (2001-2002) voiced a variety of explanations for the decline in the number of reference transactions. The most important of those reasons was that the desk statistics reflect only one aspect of reference service in a university library. Jim Rettig of the University of Richmond expressed a similar concern saying that the “Desk-centric reference statistics fail to take into account all the modes through which we currently deliver reference service” (2004, 7). Other aspects of reference service are the time spent by the reference librarians in providing instruction in the use of online catalog, databases, e-journals, and other electronic resources in a classroom and to individuals remotely by phone or email. This involves instruction in computer use as well as information retrieval techniques. All these activities take a substantial amount of a reference librarian’s time and training.

Most reference librarians would like reference statistics to reflect all aspects of reference work. They would also like the task of keeping statistics to be simple. However, there is nothing simple about reference service. While spending more and more time helping individual students at their workstations, away from the reference desk, reference librarians still have to remember to mark statistics when they return to the reference desk. They realize that detailed information as to the type of questions asked at the desk would be helpful in guiding librarians while providing user instruction. Such details would also provide information on the impact of resource changes and technology in the library. However, the librarians do not have time to collect such detailed statistics while serving the patrons. They feel that helping the patron is more important than marking statistics on the sheet. As a result many questions go as unmarked. Traditional counting methods do not reflect what resources are most helpful or which formats require increased time with users.

Kessellman and Watstein state that the back-bone of statistical reporting should no longer be the collection of basic and routine statistics on a day-to-day basis. Instead, the heart of the new system should be a series of sample statistics to be collected at various times throughout the year that reflect high, medium, and low usage (1987, 27). Forty-four other university librarians polled by Tenopir also suggested that the reference statistics should be collected randomly rather than continuously (1998, 32).

UTC Library at a glance

During the last decade a number of electronic resources have been added to the UTC Lupton Library’s collection which are accessible to the patrons in the library as well as via their home, office, campus laboratories or dorms and via wireless computers. Fifty-eight public access
terminals are housed in the UTC Lupton Library as well as an instruction classroom equipped with computers to teach 25 students simultaneously. Library instruction and orientation is offered on a one-on-one basis, as well as through regularly scheduled class sessions. Printed and on-line guides are also used as instruction tools. Raising the level of computer skills of each patron so that they may use online resources efficiently is the goal of all instruction/reference librarians. Though a librarian’s job is not to teach students computer skills, but rather to improve their information literacy and research skills, librarians must ensure that students know how to retrieve information from the library resources efficiently. Demand for library user education has been increasing every year. During the year 2001-2002, the number of library instruction classes taught at UTC totaled 241, and the number of students who attended these classes was about 5,000 (out of a total enrollment of about 8,500). During 2002-2003 however, the number of such classes taught was 281, and the number of students who attended those classes was 5,582. The number of known database searches in the 92 databases to which library subscribes was 409,141 for the year 2002-2003. Off campus use of library resources is not yet tracked. Librarians have deliberately instituted initiatives for direct contact between the subject specialist librarians and the academic departments. Librarians are spending more time with faculty, staff, and students coaching them on the effective use of various resources pertinent to their specialty.

Justification of Sampling Method

Up until 2001, the librarians at the reference desk were expected to record every patron question with a tally mark every day that the library was open. At busy times the librarians found it practically impossible to record every single question and many questions went unrecorded. Also, considerable differences existed in the interpretation of the basic categories of questions. By 2002 the reference librarians favored a new approach to record reference statistics. In the summer of 2002-2003, a literature search was conducted to determine which other universities were using or were exploring the possibility of collecting reference statistics by a random sampling method. The following is the review of the literature search.

Literature Search

Louisiana State University (LSU)

Louisiana State University originally collected statistics by both the question type (e.g.: information, reference, research, and online catalog training, etc.); and by the patron type (e.g.: faculty, graduate, undergraduate student, and others). LSU librarians were not satisfied with the procedure because it hindered the reference service during peak hours and many of the transactions went unrecorded. Considerable differences also existed in the interpretation of the basic question categories. Librarians wanted to try a new system which would collect statistics in a more scientific and statistically sound manner, while freeing the desk staff to concentrate on the information needs of the patrons. In 1986, in consultation with the statistics department, they decided to try a random sampling method for gathering statistics. A 90% confidence level and an error range of 10% were deemed acceptable for the total number of questions asked during the year. Based on the previous year’s data and a standard statistical equation, the size of a random sample was determined. Data was collected for a randomly distributed 60 hours of 4,103 total service hours during the year 1986. At the end of the year the figures from all the data collections were totaled and extrapolated to calculate the total number of questions. The final analysis showed an error rate of 11.23% which was very close to the desired 10%. The new approach was considered far more reliable and statistically valid than the old approach. While the error level could likely be reduced by increasing the sample size, the library administration decided that the level of accuracy was sufficient. To avoid delaying service to the patrons, trained graduate assistants recorded statistics on the designated days. With small modifications, the sampling approach has been highly successful at LSU. The reference staff appreciated the release time from recording all transactions and reported some improvement in interaction with the patrons (Maxstadt, 1988).
University of Tennessee at Knoxville (UTK)

In 1998, Carol Tenopir at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville surveyed 44 university reference librarians who estimated for her the percentage of reference questions answered by the variety of the resources available to them. Her categories were online catalog, print sources, CD-ROM, world-wide-web (www), commercial online sources, telephone, & listservs. While filling out her survey, some of the librarians pointed out that they rarely use only one source or even one medium to answer a question. Others said that they subscribed to a number of electronic resources through the internet which were used to answer reference questions along with the standard print sources. In Tenopir’s survey of the 44 libraries however, the highest numbers of questions were answered with the help of online catalog, followed closely by the print collection. Tenopir surmised that patrons likely ask the librarians questions which they think can be answered by the resources they associate with libraries; and librarians also turn first to familiar resources. Jim Rettig’s study also rated the local OPAC as the number one reference source followed by OCLC’s World Cat (2004, 8). Although in Tenopir’s survey the world-wide-web was used to answer only 10% of reference questions, the impression of the librarians is that many more patrons turn to the web first. Teaching students to search the web skillfully takes a lot of reference instructional time. The reference interview also takes longer as the librarian needs to know the level of computer skills and what print and online sources they have checked already, in addition to the typical questions about the topic, and the purpose of the search, etc. According to Tenopir, “Librarians will continue to take longer, go further to find answers, and instruct users on new technologies” (1998, 34). Since busy librarians do not have time to collect detailed statistics which can help them plan the services better, Tenopir suggests it is better to collect statistics randomly rather than continuously.

New York University

Kesselman and Watstein reported that the statistics task force at the New York University Bobst Library compiled records of weekly reference transactions in 1986. These totals were recorded, and then the weeks were divided into high, medium and low groups depending on the total number of questions asked each week. The mean and standard of deviation were calculated for each group and, after setting a 95% confidence limit and an error rate of plus or minus 400, a sample size was set. The task force determined that they would sample five low use weeks, seven medium use weeks and three high use weeks. Then the weeks in the academic year under study were numbered consecutively and assigned a usage status based on the corresponding week in the previous year. Specific weeks to be sampled were chosen using a table of random numbers. After recording reference statistics on all the sample weeks, means were calculated for each usage group that were then multiplied by the total number of weeks in each group for the entire year. The product of the means and total number of weeks from each usage group were added to obtain the number of total transactions.

The sample statistics thus collected had the potential to supply detailed statistics to satisfy internal and external data communication needs at all levels. The new system helped personnel to categorize and record transactions better. Certain housekeeping duties were added, such as distributing statistics forms, and reminding the staff of the days on which statistics were to be kept. However, on the plus side, reference personnel experienced a greater awareness of not only statistical concepts, but also of the role, practice, problems, and potential of reference statistics (1987).

University of South Carolina at Columbia

The University of South Carolina reviewed and used the University of New York Bobst Library’s sampling method. However, while studying sampling techniques for collecting reference statistics, they tested a correlation method for calculating reference statistics by using the number of people entering the library (door-count). The resulting correlation coefficient between the two variables was used to calculate weekly reference statistics for the nonsampled weeks. The sum of
The calculated weekly values and the actual values of the sampled weeks yielded an annual total of reference transactions that was comparable to the annual total determined by using the sampling technique. They concluded that the correlation method might offer libraries an accurate and less time-consuming procedure for keeping reference statistics (Lochstet and Lehman, 1999).

University of South Carolina at Spartanburg

The Reference librarians at the University of South Carolina, Spartanburg recently revised the categories into which reference statistics are divided. While eliminating the categories “Research” and “Ready Reference” they substituted a complexity of scale (simple, average, complex) for reference questions. They also changed the categories to library direction, campus direction and added options for question “location” (In-Library, Phone, office). They also converted the paper & clipboard format into the Microsoft Access database with an eye to minimizing the work involved in data analysis by Excel later on (Greben 2003).

Central Michigan University

The Northern Virginia office of Central Michigan University’s (CMU) Off-campus Library Services’ Program analyzed reference questions using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS/PC + Student ware). The results provided totals for each variable examined; for example; the subject of request, gender of requester, student or faculty. Also included were tables showing relationships among variables, e.g.: breakdown of subject of questions by course, search strategy, etc., with accompanying statistics. They found that such analyses gave a more precise picture of what is happening at the reference desk, and also provided information useful in planning reference services. The CMU experience is presented in a manner that any library can adapt to meet its needs if they want to keep such in-depth statistics (Witucke and Schumer, 1991).

Loughborough University (United Kingdom)

The library and information unit of the Loughborough University surveyed their own database of the public libraries. These data are collected annually by the chartered Institute of Public and Financial Accountants. According to this study most public libraries collect statistics for one week a year, during October. Weekly figures are multiplied by 50.2 to get the annual totals. The administrators provided each library with definitions of the terms and a list of specific examples of questions of the type of inquiries made at the reference desk. Such examples of what constitute inquiries or possible inquiries, and how they are classified was definitely helpful to the staff. The publicity of services, training the staff to record accurate statistics, and monitoring the recording were considered very important. In order to maintain integrity of the statistics, the authors recommended a vigorous and effective policing of sample statistics count. The researchers found a need to establish more clearly the type of information needs satisfied by public libraries of different size and location, to establish trends. Such services should also keep in mind alternative information providers in the area (Sumison, et al, 1995).

New Zealand Public Library System

The New Zealand Public Library System gathers statistics using a random sampling technique for selected days. Cullen & Grey defined a service point as any branch, mobile unit or service point in the Central Library dealing with inquiries. A stratified single cluster sampling methodology was used, where a simple random sample of clusters (hours) was taken, and all transactions within the cluster sampled, for each service point. They recommended that a team of at least two trained persons (with an additional two trained as a back-up to cope with sickness or periods of leave) should be able to cope with routine sampling of 350 hours per year in a library of their size. One person would be required for most sample periods and a second person would be required during the peak times. Appendix A lists the categories of reference inquiries divided into
levels such as directional, quick reference, and research inquiries, with some examples. Appendix B reports the monthly variances/relative variances of logged enquiries. According to Cullen and Gray the task of gathering statistics requires training, familiarity with specifications, and management of the data, (1995).

Cullen and Gray’s realization (similar to Maxstadt’s conclusion) that at a busy service point it is difficult to focus adequately on reader inquiries and gather accurate statistics at the same led them to conclude that an assistant should be trained to help with the task of keeping statistics. Their clear definitions of the categories of reference inquiries with examples were helpful while planning the UTC study.

**University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Study: Methodology**

A report of the literature review was presented to the reference faculty at the end of the summer session, 2002. An analysis of the latest trends from the literature review, along with a perception of increased load at the reference desk, and the desire that reference statistics should accurately reflect the use of the reference staff’s time, the reference faculty at UTC decided to test a random sampling method during 2002-2003. After gathering statistics by the random sampling method for one year, the results would be compared with the daily statistics collected during 2001-2002. If the sampling method proved satisfactory, the department planned to gather statistics by the random sampling method in the following years as well. Using the examples of other libraries studied, the type and category of questions posed at the reference desk were classified into two categories as follows:

**Internal Users and External Users** (telephone, email, online, etc.) Under each of the above users categories there were three subdivisions according to the type of question and some measure of time taken to answer the question: 1) Directional, 2) Less than 5 minutes, 3) More than 5 minutes. Following the examples of Maxstadt and Cullen and Grey, these categories were further clarified by listing examples of the type of questions to be included in each as elaborated below:

**Directional Enquiries** were to include: Non-bibliographic; basic directional and not library-specific questions; e.g. where are the photocopiers, or rest rooms or the reserve books, guest user login, etc.

**Quick Reference (less than 5 minutes)** Library skills used; involves using the collection. Includes: “what have you got on…?” helping them with the online-catalog, author/title search, simple database search, etc.

**Research** (More than 5 minutes): Involves skills plus time and often some organization of material retrieved. Uses professional judgment; utilizes a variety of skills; often involves the librarian doing some of the work for the client. Includes online database searching, subject or serials searches (Cullen and Gray, 1995).

Due to the cyclical nature of the level of patron use of reference services during the year, a stratified random sampling procedure was developed. By using the actual data for 2001-2002 for the number of patrons assisted at the reference desk, a standard of deviation was calculated for the entire year and also for each term. A confidence level of 95% and an acceptable error of ± 5 patrons were chosen (Table 1).
Analysis of the number of reference enquiries received during 2001-2002

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>38.14</td>
<td>41.73</td>
<td>47.01</td>
<td>21.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Error</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation*</td>
<td>29.56</td>
<td>33.16</td>
<td>28.39</td>
<td>14.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Variance</td>
<td>873.73</td>
<td>1099.76</td>
<td>806.036</td>
<td>221.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurtosis</td>
<td>-0.34</td>
<td>-0.89</td>
<td>-0.68</td>
<td>-0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skewness</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>13884</td>
<td>5258</td>
<td>55955</td>
<td>1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence Level (95.0%)</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>5.85</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>3.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(* Standard of deviation is based on daily count)

Table 2

Required Sample size for the Number of days /Random Sampling of Patrons
Reference Department/UTC Lupton Library 2002-2003

95% confidence level

\[ \sigma = .05 \text{ Error } = \pm 5 \text{ patrons} \]

\[ n = \frac{(1.96 \times 29.55)}{5} \times 136 \text{ days of sampling} \]

\[ n = \text{total sample size, } \sigma = \text{the standard of deviation, } n_i = \text{stratum sample size for the } i\text{th stratum} \]

\[ N_i = \text{size of the } i\text{th stratum, } \sigma_i = \text{the standard of deviation for the } i\text{th stratum} \]

Since the cycles in the number of patrons served clearly (and logically) coincided with the school term, the data was divided into three strata: the spring, summer and fall terms. Using standard of deviation for each stratum, the number of sampling days needed in each stratum (term) was calculated.
Table 3
Number of Days for Collecting Statistics during Each Semester
2002-2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Ni</th>
<th>( \sigma_i )</th>
<th>Ni * ( \sigma_i )</th>
<th># of Sampling days 2002-3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>33.16</td>
<td>4178.16</td>
<td>(126<em>33.16)/8909.74</em>136 = 64 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>14.87</td>
<td>1353.17</td>
<td>(91<em>14.87)/8909.74</em>136 = 21 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>28.39</td>
<td>3378.41</td>
<td>(119<em>28.39)/8909.74</em>136 = 52 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum of Semesters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8909.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that the number of calculated sampling days (within a 95% confidence interval).

Once the number of days of sampling needed for each period had been determined, a randomized sampling schedule was developed using a random number table. All days on which the library was open throughout the year were numbered consecutively and the days throughout the year for which statistics were to be kept were calculated. For the fall 2002, of the 126 days open the sampling days were 64, for the summer 2003 of the 91 days that the library was open, the sampling days were 21; and for the spring 2003 of the 119 days the library was open, the sampling days were 52. On the days identified as sample days, data was collected during all open hours. The numbers were than extrapolated for each month.

Table 4 shows the number of actual reference questions tallied by months for the years 2001-2002, and for 2002-2003, and 2003-2004 as extrapolated for each month by the sampling method, and the annual totals.
The number of total reference questions answered during the year 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 (sampling years) were higher than 2001-2002 (daily count) by 2.8% for 2002-2003 and by 11% in 2003-2004. But when analyzed using the standard error of two different means at 95% confidence level (standard error of means $= \sqrt{\frac{\sigma^2_1 + \sigma^2_2}{n_1 + n_2}}$) the difference between the actual and the sample means and their standard error for the years 2001-2002 and 2003-2004 was within the acceptable range of 1.7. Since the numbers for 2002-2003 were even lower than 2003-2004 it was concluded that the sample statistics can serve the accountability requirement.

An attempt was also made to determine if the data collected by the random sampling method for the years 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 shows similar trends as 2001-2002. The number of questions for the day of the week for sample days during 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 were compared with the same day of the week with the year 2001-2002. For example all Mondays for which the data was collected in 2001-2002 were compared with the Monday of the same week in 2003-2004 and 2002-2003 (if sampled). The following graphs show similar trends in the number of questions handled at the reference desk.
Conclusion

The results of statistical analysis show that the numbers gathered by the sampling method are very close to the numbers gathered by actual count between the two years of data under consideration. As a result the department decided to continue gathering reference statistics with the sampling method. Sampling its own advantages and disadvantages

Advantages are that statistics are gathered during a fewer number of days and so a more conscientious effort is made by all to keep accurate statistics. Reference librarians record the transactions in a standard accountable manner, within an acceptable error and confidence level.

Disadvantages are that sampling must be justified to the administration as a reliable method of providing accurate statistics for internal and external use. Sampling also involves some administrative planning, e.g. calculation of random days on which the statistics will be gathered, distribution of forms, effort on the part of the reference staff to remember to keep statistics, and a commitment from the members of reference faculty to keep accurate statistics.
Limitations of the study

This study measures only one of the reference activities, namely questions asked at the reference desk. Other aspects of reference transactions not studied are:

- Type of questions asked under each category.
- Type or classification of the patron served.
- Type of resources used to answer questions.
- Databases, e-journals or web sites and other electronic resources accessed by the patrons (in the library or from remote sites) and how efficiently and effectively.
- Reference service delivered outside of reference desk.

To get a complete picture of reference interactions new measures are required to capture the complexity of reference service. New technologies enable librarians to do more and provide more information to the users. As indicated by the literature review, many libraries are already attempting to analyze the reference statistics by the type of questions, resources used, and by the promptness of response. Some libraries are attempting to gather remote database use statistics as well. Librarians are also trying to establish a uniform reporting system of use across vendors (e.g. ICOLC, NISO, ARL, and ACRL). The UTC library needs to do the same. These data compilation measures do not assess the quality of library services in meeting user needs. New measures and initiatives are needed that assess the library’s impact on teaching, learning, and research as well as on the ability of the library to control costs and add value to the service they provide. Sample statistics gathered for all types of services provided by the reference librarians will provide the data for measuring the demand and for planning and providing efficient reference service. Complexity and value of reference service will be realized when all aspects of reference service have been measured, accounted for, and analyzed.

Reference service is essentially a human science. It is based on personal relationship between the librarians and the patrons (Richardson, 2002, 42). Automation has lent some efficiency and ease to the process, however it has not reduced the need for human help. However, we are living in an age of accountability and so managerial effectiveness of the operation must be measured in order to optimize the services. It is important to understand and document how demand, workload, and accessibility are related, in any particular library. Even though there is no perfect way to determine how busy reference is going to be at any given moment, statistics can give us an idea of which times are busier than others. These data can help in predicting the future demand (Taylor, 1994).

This was an attempt to see if random sampling could take the place of every day counting of the transaction counts, at the reference desk. This study showed that the statistical sampling method does work. The time spent on data collection was reduced, and at the same time the accountability needs of the higher administration have been satisfied. Statistical measures have provided a standardized scientific method for identifying the high, medium and low usage of reference service during the academic year. Random sampling has enabled the UTC librarians to identify a pattern of demand which will in turn help in assessing and planning future service.
References


University of South Carolina, CONTENTdm, and the Ege Leaves

Sara Swain, Writer/Editor, SOLINET

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It all started in the early 1920s when Otto F. Ege, Dean of the Cleveland Institute of Art and Lecturer on the History of the Book at the School of Library Science at Western Reserve University, “liberated” selected leaves from medieval manuscripts, annotated them, and sold forty sets to different universities in Europe, the United States, and Canada. Taken as a whole, the leaves, from varied periods and national origin, provide a remarkable history and illustrate the art of the manuscript during the period of its greatest development and influence. Set #27 is housed today in the University of South Carolina’s Rare Books and Special Collections and is of special interest not only to historians, but to scholars working to “reassemble the texts that Otto F. Ege dispersed.”

Obviously, documents from the 12th to 16th centuries are at great risk of damage from the environment and from handling, and their availability to artists and scholars has been necessarily restricted. Digitization and digital collection management software now make it possible to unlock the rich lessons of these manuscripts.

When the University of South Carolina Libraries created a department charged with digitizing the university’s valuable collections, the first order of business was determining from others’ experiences what kind of investment in technology would best serve this task. According to USC’s Kate Foster Boyd, Digital Collections Librarian at the university and coordinator of the new digitization project, the technology that stood out among others was CONTENTdm. This turnkey system had been heavily used on the west coast for a number of years and was beginning to make inroads in the east and in the southeastern region in particular. CONTENTdm’s popularity is due, in large part says Boyd, because it is easy to use and is well supported, a particular boon for institutions that do not have their own programming resources. It is also considered more sophisticated than the competition.

CONTENTdm is a powerful and flexible digital collection management package produced and supported by DiMeMa Inc. It offers scalability to meet a wide range of needs, and it is marketed to libraries, museums, and nonprofit archive associations through OCLC Online Computer Center. Hosting is available to institutions that do not have their own server; that option is also available during the 60-day free trial. The University of South Carolina Libraries selected CONTENTdm, and onsite installation and training took place in the fall of 2004. The first collection selected for digitization was the Otto F. Ege manuscripts.

Kate Boyd “drove the show,” according to Heather Dray, Educational Services Supervisor at SOLINET. Boyd’s task at this point was to bring together diverse staff resources to set up and operate the several components of the project to make it function organically. But it had to do more than that. Preserving the documents for posterity was part of the job; ensuring that they were universally accessible and searchable required the skills of a cataloger and the expertise of a subject specialist. Elizabeth Sudduth of Rare Books and Special Collections and Dr. Scott Gwara of the English Department assisted in developing the metadata. SOLINET’s Dray coached the Digital Activities Team on the use of Dublin Core standards. That phase of training took place in December 2004. Four months later, in April 2005, the digitized Otto F. Ege Manuscript Collection was launched.

The Ege leaves are finally broadly accessible. Furthermore, as soon as the collection was made available on the web, Rare Books and Special Collections was contacted about a conference being held in June 2005 at the University of Saskatchewan concerning the Otto F. Ege Manuscript collections. This Symposium, called “Remaking the Book,” focused on the creation of a digital database of all the leaves that were dispersed.
The speedy conclusion of this first project and its evident quality is testimony to the capabilities of the system and the expert direction of project manager Boyd and her enthusiastic staff. According to Boyd, the 50-leaf collection was a good, manageable size from which to learn. She also credits CONTENTdm for its ability to capture the front and back of each leaf, display it as one, and link the records for cataloging. In addition, the JPEG2000 file format enables researchers to zoom into the images and focus on the scripts and designs.

In all, the University of South Carolina has made a fine contribution to literature and history. CONTENTdm has proven its merit for projects such as this, and Otto F. Ege’s dispersed leaves are once again available to the public. One day the manuscripts might very well be back together, virtually speaking. Kate Foster Boyd can take understandable pride when she announces, as she did in April, that “the University Libraries’ Digital Activities Department of the University of South Carolina Rare Books and Special Collections is excited to announce that it has officially launched its first CONTENTdm collection: Otto F. Ege Collection of Fifty Original Manuscript Leaves. We welcome your visits (http://www.sc.edu/library/digital/collections/ege.html) and commentary.”
Promoting Your School Library’s Services with an E-mail Newsletter

Roxanne Myers Spencer

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In this age of competing services and resources, school libraries constantly look for ways to promote their services and engender excitement among students. From book fairs to literature circles to guest lecturers, the evolving school library media center must continually showcase its services. Librarians have often been hesitant to promote their services, but necessity has forced us all to become more marketing oriented. Bush and Kwielford explain this seeming reticence among teacher-librarians:

Teacher-librarians are often their own worst enemies in the marketing department. When we think of marketing, our service-oriented hackles are raised as we consider ourselves to be above the marketing mindset. We do good work, we know that it has lasting value, that it benefits our schools, and we do not see the need to make a nuisance of ourselves getting the point across.1

The library newsletter offers one inexpensive, non-aggressive, but effective way to reach out to fellow teachers, administrators, and students and parents. Baule and Bertani recommend developing a library newsletter because it will “remind readers of your programs and the fact that you are a vital, integral member of the educational community.”2

To keep costs down (and possibly save a few reams of precious paper!), consider developing a library e-mail newsletter, rather than a print format. Wilson considers e-mail a simple but powerful tool:

Simple tools and techniques available in e-mail software offer just one more way of connecting customers with the library and its services and collections. The universal acceptance of e-mail has enabled librarians to use it as not only as a simple way to communicate, but also as a powerful, robust reference and promotional tool.3

Benefits of an E-mail Newsletter

E-mail newsletters may require time, effort, and planning, but cost very little in materials. Reach a large audience without large paper, printing, or mailing expenses, and use an e-mail newsletter to:

• Alert members of the school community to new materials, special programs and events, and guest speakers

• Promote library services and collections inexpensively to a large group

• Send time-sensitive information, which is delivered immediately

• Raise the profile of the library media center within the school, governing district, and local community.

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• Encourage participation by fellow teachers, who can work collaboratively with the school media specialist on developing and promoting lesson and unit plans

• Provide an opportunity to engage students, who can contribute reviews of their favorite books, movies, websites, or other school-related electronic resources

• Improve technology and literacy skills in the design, conception, and writing of each issue

Considerations in Developing an E-mail Newsletter

Various issues to consider in putting together an e-newsletter are:

Formatting: Differences in e-mail software programs and computer platforms affect how the newsletter looks to each recipient. Unusual fonts and special graphics may not translate as intended to all recipients.

Distribution: Allotted bandwidth per document and security settings for attachments vary from school to school. Protocols for including attachments and size requirements of documents allowed through individual e-mail servers must be considered when developing the newsletter.

Guidelines for Producing an E-mail Newsletter

Design and content are the meat and potatoes of any newsletter, and e-mail newsletters are no exception. Acceptable formats for ease of delivery across programs and platforms are also important considerations. Keep in mind several factors while planning the look and readability of an e-mail newsletter. Here are some ideas for making this project attractive, engaging, and easy to send.

Design and Format

The school library media center e-mail newsletter can be as simple or elaborate as time and software capabilities allow. Depending on the school's web browser, library media specialists can create an effective e-mail newsletter using Netscape Mail or Netscape Composer 4.73 or better. Other web design programs, such as Microsoft’s FrontPage or similar basic web design programs can be used, but be careful of compatibility issues. Due to differences in e-mail software, such as Microsoft Outlook, Netscape Mail Messenger, Eudora, and similar programs, the newsletter layout, fonts, and graphics may not appear the same in each browser. Consider creating an e-mail newsletter in a simple text format and add graphics to enhance the look. It is possible to key in the contents in a Microsoft Word or WordPad document, then copy and paste into the school’s e-mail program. Select typefaces and sizes in Word or the e-mail program, as long as the e-mail is configured for variable-width fonts (usually set in Preferences or Options to display in html).

As a design rule of thumb, remember to differentiate between display fonts for short, but big, splashy information, such as the newsletter title and headlines, and fonts for maximum readability, for body text and captions. Alternate type fonts using serif (such as Times New Roman or Century Schoolbook) and sans-serif (such as Arial or Helvetica) fonts, but try not to use more than three to four fonts per issue. Stick to the most popular fonts for body text, such as Times New Roman, Palatino, Helvetica, or Arial) and consider saving more elaborate fonts in small graphics (or Word Art) files.

Display typefaces, colors, and graphics enhance the look of the newsletter, but take up more space. Such embellishments tend to eat up kilobytes and bandwidth. Considering using spot color and small, free clipart in GIF format to occasionally highlight the text. Use “thumbnail” images that enhance rather than dominate content. You can use Adobe Photoshop, or a similar photo-editing program to reduce the size of most graphics and to decrease the amount of pixels required for a clear, bright picture. Keep images to a minimum, and try to avoid adding graphics just to make the e-mail newsletter “pretty.” Added images waste bandwidth without providing useful information.

Simple text may take up less space but is less eye-catching. If the school’s e-mail program is text-based only, consider creating a simple, but
nicely designed Microsoft Word document and sending the newsletter as an e-mail attachment. While it may be loads of fun to sprinkle a newsletter with fonts such as Jokerman or Brush Script, not all fonts can be correctly displayed on all computers. Differences in software versions, printers, Mac or PC platforms, and operating systems may affect which fonts display properly. Saving the Word file in Rich Text Format (RTF) may preserve some fonts and colors across computer platforms and software versions. Another format option would be to create the newsletter as a PDF file. If the school has the full Adobe Acrobat Professional program, you can create the newsletter as a Word document and save it as a PDF file.

**Format and Delivery Concerns**

File size, including graphics and unusual type fonts, make a difference in how e-mail newsletters can be sent. Check with the school’s technology coordinator about bandwidth restrictions and protocols regarding e-mail attachments. If the school server is already overloaded (and whose is not?), this means a large file may be rejected by the server or will take a long time to load. Does the school’s e-mail server permit transmission of e-mails with attachments? Some security programs block the receipt of e-mail attachments. In some e-mail programs block the receipt of e-mail attachments. Some security programs block the receipt of e-mail attachments. In some e-mail programs, graphics and fonts must be added after the basic text, and sometimes are treated by default in the e-mail program as attachments. If computer viruses and worms have bombarded the school, security settings may be high, preventing any or all attachments from being sent or opened. Should graphics are included in an HTML format newsletter, and if graphics are treated by the e-mail program as attachments, it is possible that only a plain-text version of the newsletter will be transmitted.

**Content Considerations**

Some may prefer to map out what to include in each library e-mail newsletter, while others may prefer a more serendipitous approach. In either case, a basic contents outline will help in planning an effective issue. Initial brainstorming sessions with students or colleagues are fun and generate lots of creative approaches. Once all the ideas are on the table, organize them into columns or features for each issue.

When developing an e-mail newsletter, plan the publication as if it were a print newsletter or a promotional brochure. How many features, or what sorts of news items will you include? What will you incorporate about other departments? To enhance collaboration, solicit news from each subject area, but avoid overstepping library-related topics. Unless the library e-mail newsletter expands to become the school’s only newsletter or an e-zine, do not include stories about intramural sports or the debate club. It is fine to endorse teams to build school spirit and show support, but leave the longer details to the school newspaper or magazine. Baule and Bertani offer these suggestions:

Focus on the services your library has to offer. Use your newsletter as a teaching tool. Provide information that teachers can use now. Plug a new technology service, feature a teacher who has used library services to create an interesting lesson, or provide tips on “where to find what” in the library. Consider quoting a student or staff member in each issue to help publicize your services. Your customers’ words carry great credibility.

Engage students by soliciting capsule reviews of their favorite books, movies, or websites. Collaborate with other teachers by promoting literature across the curriculum, literature circles, interdisciplinary lesson and unit plans. Promote library services such as photocopying, scanning, research and homework assistance, and special events. Do you want to include the same kind of material for each issue? Vary information by format and by using catchy subheadings.

Do not become overwhelmed by too many choices. With rising enthusiasm, you may find yourself overwhelmed with ideas on what to include and how to format it. As you experiment with type and images, be careful not to lose sight of your goal: to make the e-mail newsletter legible, well designed, enjoyable reading. Boykin and Kross

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suggest following John Maxymuk’s advice for developing an Internet newsletter that can create a streamlined e-mail newsletter design as well. Maxymuk’s five basic recommendations are:

1. Keep the text clear and legible.
2. Give prominence to the most important features/information.
3. White space should be ample; the page shouldn’t look cluttered.
4. Graphics should be large enough to be seen but not so large that they overwhelm the screen/text.
5. The mix of text, white space and graphics should be balanced, consistent and pleasing.\(^5\)

Make this a collaborative project. As you develop the ideas and implementation of a library e-mail newsletter, you may find the project is contagious. Students and teachers may clamor to submit columns, reviews, “favorites” lists, and websites. If busy library media specialists do not have the time or inclination to develop the look of an e-mail newsletter, consider enlisting the help of students or colleagues may have talents in web or publication design. Such cooperation can help create an imaginative, user-friendly product.

If you’ve planned your e-mail newsletter for regular distribution, you can pick and choose appropriate contributions to each issue, without overwhelming the school server or your potential audience with too much information. Decide on three or four sections per issue, and designate some months for special issues, such as Black History Month or Women’s History Month, where all selections enrich the specific theme.

Make it interactive. You can imbed hyperlinks to jump from your newsletter to other webpages, such as the school homepage, library catalog, subscription databases, and other educational websites, so your e-mail newsletter can become an entertaining, information-rich promotional and learning resource for teachers and students. Wilson notes a basic point about electronic content: “Embedding links in your e-mail messages saves the reader the time and effort of retyping or cutting and pasting URLs to visit a recommended Web site.” Consider differently-abled readers by providing not just the hotlinks, but by typing in the actual URLs for any hyperlinks included. Additionally, be sure to label any graphics with a brief description (i.e., a photograph of a recent book fair should be labeled “book fair visitors, Fall 2004” in the alt-text function as you imbed the graphic).

Perhaps the most fun, and agonizing, component of any publishing effort is finding a memorable name for the publication. Oram\(^7\) advocates making “your newsletter name an attention grabber” by not using the school’s name in the title. He says, “Name it something that fits your style and personality”. Oram chose Bookman Buddy as a descriptive and alliterative title for his school library’s print newsletter.

**An Example of an E-mail Newsletter: ERC Bookends**

Soon after taking the position of Coordinator of Western Kentucky University Libraries’ Educational Resources Center (ERC), I created an e-mail newsletter. ERC Bookends was developed in January 2002 to showcase the collection and services of the ERC, a campus branch library that primarily serves the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences. To create Bookends, I used the University’s e-mail program, Netscape Mail 4.73, or Netscape Composer. My early attempts at “design” were free form, to say the least. I experimented wildly with format in early issues, incorporating a variety of fonts as attention-grabbers, with text displayed in long, colorful tables. I copied and pasted from Composer into Netscape Mail and made a few color and table-width adjustments. Recent issues are more uniform in color, type, and format. (See the index at http://lyfrgell.tripod.com/ERC_Bookends/erc_bookends_index.html for examples of the evolution of ERC Bookends.)

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\(^6\)Wilson, Public Libraries.

I continually refine Bookends to promote my library’s collection and services. Bookends is e-mailed to all WKU faculty and staff. I also post each new issue to my online classes of graduate students in Library Media Education. Each issue is a collaborative effort: I include my staff and student workers’ choices and brief annotations for fiction and nonfiction books and multimedia items from the ERC’s collection. We promote bibliographic/research instruction classes; WKU Libraries’ databases and research guides and other ERC services, such as the Ellison machine die-cuts, photocopiers, lamination, and reserve readings. In addition, we compile a list of new titles, staff and student selections of children’s or young adult books and multimedia titles to be featured. For teacher resources, in each issue we focus on a broad education topic, such as classroom management, assessment and evaluation, lesson plans, or reading and literacy, and annotate a few relevant titles. To highlight WKU Libraries’ subscription databases, I often select a popular education topic, such as reluctant readers, emotional and behavior disorders, or year-round school, which I search in a featured database, then cite a few relevant full-text articles. These brief bibliographies demonstrate, on a rotating basis, our education-related subscription databases.

From January 2002 through April 2004, I used Netscape Composer, v. 4.73, which was the university’s browser and e-mail client, to create a colorful, lively e-mail newsletter. WKU has since collaborated with Mozilla to produce a more current, customized e-mail client for faculty and staff. Size of messages sent to large groups on campus is restricted, so I use thumbnail images, and keep fonts fairly simple. I have been experimenting with Mozilla’s Composer web design program, which is similar to Netscape Composer, with a few more features. For the present, I create a simpler newsletter than before (but still colorful!). I usually write the text in Microsoft Word, which I then copy and paste into a Mozilla e-mail. With a little additional formatting, and adding and tagging thumbnails (to comply with ADA requirements for webpages), I still have an attractive and informative e-mail newsletter that I send to all WKU staff and faculty.

**Conclusion**

The library e-mail newsletter can be part e-zine, part webpage, part blog, part news, and full-tilt promotional tool for the school library, limited only by time, skill, and bandwidth. This project promotes collaboration among fellow teachers and encourages students to become involved in a school project that builds writing and web skills. Gustafson says The Occasional Library Newsletter, which she e-mails to her “staff and a growing list of teachers and library media specialists from other schools” has become “an important communication and collaboration tool.” Use your imagination to develop a vital, newsy, easy-to-navigate marketing vehicle for your school library media center. Oram asserts that “by promoting your library’s services, you become a leader at your school.”

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10 Oram, LMC.
Selected Library Newsletter Websites:

ERC Bookends: http://llyfrgell.tripod.com/ERC_Bookends/erc_bookends_index.html

Public Libraries:

Queens Borough (New York) Public Library:
http://www.queens.lib.ny.us/email/subscribe.asp

Prince William County (Virginia) Library:

Madison (Wisconsin) Public Library:
http://www.madisonpubliclibrary.org/enewsnletters.html

School Libraries:

American School in Sao Paolo, Brazil (PDF file): http://www.graded.br/files/libraries/newsletterq1.pdf

Deer Lakes (Pennsylvania) Middle School:
http://www.deerlakes.net/modules.php?name=ms&file=lnews

Versailles (Ohio) High School (January 2002-October 2003):
http://www.versailles.k12.oh.us/highschool/Library/Librarynews.htm
The Poor and Homeless: An Opportunity for Libraries to Serve
Sheila Ayers

Sheila Ayers is a recent MLIS graduate from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa.

Introduction

Serving the poor and homeless presents one of the greatest challenges America’s public libraries have ever faced. With their numbers increasing every year the poor and homeless need a path out of poverty and help to ease the pain along the way. In 2003 the poverty rate rose to 12.5% in the United States; 35.9 million people were poor in 2003. That is 1.3 million more than were poor in 2002. In 2000 the poverty rate was 11.3% with 31.6 million in poverty. In 2003 the poverty rate for the Northeast was 11.3%, Midwest 10.7%, South 14.1% and West 12.6%. From 2002 to 2003 the poverty rate in the Midwest rose from 6.6 million to 6.9 million. While the number in the South rose from 14.0 million to 14.5 million. (U.S. Bureau of the Census) Out of these numbers rise the nation’s homeless.

Public libraries offer new worlds to the poor by providing information in a wide variety of different forms on every subject imaginable. The information is an opportunity which opens the door to other opportunities and can change or save lives. Librarians, as keepers of the keys of knowledge, have an obligation to spread information like a balm over those scarred by poverty. The knowledge contained in public libraries can heal the poor in body, mind, and spirit. The information contained in public libraries can empower and enable the poor to change their lives.

A History of Homelessness in the United States

During the Colonial period colonists who were not pulling their weight were either put on a boat back to England or sent to other colonies. In the 1980s many cities tried to solve their homeless problem by giving indigents one way bus tickets to other cities. This was called “Greyhound therapy.” After the Civil War the number of homeless males rose due to a lack of job opportunities. The hobo population rose after World War I. Most hobos were young men who traveled the country living the hobo lifestyle. They were seen as misfits in society (Hersberger 1999).

Between 1929 and 1939 during the Great Depression, large numbers of people, families as well as individuals, became homeless. These people became homeless due to a national economic disaster, not because they were dysfunctional individuals. After World War II homelessness was almost a nonexistent condition in America. Cheap sleeping rooms only (SROs) were easy to find in urban areas. This continued until 1980 (Hersberger 1999).

There was a sharp rise in homelessness in the 1980s due to several factors. The Reagan administration’s policy on deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill and its funding cuts for subsidized housing contributed to the increase in numbers. Another factor was the breakdown of marriages. Many people divorced and that thrust many women and children into poverty. The nation’s illegal drug problem also contributed to the rise in homelessness (Hersberger 1999).

In 1999 two national studies, Homelessness: Programs and People They Serve and The Face of Homelessness provided a profile of the 2 million people who experience homelessness each year:

- 33% of them work.
- 40% are mentally ill (lack of adequate health care and social services push mentally ill out on their own).
- 85% are single; of these: 77% are men, 23% women.
- 41% are white non-Hispanic.
- 40% are black non-Hispanic.
• 10% are Hispanic.
• 8% are native American
• 38% have alcohol-use problems.
• 26% have drug-use problems.
• 39% have mental-health problems.
• 20% eat one meal a day or less.
• 40% went one or more days in the last 30 without anything to eat.

Among homeless families:
• 84% have female heads of household, 16% male.
• 38% are white non-Hispanic.
• 43% are black non-Hispanic.
• 15% are Hispanic.
• 3% are Native American (Grace 2000).

One percent of the population of the United States experiences homelessness each year (Urban Institute 2000). (National Coalition for the Homeless 2002)

Two Tales of Homeless Men in Libraries

Some homeless people used public libraries before becoming homeless; they naturally gravitate to the libraries when they find themselves on the streets. Other homeless people find libraries for the first time when they become homeless and library may become a shelter for them. However, there is potential for the library to do more than shelter them. The library can become a gateway to a new life if the homeless discover the resources it contains.

In 2004 a homeless man in Huntsville, Alabama used the Madison County Library. At the time he was living under a bridge in a tent provided by the Homeless Coalition and was in walking distance of the library. During an interview with the writer, Tom (not his real name) stated that he went to the library “pretty much every day for four or five hours.” He said he went there to get warm and to stay out of the weather. Sometimes he slept while he was there.

While he was in the library Tom read newspapers, magazines, and books but did not use the Internet, audiocassettes, or videotapes. He did not use library resources to find a job or to find out about social services. Tom said he did not use the library bathroom to wash either himself or his clothes but that other homeless people who were in the library did use the bathroom to shave, brush their teeth, and change clothes.

Tom told the writer that several homeless people stayed together in areas on both the first and second floor of the library. He said the library employees did not bother him and the regular patrons did not bother him either. Tom felt the library was a safe place and he liked being there. He did recall that some of the homeless people were asked to leave when they were panhandling at the entrance of the library.

Tom was a typical homeless person who was looking for a safe place to spend a few hours. After spending a few months visiting the library on a daily basis, Tom was described by his sister as being very well read and knowledgeable about what was going on in the world.

Richard Kreimer, a homeless man in Morristown, New Jersey during the late 1980s visited the Joint Free Library of Morristown. He “was asked to leave the library because of bodily odors, inappropriate stalking of female patrons, and abusive outbursts” (Silver 1996). Kreimer and the ACLU sued the library stating that Kreimer’s First Amendment rights were compromised. The ACLU contended there was nothing to keep libraries from “using their own prejudices to remove someone they don’t like” (Silver 1996).

Federal Judge H. Lee Saroken ruled that the homeless cannot be barred from public libraries due to “staring or hygiene that annoys or offends other patrons”. (Silver 1996) A Federal Appeals Court overturned the lower court’s ruling. The Federal Appeals Court stated that the “Library is a limited public forum and is obligated only to permit the public to exercise rights that are consistent with the nature of the library”. “The appeals panel stated that the library is not a shelter or a lounge, and that this ruling prohibits one
patron from unreasonably interfering with other patron’s use and enjoyment of the library” (Silver 1996).

In response the American Library Association’s Intellectual Freedom Committee drafted a proposal to address offensive patron odor, staring, outbursts, and other inappropriate library behavior. Five hundred librarians rejected this policy as vague. The executive director of the committee noted in regard to offensive odors, “There are some perfumes that absolutely make me nauseous” (Silver 1996).

Concerning homeless patrons E.J. Josey said, “These people are not problem patrons, they are patrons in need of your help, because you are a civilizing agency. The library has the power to help them and as librarians you have the power to help forge coalitions that will serve not only the homeless, but also the best interest of your city and your library” (Venturella 1998). Clearly the two men described in the above stories were in need of help. Tom was able to fit into the library atmosphere and not cause a disruption. His use of the library’s books and periodicals was acceptable. However, Tom might have benefited even more from the library if he had learned to use the Internet while he was there. Tom could have also used the library as a resource to find a job. He made acceptable use of the library, but he did not use it to its fullest advantage.

Kreimer seemed as if he may have needed professional help from mental health professionals. His behavior in the library would have been bizarre in any setting. Library staff members need to formulate a policy for dealing with inappropriate behavior. The book Patron Behavior in Libraries by Beth McNeil and Denise Johnson offers authoritative solutions to problems such as how to interact with mentally ill patrons, patrons who sleep in the library and the legal implications that may arise after action has been taken.

Sub-populations of the Homeless

The homeless are not a homogeneous group. One study “categorized sub-populations of the homeless as single males, Vietnam veterans (a subgroup of homeless males), homeless single females (sometimes further categorized, like males into age groups), homeless couples, runaway teenagers, and families” (Hersberger 1999). Further subdivisions can be based on race and ethnicity. Substance abusers or the mentally ill create two more subdivisions. When libraries are considering services to homeless persons the libraries should have “knowledge of local homeless populations and their particular subgroups” (Hersberger 1999).

Another perception is of the deserving and undeserving poor. The deserving poor are seen as being the homeless families, homeless children, and persons working to better their situations. The deserving poor are seen as becoming homeless through no fault of their own. “Those who become homeless due to personal dysfunction or weakness, i.e. substance abuse problems with drugs or alcohol, divorce, or multiple teenage pregnancies, are viewed frequently as undeserving of government assistance” (Hersberger 1999). Librarians need to reflect on their personal attitudes and biases when faced with serving the homeless.

ALA Policy on Library Services for the Poor

In June 1990 the ALA recognized the urgent need to respond to the increasing numbers of poor people in America. Fifteen policy objectives were approved by the ALA. The objectives were:

1. Promoting the removal of all barriers to library and information services, particularly fees and overdue charges.

2. Promoting the publication, production, purchase, and ready accessibility of print and nonprint materials that honestly address the issues of poverty and homelessness, that deal with poor people in a respectful way, and that are of practical use to low-income patrons.

3. Promoting full, stable, and ongoing funding for existing legislation programs in support of low-income services, and for pro-active library programs that reach beyond traditional service-sites to poor children, adults, and families.
4. Promoting training opportunities for librarians, in order to teach effective techniques for generating public funding to upgrade library services to poor people.

5. Promoting the incorporation of low-income programs and services into regular library budgets in all types of libraries, rather than the tendency to support these projects solely with “soft money” like private or federal grants.

6. Promoting equity in funding adequate library services for poor people in terms of materials, facilities, and equipment.

7. Promoting supplemental support for library resources for and about low-income populations by urging local, state, and federal governments, and the private sector, to provide adequate funding.

8. Promoting increased public awareness-through programs, displays, bibliographies, and publicity-of the importance of poverty-related library resources and services in all segments of society.

9. Promoting the determination of output measures through the encouragement of community needs assessments, giving special emphasis to assessing the needs of low-income people and involving both anti-poverty advocates and poor people themselves in such assessments.

10. Promoting direct representation of poor people and anti-poverty advocates through appointment to local boards and creation of local advisory committees on service to low-income people, such appointments to include library-paid transportation and stipends.

11. Promoting training to sensitize library staff to issues affecting poor people and to attitudinal and other barriers that hinder poor people’s use of libraries.

12. Promoting networking and cooperation between libraries and other agencies, organizations, and advocacy groups in order to develop programs and services that effectively reach poor people.

13. Promoting the implementation of an expanded federal low-income housing program, national health insurance, full-employment policy; living minimum wage and welfare payments, affordable day, care, and programs likely to reduce, if not eliminate, poverty itself.

14. Promoting among library staff the collection of food and clothing donations, volunteering personal time to anti-poverty activities and contributing money to direct-aid organizations.

15. Promoting related efforts concerning minorities and women, since these groups are disproportionately represented among poor people.

**ALA Handbook of Organization 1995/1996**

The ALA stated, “it is crucial that libraries recognize their role in enabling poor people to participate fully in a democratic society, by utilizing a wide variety of available resources and strategies” (Venturella 1998).

The Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) of the ALA created the Task Force on Hunger, Homelessness, and Poverty. This was to increase awareness of “the dimensions, causes, and ways to end hunger, homelessness, and poverty, as well as a better recognition of the library/poverty nexus” (Venturella 1998). The Office for Literacy and Outreach Service (OLOS) Subcommittee on Library Services to the Poor and Homeless develops and recommends to the OLOS Advisory Committee “initiatives and priorities to achieve implementation of the ALA Poor People’s Policy, to participate actively in said implementation, and to monitor the profession’s effectiveness in achieving that implementation” (McCork 2002).

Clearly, the ALA has a compassionate, concerned, and serving attitude toward the nation’s poor and its homeless. That attitude should filter down to all libraries and become a catalyst for change in the lives of the poor and the homeless. It should also be a catalyst for change in the libraries. Every public library in the United
The Southeastern Librarian States has the opportunity to serve those who are poor and homeless. In the case of rural areas where resources for the homeless are few or non-existent, what the public library is able to provide can be crucial. At times this may be shelter from the elements in communities where there are no shelter facilities for the homeless. But certainly, on a daily basis, the library can provide resources to help both the housed poor and the homeless get vital information on services they are qualified to receive.

**Inexpensive Things Libraries can do to Assist the Poor and Homeless**

Libraries can do some fairly inexpensive things to assist people who are poor and those who are homeless. Among these things are providing vital community and social service referral information; job search and career guidance; and educational/vocational course information. They can keep on hand a variety of job applications and tax forms as well a driver’s license applications; first aid, dietary, AIDS, and other healthcare information; sample check books; magazines and children’s books to give away; sample ballots; and current classified and help wanted sections. Librarians can assemble collections that can be taken into the streets-and into shelters, welfare hotels, Head Start programs, and food kitchens. Libraries can band together with social services to create “crisis literacy” programs that provide strategies for managing bureaucratic mazes or instructions for filling out complicated forms (Venturella 1998).

Another thing libraries can do is post a listing of “Ten Reasons Why A Person Who Is Homeless Would Use A Library.” The library should make sure the ten reasons are representative of what that particular library has to offer. Such a list might include the following:

- Community information and referral services
- Regional guides and newspapers
- Job search/career guidance
- Quiet study environment
- Educational/vocational courses information
- Programs for Children
- Literacy/ESL tutoring
- New reader/ foreign language materials
- Adult program
- Audiovisual materials

(Venturella 1998)

**How Libraries Serve the Homeless**

Many libraries are allowing the homeless to use shelter addresses as proof of residency to obtain library cards. Once the library card is obtained, fees in public libraries may act as a barrier to the poor and homeless. In the United States there is a trend to protect basic services and charge for supplemental services. However, there is no agreement as to what constitutes basic services and what services are special (Kagan 1999).

What is seen as a special service at one time may be considered a basic service at another time. The Lawrence County Public Library in Tennessee implemented a policy stating there would be a one dollar fee for Inter-Library Loan. This could be enough to stop a poor person from requesting a book or books that they could not otherwise get from the library, which is home to a collection of about 45,000 titles.

Overdue fines also act as a barrier. While the ALA policy promotes removing fees and overdue fines as barriers to the poor, it is up to the individual libraries to decide how to do this. Theft is also a problem and a common occurrence on the street. If a homeless person checks out a book and the person’s belongings are stolen there is little chance the book will ever be returned to the library. The library may be able to work out some kind of repayment plan with the homeless person. But in the meantime the issue of whether the homeless person can continue to check books out of the library exists.

The Tulsa (Oklahoma) Public Library experienced an increase in the number of homeless
using the library as a shelter while Pat Woodrum was the library director. Woodrum organized community groups and found private funding to create the Tulsa Day Center for the homeless. At this center the homeless “can take a shower, get snacks, seek counseling and medical attention, and use the resources of a special library collection” (Venturella 1998).

Other examples of services for the homeless include a referral service offered by The Memphis/Shelby County Public Library in Tennessee. The Enoch Pratt Free Library working with the Baltimore County Coalition for the Homeless provides a “Street Card” listing services available to the needy. The Multnomah (Oregon) County Public Library and Milwaukee Public Library both used special federal grants to place self-help material and books in homeless shelters and centers (Venturella 1998).

**Computer Services and the Homeless**

A homeless man by the name of Tim Donohue used the local library in Henderson, Nevada to write a book entitled In the Open. Donohue said, “If it hadn’t been for the library, and for the word processors there- which you can use almost for free-I probably wouldn’t have been able to write the book.” (Venturella 1998) While this is perhaps an unusual example of what can happen when computer access is given to the poor and homeless there are also other more mundane examples of what computer access can allow the poor to accomplish.

Urban libraries have found that Internet access is particularly valuable to homeless people. An April 2, 2000 article in the San Francisco Chronicle explained how enthusiastically homeless patrons have taken to the Net. Reporter Mike Weiss found that while homeless patrons “made great use of traditional services like book and periodical collections, and somewhat less-traditional ones such as videos available for viewing on the facility’s VCRs, it’s the Internet terminals that they rushed for as soon as the building opened its doors each morning” (Flagg 2000). Help for the homeless databases provide immediate assistance in solving everyday problems. “…the Metro Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless, for example, hopes to put its shelter bed registry online soon— the Department of Housing and Urban Development is working on a national database project” (Flagg 2000).

E-mail is a favorite choice of communication for homeless Internet users. A February 2000 Newhouse News Service report described how a homeless patron called Dingle “uses e-mail to exchange tips with similarly situated friends around the country on which cities offer good welfare benefits, places to avoid, and even lightly-guarded Internet terminals on college campuses” (Flagg 2000). Other homeless users stay in touch with family via e-mail because they do not have cell phones. E-mail at the public library is a free, quick service while regular mail involves paying postage and several days of delay before the letter arrives. Having the response to the e-mail arrive via the computer is also simpler than having to check at the post office to see if mail has arrived.

**The Digital Divide**

In 1999 the Library Program of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation was launched. This was an effort to bridge the digital divide between the technology “haves” and “have nots”. The first states participating in the program were Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

Computers were donated to libraries where the average poverty rate was over ten percent. The number of computers donated was based on the total number of people living in the areas. The program also provided for the training of librarians and staff. Technical assistance was provided for three years. In states where there were library schools, graduate library student interns assisted with onsite troubleshooting.

When the program began, about one-third of the computer users surveyed said they had never been to a library. Patron traffic increased an average of 36 percent following the installation of the computers with one-third of the library patrons having no other access to the Internet. “Students or adults reporting annual household incomes of less than $15,000 used the computers
most often and for the longest periods. Public access computers also appeared to be especially important to those whose highest level of education is high school or less and to the unemployed” (Gordon, et al. 2001). Half of the unemployed who were looking for work said that library computers were the only source of access they had. “Among computer users, African Americans and Native Americans are overrepresented among those living in households with annual incomes under $15,000” (Gordon, et al. 2001).

The digital divide has a number of different dimensions. They relate to race, income, education, age, and place of residence: Caucasians have significantly more access to computers and the Internet than other racial groups, and Native Americans have the least. African American children in some places, however, have more computer access at school than their Caucasian classmates. People earning higher incomes are more likely to have access at home and work than people earning lower incomes. People with more education are more likely to have access than people with less education, especially those who didn’t continue their education beyond high school. Younger people are significantly more likely to have access than older people, and people with children are more likely to have computers at home (Gordon, et al. 2001).

Alabama was the first state to receive the Library Program computers. At the time of installation the computers were the most up to date available. However by the time the program ended in 2003, the wealthier states that had received their computers later were still ahead of Alabama. This was because the wealthier states received computers that were the most up to date available (Gordon, et al. 2001).

Eighty-three percent of librarians reported their libraries had made sufficient efforts to inform the public that public access computers were available. However, at the time the Gates Library Program was underway, there was a lack of public awareness concerning both the computers and the computer classes in libraries. Many public libraries limited their outreach to library posters. While it is clear that a number of new patrons were reached, there is a large group of the very poorest citizens who have not been informed about free access to computers and the Internet (Gordon, et al. 2001).

E-Libraries: A Way to Reach the Economically Disadvantaged

E-libraries are being used to reach the poor and expand existing library services. Florida's Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library became one of the first systems in the country to promote e-libraries in remote areas of Hillsborough county. The e-libraries are not staffed by library personnel and are housed in recreation centers. Manager of Materials and Circulation Services, Marcee Challener said, “It's a way to have a library presence. We are their Internet provider.” Residents are also able to place holds on materials, pick up materials sent from other libraries, and return materials at the e-libraries (Aranda 2004).

Hialeah Public Libraries, also in Florida, built three e-libraries between 2001 and 2003. The purpose was “to increase outreach services to communities defined by low income, transportation constraints, and the “Digital Divide” (Aranda 2004). The libraries are in centralized locations and are connected to police substations. They offer “reference and circulating collections, daily book deliveries, newspapers, magazines, and the immediate ability to place reserves, request interlibrary loans, and have access to librarians” (Aranda 2004). Hialeah’s e-libraries serve a population that is over 90 percent Hispanic and where 34.6 percent of the population lives below poverty level. The e-libraries have been a success with residents of all ages who use the Internet and attending computer classes.

Maria Alpizar, the Director of Hialeah Public Libraries said, “There are at least three profiles in which an e-Library concept might work well toward expanding existing services.” They are: 1) for rural populations, where distance from centralized libraries is a tremendous issue for patrons, such as in the case of Tampa; 2) for small, branch systems that desperately need a low-cost way of opening another service point, and 3) for areas with a population explosion,
such as Hialeah in western Miami-Dade County. In a city with a population of over 225,000, each neighborhood wants its own library and if funding or space isn’t immediately available, it has been our experience that the e-Library concept creates an immediate sense of ownership with an increase in service overall (Aranda 2004).

The Hialeah e-libraries serve as learning centers too. Computer literacy classes and English classes are offered when the library is not open through partnerships with high schools’ adult education centers. The Hialeah e-libraries are helping to close the gap in the Digital Divide.

Conclusion

It is clear that much is being done to help the poor and homeless in obtaining information and help via America’s public libraries. Libraries need to increase their outreach efforts. They also need to keep the programs they currently have in support of the poor and homeless. Libraries need to share information with other libraries about what they are doing and funding must actively be sought to implement new programs. If this is accomplished, the poor and the homeless may discover the best help available to them is found in the nation’s public libraries.

Note

Tom, the homeless man who frequented the Madison County Public Library, has found a job. He is now living in an apartment in Alabama and saving money to make a down payment on a house.
Bibliography


Guidelines for Submissions and Author Instructions
The Southeastern Librarian

The Southeastern Librarian (SELn) is the official publication of the Southeastern Library Association (SELA). The quarterly publication seeks to publish articles, announcements, and news of professional interest to the library community in the southeast. The publication also represents a significant means for addressing the Association’s research objective. Two newsletter-style issues serve as a vehicle for conducting Association business, and two issues include juried articles.

1. Articles need not be of a scholarly nature but should address professional concerns of the library community. SELn particularly seeks articles that have a broad southeastern scope and/or address topics identified as timely or important by SELA sections, round tables, or committees.

2. News releases, newsletters, clippings, and journals from libraries, state associations, and groups throughout the region may be used as sources of information.

3. Submissions should be directed to: Perry Bratcher, Editor SELn, 503A Steely Library, Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, KY 41099. Phone 859-572-6309, 859-572-6181 (fax). Email: bratcher@nku.edu.

4. Manuscripts must be submitted in electronic format as attachment to an email, preferably in MS Word or compatible format. Articles should be written in a grammatically correct, simple, readable style. The author is responsible for the accuracy of all statements in the article and should provide complete and accurate bibliographic citations. Although longer or shorter works may be considered, 2,000- to 5,000-word manuscripts are most suitable.

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