

Todd Library Update

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Academic Libraries: The Changing Knowledge Centers of Colleges and Universities

by

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The libraries of America's colleges and universities are in the midst of a period of unprecedented change and adjustment. Academic libraries have never been static organizations; they have existed within and responded to changes in the institutions of higher education they serve. The typical academic library has grown from a one-room affair open only a few hours a week to a complex organization employing a large staff and housing hundreds of thousands of volumes.

Today's academic libraries are facing a series of challenges that arise from factors both internal and external to the library itself. As libraries, the primary information resources on campuses, enter the so-called "information age," they face a number of common problems. Libraries' responses to these challenges will determine the shape of the academic library of the future.

What Effect Will New Technology Have on Academic Libraries?

New technological developments have already profoundly affected academic libraries. Almost every function carried out in a library has been altered to some extent by advances in electronics, computerization, and telecommunications. At one time, for example, each library largely did its own cataloging. In 1971, the first online shared cataloging system was established. More of these bibliographic utilities have since been established, and now most cataloging in academic libraries is produced through the shared cataloging database of one of these utilities. Services for users have been greatly expanded by the use of online bibliographic search services, which became common in the 1970s. Instead of manually searching indexes to find citations or produce bibliographies, a trained searcher can manipulate a computer database that produces the same results in a matter of minutes. Interlibrary loan, library acquisitions, and circulation

have all benefited from the use of computerized systems. Many academic libraries now have electronic antitheft devices to retard unauthorized "borrowing" from the collection. Photocopying machines have changed library users' note-taking patterns in less than a generation.

These developments, immense as they have been, are merely forerunners of the technologies that will be common in libraries of the future. Some libraries have already introduced online public access catalogs to replace traditional card catalogs. Some libraries are using new methods of information storage, such as digitally encoded video discs. Future interlibrary loans will bypass the postal system and use new methods, such as digital telefacsimile, for document delivery.

Libraries will indeed live in a "brave new world," but they will find technology very expensive. Despite earlier hopes that automation might lead to reduced costs, such reductions have yet to be realized.

Technology provides us with many options, only some of which we can afford. But we must recognize clearly that in applying technology to the service of scholarship, in some areas we have no choice. We are not replacing traditional services because we prefer the new gadgetry but because we no longer have the resources necessary to make the old ways effective in the current environment (Battin 1982, pp. 581-82).

How Can Libraries Meet the Rising Cost of Materials?

The acquisition budgets of academic libraries in the 1970s were not able to keep pace with the soaring prices of library materials. Prices for both books and journals ran far ahead of general inflation. The serious erosion of the

buying power of the library's acquisition budget occurred at the same time that financial problems became severe throughout all of higher education. Thus, colleges and universities were unable to provide sufficient funds for library budgets to keep pace with inflation. At the same time, the output from publishers increased dramatically, with the result that libraries added a smaller percentage of the published literature to their collections.

Academic libraries, even those that pride themselves on their extensive collections, have reluctantly realized that they can no longer acquire and house comprehensive book collections. The consensus is that no library, however large, can afford to achieve self-sufficiency; thus, networks must be established to permit the cooperative sharing of library resources. The time has come to accelerate "the trend away from each library being a self-contained unit, toward a system in which the library will be a service center, capable of linking users to national bibliographic files and distant collections" (*National Enquiry* 1979, p. 159). Many library users, who would prefer to see their libraries continue to purchase the bulk of the scholarly materials they need, will likely resist this new emphasis on access rather than acquisition. Nonetheless, it is inevitable that collection development policies, especially in large libraries, will respond to new economic realities. The formation of consortia and the development of a national cooperative strategy promise continued access by scholars to the world's literature at a less burdensome cost.

What Is the Appropriate Role for Librarians?

The library is a highly labor-intensive organization; thus, issues relating to staffing and personnel are critical. Development of new

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The first few words

Most of us know plots. But how many of us can recall the means an author uses—the first few words—to get us quickly into his story? The opening sentences of some famous literary works are reproduced below. How many do you recognize? (JDM)

1. For a long time I used to go to bed early.
2. On a hill by the Mississippi where Chippewas camped two generations ago, a girl stood in relief against the cornflower blue of Northern sky.
3. Call me Ishmael.
4. Riverrun, past Eve and Adam's, from swerve of shore to bend of bay, brings us by a commodius vicus of recirculation back to Howth Castle and Environs.
5. When you are getting on in years (but not ill, of course), you get very sleepy at times, and the hours seem to pass like lazy cattle moving across a landscape.
6. It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.
7. We are at rest five miles behind the front. Yesterday we were relieved, and now our bellies are full of beef and haricot beans. We are satisfied and at peace.
8. On Friday, noon, July the twentieth, 1714, the finest bridge in all Peru broke and precipitated five travellers into the gulf below.
9. Last night I dreamt I went to Manderlay again. It seemed to me I stood by the iron gate leading to the drive, and for a while I could not enter for the way was barred to me.
10. The Salinas Valley is in Northern California.
11. It was a bright cold day in April and the clocks were striking thirteen.
12. In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since.

Answers on back page

Dear Faculty and Administration,

The Self Study of the University has been completed and the SACS Visiting Committee has provided us with three suggestions pertaining to the library.

Suggestion #1

"That priority consideration be maintained for a major library expansion during the present five-year planning period."

A proposed expansion of Todd Library has been planned which calls for two additional floors on the top of the one-half of the current building that was built in 1969 with a foundation to support additional floors. This addition and renovation project is currently on the SBR list of projects for fiscal year 1987-88 and is budgeted at \$3.8 million. One thing to remember, however, is the frequent moving of projects to later years due to inadequate funding by the state for all requested projects.

Suggestion #2

"That the Library study the distribution of the Library acquisitions funds in terms of curricular needs in order to maintain an appropriate balance between the books and periodicals allocations."

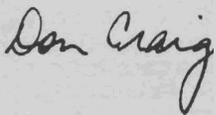
The Library staff is working closely with the University Library Committee on this study of the balance between funds spent on books and those spend on periodicals.

Suggestion #3

"That the University continue its planning efforts toward the improvement of Library services through the introduction of automation programs."

Library staff are continuing efforts designed to prepare the Library for computerization. Bibliographic records are being recorded onto computer tapes, a study of individual library departments is in progress, a person with automation experience is being sought, and selected faculty and administrators are being oriented to sophisticated computerized library systems in use at other universities. Staff members have been encouraged in their efforts by the inclusion of library computerization in the SBR Five-Year Plans and by a 1985 THEC study recommendation for greater utilization of technology in Tennessee's libraries.

Cordially,



Don Craig
University Librarian

Mrs. Frances Hunter



After twenty years of service, Mrs. Frances Hunter, interlibrary loans librarian, retired June 30, 1985. A graduate of Peabody College (class of 1947) and Middle Tennessee State University (M.A., 1965), Mrs. Hunter was appointed to Todd Library faculty as instructor, September 1, 1965. She was tenured in 1973 and was promoted to the rank of assistant professor in 1979.

As Todd Library's first interlibrary loans librarian, she established basic operating procedures and guidelines. In fiscal 1965-66, Mrs. Hunter handled a total of five (5) interlibrary loans in addition to her duties in the Circulation/Reference Departments. In fiscal 1984-85, Mrs. Hunter handled 2,853 interlibrary loan transactions and also worked some fifteen hours each week at the Reference Desk where she helped to answer 30,873 questions. In 1975 the library joined the Southeastern Library network (Solinet) which brought about a number of changes in interlibrary loan activities. Mrs. Hunter attended workshops and seminars and adapted Todd Library's lending to the new technology.

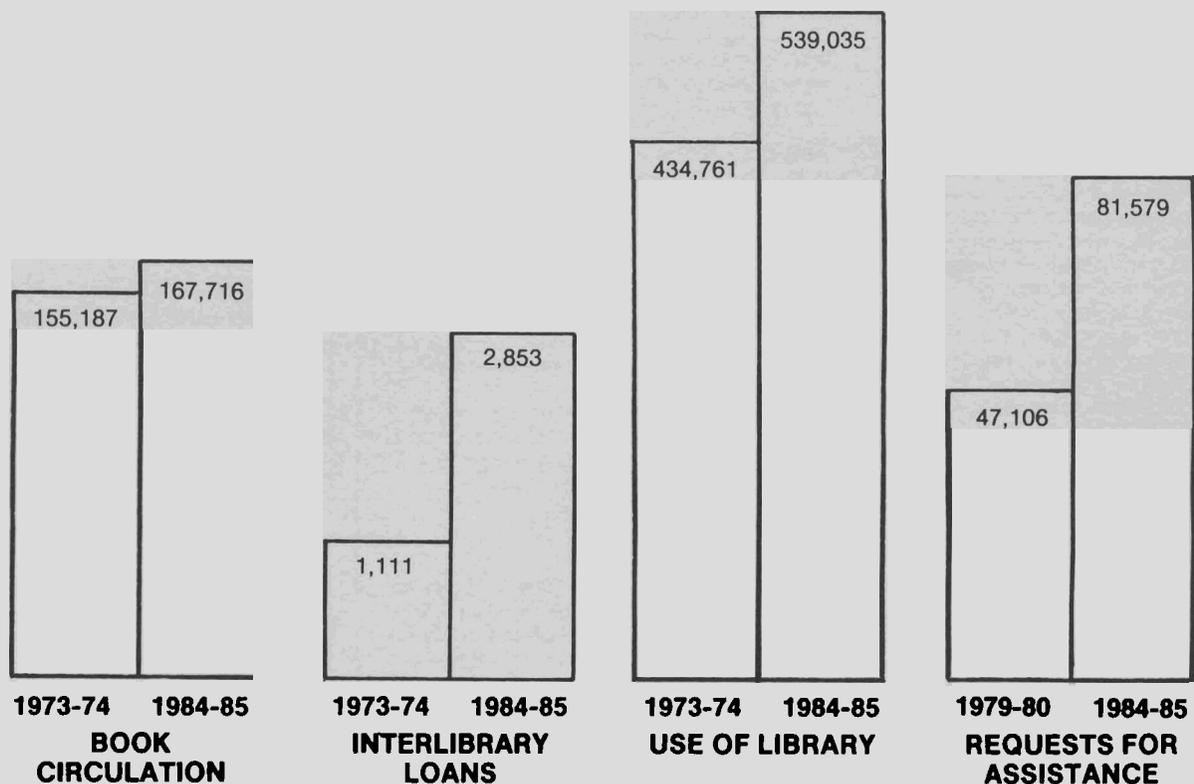
Mrs. Hunter served as a member of the Reference Department Staff and frequently conducted library orientation sessions. She received the "Certificate of Recognition" from Sigma XI, the Scientific Research Society, in April 1982.

A veteran world traveler, Frances has seen the Great Wall of China and the Forbidden City, has ridden a camel in Egypt, has sunned on the beaches of the Canary Islands, and has been snorkeling off the Island of St. Croix. Among her retirement plans is a trip to Nepal.

Mrs. Hunter is active in the Murfreesboro Woman's Club, Delta Kappa Gamma (now serving as president), and the First United Methodist Church. She is a member of the American Library Association, Southeastern Library Association, Tennessee Library Association, and Mid-State Library Association. She is a life member of the Friends of Linebaugh Library. Other interests include reading, swimming, cooking, flower gardening, and, of course, traveling.

The Hunters are the parents of a daughter, Mrs. Mike (Marcia) Anderson, and the grandparents of Michel, Brent, and Jennifer Anderson. (IDR)

MTSU: A Decade of Growth in Library Services 1979-80 and 1984-85



Academic Libraries: The Changing Knowledge Centers at Colleges and Universities *continued from front page*

staffing patterns has resulted in many tasks previously handled by professional librarians being turned over to students, clerks, or para-professionals. The new technological developments require more sophisticated librarians, and the role of the academic librarian is being reinterpreted to provide more effective service to library users. Reflecting this new professionalism is the renewed emphasis on instruction in library and information skills. Librarians now take an active responsibility for facilitating students' and faculty's use of the library's resources.

A closely related issue is that of status for the librarian: Should the academic librarian have the same status as the faculty and be governed by the same or similar standards for promotion and tenure, or is another status more appropriate? After a strong push for faculty status in the 1960s, some librarians are reversing their stand on the issue, and a lively debate has ensued. Another issue, the type of education and background most appropriate for librarians planning to enter academic libraries, is still to be resolved.

How Should Libraries Be Managed?

The problems academic libraries face in the area of management stem in part from the fact that budget support depends upon justifying services and programs to students, faculty, and administrators. Although the library usually is one of the largest cost centers on the campus, it has few ways to generate funds for its support (*Galvin and Lynch* 1982, p. 1). The costly effects of inflation, the growth in the volume of publication, and the implementation of expensive new technologies have caused some academic administrators to view the library as a "bottomless pit" capable of absorbing all the funds appropriated to it and always needing more. The increasing complexity of the library organization and budgetary pressures have forced academic librarians to pay increasing attention to administrative matters. Although many libraries are still governed in a hierarchical manner, employees' involvement in governance has become of interest. In some libraries tension has arisen between the desire of the staff to have greater participation in decision making and the library director's accountability for the library's administration. In other institutions the advent of collective bargaining and faculty status for librarians has further complicated governance. The more successful libraries will likely implement governance plans that allow professional librarians a meaningful role in the library's policy decisions but spell out administrative responsibility in detail.

How Can Existing Collections in Academic Libraries Be Preserved?

Librarians have always assumed that preservation of recorded knowledge is one of their central functions, but today's academic librar-

ies face an intractable preservation problem. Improper storage facilities, the overuse or misuse of collections, and the use of acids in paper manufactured during the past 100 years have resulted in the physical deterioration of a large and growing part of this country's library collections. Regardless of cause, an alarming percentage of collections need procedures implemented to preserve the existing stock. Although techniques are now available to aid in preserving and restoring library collections, successful preservation presents a challenge to both librarians and scholars. Priorities need to be set and a national plan implemented to ensure that the content of millions of published materials will not be lost. As with technology, the cost is likely to be high.

What Will the Academic Library of Tomorrow Look Like?

Over the next one or two decades, academic libraries will change. Some have predicted the virtual disappearance of libraries as electronic communication leads to a paperless society, but more likely libraries of the future will neither disappear nor become paperless, because the vast retrospective collections they hold are available nowhere else. Books and computer output will coexist. Users will still go to libraries to find collections of materials that are not available elsewhere or that they cannot afford (*De Gennaro* 1982).

New technologies and economic constraints will continue to reshape academic libraries. Academic administrators should not underestimate the severity of the problems that will confront college and university libraries during this period. The higher education community needs to reassess its traditional concept of academic libraries and join with librarians to develop a consensus about the appropriate role and mission of the academic library of the future.

Selected References

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The First Few Words Answers *continued*

1. *Remembrance of Things Past* by Marcel Proust.
2. *Main Street* by Sinclair Lewis.
3. *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville.
4. *Finnegans Wake* by James Joyce.
5. *Good-bye, Mr. Chips* by James Hilton.
6. *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen.
7. *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque.
8. *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* by Thornton Wilder.
9. *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier.
10. *East of Eden* by John Steinbeck.
11. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell.
12. *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

TODD LIBRARY UPDATE is issued from time to time for the Middle Tennessee State University community.

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