

Fall 1990

## *Reflections* - Fall 1990

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# Reflections

The University of South Carolina, Columbia

Vol. 3, No. 1, Fall 1990

## Overview of Public Services

At Thomas Cooper Library, as at most libraries today, the work of the Library is divided into two broad functional areas: Public Services and Technical Services. Public Services, as the name implies, covers those areas that deal directly with the public: answering questions, checking out books, and providing instruction in the use of the Library. Public Services includes Thomas Cooper's departments of Reference, Circulation, Interlibrary Loan, Reserves, Science Library, Map Library, Government Documents/Microforms, Film Library, and Education Library, and three branch libraries: Mathematics, Business, and Music.

The overall mission for the Public Services division of the Library is to interpret the

Library to the patrons and to help them meet their informational requirements. Each department does this individually, but the Assistant Dean for Public Services, together with the department heads, coordinates policies, allocates staff, plans for new services, and evaluates those services currently being offered.

The Public Services staff of the Library has been busy in the past few years planning for and introducing new technologies to users. The last year and a half have seen the addition of a computer lab in the Reserve Room of the Library, the implementation of the online catalog, and the placement of CD-ROM work stations in the Thomas Cooper Library to complement

those already in place in the Business and Education libraries.

The role of the Public Services staff is not only to help patrons become aware of and utilize the resources of the Library, but also to aid them in accessing sources beyond this campus. Thomas Cooper Library is heavily involved in resource sharing. The online catalog shows items held in other campuses of the USC System, which are regularly obtained for library patrons. Interlibrary loan privileges have been made available to undergraduate students as well as to faculty, graduate students, and staff. Reference staff regularly makes referrals to other libraries and information centers that can fulfill the needs of our patrons.

## Computer-Based Reference Services

There are currently two types of computer-based reference services available at the Thomas Cooper Library. The first is the service called ACCESS, thus named since it allows access to several hundred different types of databases located elsewhere. The second type of automated source is the CD-ROM (Compact Disk Read Only Memory) databases located at various points in the Library.

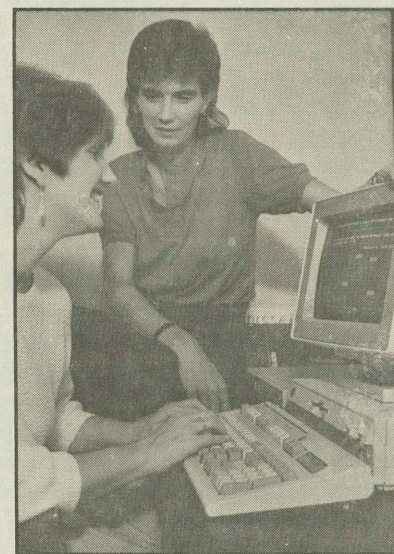
The value of this type of service lies in the ability of the user to find very specific topics or terms which are often not covered by the broad categories used as subject headings in many indexes. In addition, one can combine search terms to find materials on multiple topics without looking for each topic separately. Words and terms can be searched in titles or abstracts as well as in subject headings, a difficult task in print indexes. Also, although many of the databases are computerized versions of printed indexes, there are many which are unique and have no printed equivalent. For those patrons pressed for time, online searches can save hours of combing through printed

indexes. Several years' accumulation of information may be compressed into a single search.

The ACCESS service provides patrons with the ability to research the most current as well as older information in virtually any subject area, via an online search. The majority of these databases are bibliographic, meaning that the information retrieved consists of citations for journal articles or books dealing with a particular topic. Some of the databases, however, are statistical or informational, such as *Population Index* which gives demographic data or the *Official Airline Guide* which consists of flight schedules. A growing number of these databases are adding "full-text" items, meaning that the complete journal articles themselves can be printed.

An appointment is made with a librarian, who performs the search with the patron present. Users are charged the exact cost of the search plus a small service charge. Costs vary depending upon the

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Using new CD-Rom technology to retrieve bibliographic citations represents one way that the Library meets its users' informational needs.



# Library Instruction at USC-Columbia

Students need to recognize their need for information, how to locate that information, how to evaluate it once they have found it, and how to use it effectively in solving a problem or making a decision. Effective use of the library is an extremely important component of a successful college career.

The Thomas Cooper Library offers a variety of orientation sessions, tours, and lectures to promote more effective use of the Library. This instruction program, which reaches some 6,000 students each year, emphasizes research strategies, the use of traditional and online access to information and the critical evaluation of information sources. The Reference Department, in cooperation with other public service departments in the Library, is responsible for coordinating and providing library orientation and instruction. Library instruction sessions are offered for graduate and undergraduate classes in all subject areas. These sessions may be requested by the instructor or initiated by librarians.

The most comprehensive of the Library's instructional activities is the English 101 program. Its purpose is to introduce USC freshmen to the Library early in their undergraduate careers. This program combines a general introduction to the library with specific course-related instruction. English 101 classes (approximately 100 sections each fall semester) come to the Library to receive instruction in the use of periodical indexes which they will then use to find articles related to their class readings. The students learn the variety of periodical indexes available in various subject areas and how these can be used for research in their other classes. They are also provided detailed handouts on the use of Library resources, as well as being introduced to USCAN, the Library's online catalog.

Another instruction program which targets freshmen is the English 102 library lecture. At an instructor's request, a librarian will meet with an English 102 class and present various reference tools that will be useful in finding material on particular topics. These lectures cover sources appropriate to the topics the students are researching, and are accompanied by handouts and bibliographies.

The Reference Department offers research seminars each semester to upper-level undergraduate and graduate classes, at the request of the instructor. These seminars are designed to demonstrate various library resources, both print and automated, which can be used in researching a particular topic or field of study. The Li-

brary regularly receives requests for such seminars from instructors in a number of departments and colleges.

Each summer, in cooperation with the University's Office of Student Orientation, the Library offers 20-25 minute tours of the building for parents of prospective freshmen. This is part of a campus-wide effort to provide activities and information for parents while their children are registering for classes, taking placement exams, and receiving their own orientation to the University. These brief tours include historical information about the USC libraries and general information about the building and library services available to students.

During the first two weeks of each fall and spring semester, new graduate student orientations are offered. Depending on the size of the group, these orientations, which are approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour in length, are conducted as slide presentations, building tours, or a combination of both. Orientations are also offered to new faculty at the beginning of each fall semester. These orientations are presented as informal receptions during which new faculty are informed about library services available to them. Faculty are also provided the opportunity to meet with and ask questions of library administrators. Orientation tours for new USC staff are offered once each month.

Special training sessions are offered as new technology is introduced to the Library. For example, when USCAN began operation in 1989, workshops were offered to train students, faculty, and staff to use the system. This fall, workshops will be offered to train library patrons in the use of the new CD-ROM indexes which will be available for public use.

USC's English Program for Internationalals (EPI) is a full-time intensive language program for international students who want to improve their English skills before applying for regular admission to American universities. A library guide directed at this special group has been prepared and is available in the Library's Reference Department and also at the EPI offices. In addition, building tours, library lectures on research strategies and online demonstrations are conducted at the request of instructors.

University 101 is a program designed to introduce freshmen students to University life. The Library does not offer special tours or lectures for this group because most of these students are also enrolled in English 101. Instead, a self-guided library tour and research assignment is used in this course. These exercises have been quite

successful in providing this group of students with a comprehensive introduction to the Library and basic research strategies.

The Reference Department has designed several guides and brochures which can help patrons to use the Library more effectively. These include pamphlets on finding articles in periodicals, USCAN search guides, a library bookmark, a self-guided tour, bibliographies which list sources for research in specific disciplines, and other relevant handouts. Further information about library instruction may be obtained from the Reference Department.

## Circulation Services at Thomas Cooper

Thomas Cooper Library was one of the first libraries in the country to implement an automated circulation system. Bar code labels placed in books and on patron IDs were used to adapt for library use the type of scanning system which had been successfully used in grocery and retail stores. The Library uses this system to circulate nearly a half million books, periodicals, government documents, videocassettes and films annually.

The primary functions of the Circulation Department are to check out books to patrons and to answer questions about the status of needed materials. The department also handles thousands of requests to recall material on extended loan and to locate items which may not be on the shelf. Since the summer of 1990, circulation staff have been responsible for supervising the stack level student assistants who shelve books on a daily basis. Other duties of the Circulation Department include the maintenance of all photocopy machines in the building, the allocation and supervision of graduate and faculty study carrels, and the organization and collection of bindery materials from the stacks.

Borrowing privileges at Thomas Cooper Library are extended to all students, staff, and faculty throughout the University System. The Library also lends materials to faculty from other colleges and universities in the state of South Carolina, to the nearly 5,000 members of the University Alumni Association, to librarians of local high schools, to local businesses, and to members of the newly-formed Thomas Cooper Society. Loan periods for most items in the Thomas Cooper Library are one semester to faculty and one month to students and other patrons. Books may be renewed once, either in person or in writing.



## Reference Service at Cooper Library

The major responsibility of the reference librarian is to answer a patron's inquiry and to guide the patron to appropriate information resources. The seemingly simple procedure of finding an answer can often be complex, involving question negotiation, knowledge of many different sources in various formats, and many other tasks. The Reference Department at the Thomas Cooper Library strives to put these elements together so that the patron can obtain the needed information.

The Reference desk is the focal point for patron contact. The service given there is properly considered the top priority of the Reference Department. Reference librari-

ans are ready for questions of all kinds, from a straightforward request for directions to the highly complex research problem. Their knowledge of the Library's collection and their familiarity with the tools to access the collection, one of which is the computer, aid the librarians in their pursuit of information for the patron. As the rate of publication increases and as computers become more and more necessary to gain proper access to the collection, librarians devote larger portions of their time putting such technology to work for the patron. Reference librarians also offer lectures on a variety of topics, which are frequently accompanied by bibliographies and guides to the Library.

## Stack Levels Reorganized

During the summer, the Library reorganized stack levels 2, 3, and 4 under the supervision of the Circulation Department. Stacks personnel have been reassigned to Collection Management, the Reference Department, Interlibrary Loan, and the Circulation Department. Students working for the Circulation Department will be responsible for shelving and stack maintenance.

Two of the stack librarian positions have been reassigned to the Collection Management unit and will serve as a full-time humanities bibliographer and as a science bibliographer. They will help coordinate the work of Library faculty who serve as selectors in various subject areas. The third stack librarian position has been transferred to the Reference Department and will enhance reference assistance to library users.

As part of this reorganization, the Library will install more directional signs throughout the building. These signs will assist users in locating materials on the various stack levels. A new self-guided

tour, *Where Do I Go From Here*, has been prepared and will be available at the Reference Department and at various points throughout the building. Reference staff will also provide floor plan handouts to direct users to specific areas where books and journals are shelved. Student assistants shelving and performing stack maintenance will provide assistance if users cannot locate materials.

The Stack reorganization is an effort on the Library's part to achieve maximum utilization of all staff in order to provide for the increase in services which library users have come to expect.

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Editor:

E. Jens Holley

Editorial Board:  
Alexander Gilchrist  
May Harn Liu  
Dianne McKnight  
Jean Rhyne

Contributors to this issue:

Daniel Boice  
C. J. Cambre, Jr.  
Cathy Eckman  
E. Jens Holley  
Jackie Kinder  
May Harn Liu  
Tom Marcil  
Diane McKnight  
Roger Mortimer  
Carol Tobin

## Exhibits Committee Formed

Thomas Cooper Library has formed an Exhibits Committee to promote cultural and intellectual awareness in the community, while increasing general interest in the Library. Art exhibitions, local collections, and displays from the University's own holdings are among the themes under consideration for future exhibits, and faculty contributions are encouraged. The first exhibit is tentatively scheduled for the fall.

## Thomas Cooper Society Formed

The Thomas Cooper Society, a volunteer, support organization for the Thomas Cooper Library of the University of South Carolina has been formed to encourage community interest in the Library and to promote a fuller understanding of its purpose, programs, and potential.

The Society will bring significant aspects of contemporary culture and scholarship to its members and will foster the knowledge of book collecting and the book arts through a stimulating series of lectures, exhibitions, and special events.

Activities will include special dinner meetings; addresses by nationally prominent individuals; exhibitions; seminars and workshops on book collecting and varied aspects of the book arts; funding raising; and special publications, which will include a Society newsletter publicizing the Society's program and reporting important library news. An annual book-collecting competition open to all students enrolled in colleges and universities in the state of South Carolina will encourage and reward the beginning collector.

The basic categories of membership are: Student; Individual; and Family, which carries privileges for two individuals. Categories for the interested sponsor also include Patron and Life Member.

All funds except for the modest expenses of the Society will be transferred to the Thomas Cooper Library for the purchase of books, periodicals, and other scholarly resources.

## New Assistant Dean for Technical Services Named

In July 1990, Gary McCane Ross was appointed assistant dean for technical services and automated systems for the Thomas Cooper Library at the University of South Carolina. He was formerly associated with Miami University Libraries in Oxford, Ohio as the assistant university librarian for automation and technical services.

Prior to his appointment at Miami University, Ross served as assistant director for technical services at the College of Charleston Libraries in Charleston, SC, and head librarian of the Automated Cataloging Department at the University of Texas at Austin Libraries. Previously, he held professional positions at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

(continued on page 6)



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## CD-ROM Data Bases Available at the University

### BUSINESS LIBRARY

#### *ABI/Inform*

Description: Index to journals in business, economics and related fields

Coverage: Current 5 years (earliest month deleted as new month added)

#### *Compact Disclosure*

Description: Public company/industry information compiled from SEC filings, annual reports, etc.

Coverage: Current 18 months SEC filings

#### *Computer Library*

Description: Abstracted index to journals in the computer industry; includes full-text articles of 15 journals

Coverage: Current 12 months

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### EDUCATION LIBRARY

#### *ERIC*

Description: Index to sources in the field of Education

Coverage: 1966+

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### GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

#### *CIS Masterfile*

Description: Detailed statistical information in a variety of areas

Coverage: 1789+

#### *County and City Data Book*

Description: Statistical information on U.S. counties and metropolitan areas compiled from census data

Coverage: 1988 edition

#### *GPO Monthly Catalog*

Description: Index to federal government publications

Coverage: 1976+

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### MAP LIBRARY

#### *Electromap World Atlas*

Description: Worldwide statistics and information with country breakdowns; includes over 200 maps; attached to color printer

Coverage: Current information, updated annually

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### REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

#### *Dissertation Abstracts OnDisc*

Description: Abstracted index to dissertations from U.S., Canadian, and some Commonwealth universities

Coverage: 1861+ (abstracts from 1980+ only)

#### *Newspaper Abstracts*

Description: Abstracted index to articles in several major daily U.S. newspapers

Coverage: 1985+ (varies for certain

newspapers)

#### *PSYCLIT*

Description: Abstracted index to journals in psychology and related fields

Coverage: 1974+

#### *le Robert Electronique*

Description: French dictionary with 80,000+ entries; includes verb conjugations and 160,000 quotations

Coverage: 1985 edition of Le Grand Robert de la Langue Francaise

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### SCIENCE LIBRARY

#### *Applied Science and Technology Index*

Description: Index to journal articles in applied sciences and technology

Coverage: 10/83+

#### *General Science Index*

Description: Index to journal articles in the sciences

Coverage: 5/84+

#### *CINAHL (Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health)*

Description: Partially abstracted index to journals in nursing and health-related fields

Coverage: 1983+



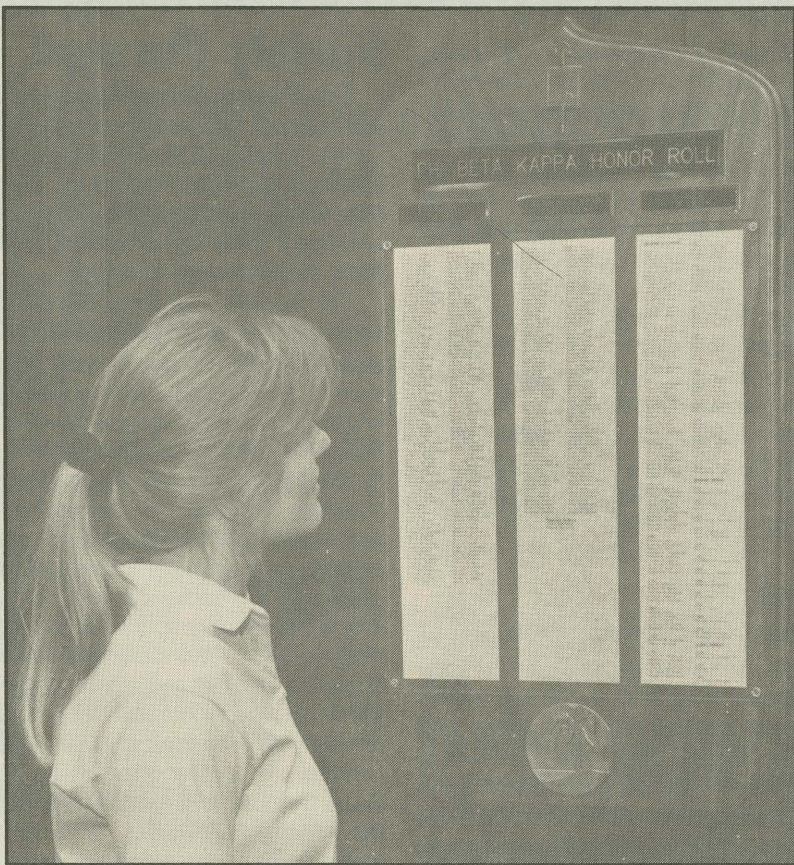
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### Phi Beta Kappa Plaque Placed in Library

To emphasize the ties between the Library and scholarship, and to honor current members for their hard work, the USC chapter of Phi Beta Kappa has placed a membership roll, a list of its new inductees, and a list of its award winners on the main floor of Thomas Cooper Library. The lists will be updated annually.

Thomas Cooper Library  
The University of South Carolina  
Columbia, SC 29208

### Computer-Based (from pg. 1)

type of data, the length of time it takes to find the information, and the amount of information printed. Appointments are made through the Reference Department, or through the Science or Business Library for searching those subject areas.

CD-ROMs are laser disks containing a variety of resources. The majority of them are databases such as *ABI/INFORM*, an index to business periodicals, which is available in the Business Library, and *ERIC*, an index to educational journals and reports, which is available in the Education Library. They are used on a microcomputer in the Library, and the information is contained on a small disk or series of disks. The library subscribes to these just as it subscribes to printed sources, and continually adds new resources in this format. These CD-ROM databases are for direct use by the patron at no charge. Assistance is available and workshops will be held this fall.

### Assist. Dean Named (from pg. 3)

Libraries in Blacksburg, Va., at Ohionet, and the Ohio State University Libraries in Columbus, Ohio. In addition, he worked as a consultant for the Rutgers Universities Libraries in New Brunswick, N.J., and for the South Carolina Historical Society in Charleston.

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