

Library Research in North Carolina

Ilene Nelson, Editor

This column was inaugurated one year ago with the stated purpose of providing a forum "for publicity about library-related research that is being performed by our colleagues in the state or that deals with libraries and librarianship in the state." I intend to interpret this purpose broadly. Furthermore, I invite comments from readers regarding potential topics for research. Often, those of us working in libraries recognize the need for study in a certain area but lack the time to conduct the research ourselves. An idea outlined in this column might spark the imagination of another practitioner or academician in our audience and result in a useful study.

Research is ongoing in North Carolina's library schools. One of the degree requirements for students enrolled in the master's program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is the completion of an original research project. It occurred to me that the results of this research would be of interest to North Carolina librarians. The following abstracts are of several recently submitted papers which seem particularly pertinent to the concerns of working librarians. The papers themselves are available through interlibrary loan from Elizabeth Laney at the UNC Library School Library.

Kathleen D'Angelo's review of disaster planning literature coupled with still vivid memories of the devastation of Hurricane Hugo, the fire at Western Carolina University, and the San Francisco earthquake will perhaps stimulate an examination of disaster readiness in North Carolina libraries.

Kathleen T. D'Angelo. *Mass Treatment Options for the Recovery of Water-Damaged Library Materials, With Attention to Disasters and Disaster Planning: A Review of the Literature*. A Master's paper for the M.S. in L.S. degree. May, 1989. 213 pages. Advisor: Jerry D. Saye

This review of the literature examines options currently available for the recovery and mass treatment of water-damaged library materials. Because techniques have tended to be developed in response to actual water emergencies, methods for mass treatment are presented in the context of disasters and disaster planning. The paper focuses on the past decade of care and restoration efforts, with particular attention to the impact of science

and technology on the availability and types of treatment...

There are a number of disaster preparedness manuals available to librarians. John Sharpe's *Disaster Preparedness: A Guide for Developing a Plan to Cope With Disaster for the Public and Private Library* was published in 1982 by the Duke University Library.

When we contemplate disaster striking the library, the effect on the book collection is generally our primary concern. The nightmare becomes more horrible, however, when you stop to think about the various computer equipment and systems in your building. Calm yourself by reading R. Bruce Miller's article, "Libraries and Computers: Disaster Prevention and Recovery," in the December 1988 issue of *Information Technology and Libraries*, pp. 349-358. The author addresses preparing for and recovering from typical natural disasters as well as unnatural disasters such as vendor default and viruses. The article is filled with practical advice and concludes with a general outline for developing a computer-specific disaster preparedness plan.

The specter of censorship is equally disturbing to librarians. We believe ourselves prepared to confront the blatant forms. Yet censorship in subtler guises, in actions we ourselves might take, presents an equal, if not greater, danger. Janice L. Mitchell-Love considers various aspects of the subject in her paper.

Janice L. Mitchell-Love. *Select, Don't Censor: A Topical Perspective of Censorship*. A Master's paper for the M.S. in L.S. degree. April, 1990. 46 pages. Advisor: Susan Steinfurst

This paper investigates the issue of intellectual freedom in a topical manner. Lester Asheim's theories of selection, using his noted articles, "Not Censorship But Selection" and "Selection and Censorship: A Reappraisal," are discussed. Then Harriet Pilpel's classification of censorship attempts (RSVP) plus two of the author's are explained, and the RSVP-plus-two formula is employed in an examination of selected titles from the ALA's *Challenged and Banned Booklist of May, 1986 to May, 1987*. An article entitled "Majorities for Censorship" by Howard D. White and one called "Intellectual Freedom? Censorship in North Carolina, 1981-1985," are inspected to discover

facts about censorship nationally and regionally, respectively...

At first glance the topic of Cathy L. Martin's paper may seem too specialized to be of interest to more than a few readers of *North Carolina Libraries*. This comparison of online citator services, however, should raise questions in the minds of all of us.

Cathy L. Martin. **A Comparison of Online Legal Citator Services with Shepard's Federal Citations: Are the Online Services Reliable?** A master's paper for the M.S. in L.S. degree. July, 1989. Advisor: Judith Wood

Shepard's/McGraw-Hill publishes a series of citator services, *Shepard's Citations*, designed to enable a legal researcher to locate judicial history of a given case and to verify its current authority. *Shepard's Citations* are now available online in Lexis and Westlaw, and producers of both systems also provide their own custom-designed citator services, Auto-Cite and Insta-Cite, respectively. This study was undertaken to investigate whether the online *Shepard's Federal Citations* in both Lexis and Westlaw accurately reflect the printed version and whether the Auto-Cite and Insta-Cite services are as accurate as the printed *Shepard's*.

In a study of fifty cases having a "significant" case history (for example, having been reversed on appeal), both online versions of *Shepard's Citations* agreed with the printed version. In eight cases, or sixteen percent of the fifty cases, both Auto-Cite and Insta-Cite analyses differed significantly from the printed *Shepard's*. The producers of Lexis and Westlaw are called upon to exercise the highest standard of care in analyzing cases for Auto-Cite and Insta-Cite.

In a cursory review of *Library Literature*, I found very few evaluations of the content of online databases. I did discover an interesting comparison of InfoTrac II and *Readers' Guide*—Carol Reese, "Manual Indexes Versus Computer-Aided Indexes: Comparing the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* to InfoTrac II," *RQ*, 27:3 (Spring 1988): 384-389. In this study one set of topics was researched by two groups of students from a New Jersey community college, one group using *Readers' Guide* and the other InfoTrac. The authors report that eighty-three percent of the students who used *Readers' Guide* conducted successful searches as compared to a sixty-three percent success rate for those who used InfoTrac II. I invite readers to get in touch with me if they know of other similar studies of online or CD-ROM sources.

Lists of recommended titles are always welcomed by librarians. Sandra Poston's guide should have a usefulness beyond its stated purpose.

Sandra W. Poston. **Opening-Day Collections for School Media Centers: A Selection Guide.** A Master's paper for the M.S. in L.S. degree. April, 1989. 65 pages. Advisor: Susan Steinfirst

This paper is intended to serve as a manual with guidelines for selecting instructional media for new library media centers, often referred to as "opening-day," "core," "base," or "initial" collections. Because these collections are often developed by individuals who know little about the needs of the students and teachers who will be requesting materials on the first day of school, this manual attempts to guide the media specialist or selection committee through the necessary steps of developing a collection that at least partially meets opening-day demands. These steps are: choosing a selection committee, developing a schedule, assessing needs, using preview materials and selection tools, using catalogs and promotional materials, and choosing and working with a major vendor. Included is an extensive bibliography of review sources for various formats of instructional media.

Information and referral services became relatively common in American public libraries during the early 1970s. Two recent University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill master's papers explore these services from different perspectives. Mary D. Hartvigas's 1989 paper entitled *Project LIFT, an Information and Retrieval Service* chronicles the Durham County Library's involvement with information and referral. Linda Thomsen, on the other hand, presents a more speculative examination of the subject.


Linda Thomsen. **Information and Referral Services in Public Libraries: Has the Trend Continued?** A master's paper for the M.S. in L.S. degree. July, 1989. 50 pages. Advisor: Elfreda A. Chatman.

This study describes a mail survey of one hundred randomly chosen public libraries in the United States. The survey was designed to replicate a study done by Thomas Childers in 1978, for the purpose of determining whether or not there has been a significant change over the past decade in the number of I&R services offered by public libraries nationwide.

Survey results indicate a decrease in the number of public libraries offering information and referral services, from 36% in 1978 to 18.6% in 1989. Based on the premise that I&R was introduced to the public library setting as a means of reaching the traditionally underserved economically disadvantaged, the author concludes that the decrease in the number of information and referral services in public libraries suggests an inability and/or lack of interest among public libraries to meet the information needs of this segment of the population.


In 1986, Sharon L. Baker and Ellen Dew Ruey surveyed the views of directors and heads of reference in all North Carolina public libraries regarding information and referral services. Baker and

Ruey found that these librarians favored offering only those I&R services which parallel traditional reference services. This finding is thought-provoking when considered in relation to Linda Thomsen's premise and conclusions about information and referral services. "Information and Referral Services — Attitudes and Barriers: A Survey of North Carolina Public Libraries," *RQ*, 28:2 (Winter 1988): 243-252, is the report of the research conducted by Sharon Baker and Ellen Ruey.

What have you learned by reading this column? Address your comments to Ilene Nelson at the Reference Department, Perkins Library, Duke University, Durham, NC 27706; telephone (919) 684-2373; fax (919) 684-2855. 

Preservation Consortium Seeks Input

The preservation of North Carolina's library and archival materials has been the main agenda item of the North Carolina Preservation Consortium. Founded by a coalition of librarians and archivists, the Consortium, with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, has been gathering information for a state-wide preservation plan. Issues such as binding as a preservation strategy; reformatting; disaster plans for libraries; hands-on repair of materials; education needs for staff and users; and how to reach resource allocators have been discussed at the Consortium's public forums throughout the state. With its presence at the regional sessions of the Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services, the Consortium has also polled librarians on preservation issues. Those wanting to make their views and needs known are urged to contact the Consortium's coordinator for a survey form. Easily filled out, the survey, once returned, will allow librarians the opportunity to express the preservation needs and priorities of their institution, particular field, and area of the state.

These forms, as well as any other information regarding the Consortium and its upcoming Preservation Symposium to be held in Raleigh April 26 and 27, 1991, can be obtained by contacting Harlan Greene, Preservation Coordinator, North Carolina Preservation Consortium, c/o N.C. Division of Archives and History, 109 E. Jones Street — Room 303, Raleigh, NC 27601-2807. The phone number is (919) 733-7305. 

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