

# MISSISSIPPI LIBRARIES

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## PRESIDENT'S PAGE

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It is an honor to serve as President of the Mississippi Library Association. I look forward to working with each of you on behalf of the Association.

We had a highly successful National Library Week Workshop and Legislative Reception with outstanding attendance from both library supporters and our legislators. Rep. Steve Holland and Rep. John Read served on a panel that discussed *Libraries...Through a Legislator's Eyes*. Specials guests attending the reception were Governor Ronnie Musgrove and Lieutenant Governor Amy Tuck. I would like to thank Jennifer Smith, Robert Lipscomb, Mary Julia Anderson, Emma Ainsworth, Velma Champion, and the other committee members for all the hard work they put into making the day a success.

I would also like to thank the Legislative Committee co-chairs Frances Coleman and Glenda Segars for keeping us up-to-date on legislation concerning libraries. The Legislative Committee is a network of librarians, trustees and friends who work diligently to promote legislation that is favorable to all types of libraries.

Some of the goals of the 2000 Legislative Committee are: to support the Mississippi Library Commission's efforts to secure adequate state bond funding for the new state library facility and improvements of public libraries around the state; to continue support of MAGNOLIA; and to support reinstatement of a state supervisor of school libraries at the Mississippi



*Rhonda Tynes*

Department of Education. Please join the Legislative Committee in working to meet our objectives. Your support is vital to accomplish these goals.

Plans are also being made for Mississippi's delegation to attend ALA's Legislative Day in Washington on May 2. If you are interested in being a part of the state delegation, please contact Glenda Segars at 662-

862-3101.

Several of us representing MLA, attended ALA Midwinter in San Antonio. We enjoyed hearing stimulating speakers, attending discussion groups, and visiting the exhibits. Truthfully, more than anything else, we enjoyed the warm weather and the restaurants on the Riverwalk.

This issue of *ML* is the inaugural one for our new editor, Ann Branton. Thank you, Ann, for taking on this huge responsibility. I would also like to thank those of you who volunteered for committee work. The complete list of committees was printed in the Winter 1999 issue of *ML*. I also appreciate the section and roundtable chairs and the other elected officers of MLA for the time they volunteer to the association. All of you are the reason our association is so successful.

Many members are working to make good things happen in Mississippi libraries. Everyone has something to contribute to the effort. So, I challenge each member to stay informed, speak out, get involved, and support your association. Help promote the excellent libraries in our state.

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On the Cover: Reader figurine from the private collection of Carol Cubberley, Director of Technical Services, USM Libraries, The University of Southern Mississippi; photograph by Barton Spencer, Assistant to the Dean, USM Libraries, The University of Southern Mississippi.

## MISSISSIPPI LIBRARIES

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Manuscripts must be typescripts produced as a computer file document in MSWord 95 or greater, WordPerfect or ASCII text. Supply a paper printout as well. Manuscripts must be received by the editor by the following deadlines: Spring, February 2nd; Summer, May 2nd; Fall, August 2nd; and Winter, November 2nd. Photographs must be black and white, glossy finish.

**NOTICE:** Dues must be paid by March 1 in order to vote in election of officers and to receive the Spring issue of *Mississippi Libraries*. No back issues will be sent.

# The E-Book: Future or Fad?

James M. Bunnelle

Catalog Librarian

*The University of Southern Mississippi*

Yet another technology is set to impact libraries in the coming years, or so we are led to believe by manufacturers and technophiles alike: the E-book. The E-book is a handheld computerized device that allows for the portability of "E-texts," or texts that have been converted into an electronic format. And naturally, just as before, the predicted demise of paper and traditional printing has been announced by many of its proponents, an announcement which no doubt sounds familiar to most librarians by now.

## E-OVERLOAD

With the daily inundation of the "E" prefix in recent times, a distinction should be made here between E-texts and E-books, two related yet separate entities. Simply put, E-text refers to coded data, often encrypted, which is displayed electronically, whether using plain text or marked-up HTML, while the term E-book is used to describe the portable, electronic devices through which the data is decoded and displayed. E-text itself is not a new technology, as Project Gutenberg and other non-profit organizations have created them for years. However, the software-based translators have undergone great changes, and this new combination of software and smaller, portable display devices is the driving force behind the recent E-book boom.

## THE PRIME MOVERS

The two heavyweights behind this boom are NuvoMedia's Rocket eBook and the SoftBook Reader from SoftBooks Press. NuvoMedia's product was the first to hit the shelves in late 1998, and

although its design has been improved upon somewhat by its successor, many users still feel it has the edge. The Rocket eBook is the smaller of the two devices, with a screen no larger than the standard paperback book. This was improved upon by the SoftBook Reader, which extended the size to conform to the standard 8.5x11 format, an alteration that made print more legible and allowed magazine-size pages to display full screen. Both machines run off of rechargeable batteries, lasting between 4 to 6 hours for the Rocket eBook and 3 to 4 for the SoftBook Reader.

The major difference in the two products lies in how they import and create E-book data. The Rocket eBook is dependent upon a personal computer for downloading texts from the Internet. The machine rests in a small cradle and is connected straight into the computer, where the selections are made. Following this, the software, aptly titled the "Rocket Librarian," decodes the data and creates the E-text. In order to promote this process, NuvoMedia has signed contracts with both Barnesandnoble.com and Powells.com as content providers for Rocket eBook users.

SoftBooks opted for a different approach in hopes of making their device less dependent upon secondary technology. They furnished the SoftBook Reader with its own built-in modem that connects directly into a standard phone jack, allowing for greater flexibility in the downloading of data. After connecting to one of SoftBook Press's "infocenters," all E-text selections are made with a stylus on the SoftBook Reader's touch-sensitive screen. They are then retrieved and saved onto the device memory, which holds around 1,400 pages (expandable up to 100,000 with memory card).

## VIRTUAL UNCERTAINTY

It goes without saying that publishing and distribution would be the hardest hit by the predicted shift from print to electronic. As writers stand prepared to harness the full potential of electronic publishing, the major publishers have expressed reservations about the freedom (read "loss of profits") and chaos that comes from independent publication, distribution and marketing. They are afraid, with justification, at what could happen if enterprising writers and independent publishers circumvent their traditional role as gatekeeper. Sites like Fatbrain.com and Ebookstand.com are already accepting manuscripts from those unwilling to deal with — or getting the runaround from — the major houses like Random House and Knopf, and one should not immediately assume that these books are inferior or unworthy of publication. For years now, the major publishing firms have been criticized for their neglect of what was once known as the "midlist," meaning low profile, more literary titles that appeal to smaller audiences. Or as one journalist put it, "books that enable editors to look themselves in the mirror at night." An intense concentration of power and resources following countless mergers left publishers relying on either previously established authors with solid audiences or sensationalist tell-alls. The literary community hopes that electronic publishing will reverse some of that and help balance the scales.

A review of the literature shows a mix of industry concerns. Some publishers are afraid that popular, well-established authors, like John Grisham or Stephen King, will simply begin to cater to their audience's needs directly, posting their downloadable novels at their online web sites and charging the price of your everyday hardback. Not only would it make

the author's life easier, but it would also result in 100% royalties, with the only overhead being the maintenance of the site itself. Some literary types see this as a positive development, believing that with the responsibility of marketing and promoting the established writers off of the publishers' hands, they can once again return to promoting the works of first-time or neglected midlist authors.

In short, anything could happen. The E-book is too new, and possibly too ephemeral, to cause the publishers much concern at the moment. Still, distributors of E-texts are gearing up for big business, and librarians should keep their eyes on companies that could affect them, particularly netLibrary. In March of 1999, netLibrary introduced an Internet-based, E-book service for libraries that allows for full-text searching of content. The E-books can then be "checked out" by downloading them to computers using netLibrary client software distributed by the company at no charge. In addition to a large body of public-domain titles from Project Gutenberg, the company intends to supply reference, scholarly and professional E-books to a variety of libraries and consortia. Library vendors are also taking netLibrary's position quite seriously. In September of last year, it was reported that Blackwell's Book Services would sign an agreement with netLibrary in order to utilize the table of contents in Blackwell's database for accessing book chapters. What's more, on the technical services end, netLibrary has contracted with OCLC in order to provide MARC cataloging for its titles, including 856 fields, which would enable users to search and connect to their database from the library's local catalog.

### ATTEMPTING TO RETAIN THE "BOOKNESS"

This attempted alliance with the library community is not surprising. After looking at these machines, it is clear that both

NuvoMedia and SoftBooks Press tried very hard to mimic the traditional characteristics of a book so as not to upset the conventional reading experience that most users are accustomed to. A rocker switch on the side allows the user to flip pages or "thumb through" the book, although this still becomes cumbersome due to the loading times of the individual pages, making the "thumbing" pretty slow-going. Both the Rocket eBook and the SoftBook Reader come with a stylus that lets the user annotate text, search for definitions, highlight important passages, and scribble in the margins. And unlike the conventional book, the font and type-size are adjustable and permit the reader to make basic design changes to suit his/her specific preferences. SoftBook's device goes so far as to attach leather binding to its machine, giving it an elegant look that has received accolades from critics and designers. Perhaps the pinnacle of this imitation "bookness" will be achieved with the upcoming release of EveryBooks' Dedicated Reader, a pricey E-book, which opens up into two dual, full-color panels, as opposed to its predecessors' single screen, somewhat bland LCD, displays.

Nevertheless, the implications of all of this on the reading experience have yet to be determined. For instance, many enjoy having the ability to manipulate the fonts and format however they see fit. But to a certain extent, this undermines, and even destroys, the intentions of the graphic artists and typographers, who sometimes collaborate with the writer to achieve a certain aesthetic effect. On *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Hemingway worked hand-in-hand with his book designers in order to meticulously craft an outer book that would reflect its inner content, right down to the type of paper used. Such attention to detail would be lost if readers had the freedom to alter and rearrange the layout of a given text. Thus, in the great "Is print doomed for extinction?" debate, not

only do elements of the physical book as an art form get overlooked, but technology proponents all too often lump all books into one great category, seldom understanding that there is room for everything to co-exist.

### LACK OF STANDARDS

Despite all of these technological advances, several serious problems still surround the E-book, problems which must be resolved before the device even begins to make a dent in the world of print.

The first hurdle is the lack of standards within the industry. Gradually, this will be worked out as companies impose standards or consumers decide for themselves which technology they prefer. The former seems likely given the current progress in that direction. In December, representatives from various companies and non-profit organizations assembled in San Francisco and created the Open Electronic Book Forum (OEBF), whose aim is to "create and maintain standards to promote the successful adoption of electronic books." The main objective is to decide upon a set of common file-format specifications so readers won't be forced to reformat electronic data transferred from different E-book devices. The SoftBook Reader and Rocket eBook both use HTML for their content, but EveryBook's Dedicated Reader will use PDF (Portable Document Format), used by Adobe Acrobat. This, they say, is better suited to their product's full-color display due to PDF's emphasis on image control and reproduction.

To make things more confusing, Microsoft is promoting XML (Extensible Markup Language), a new standard that will eventually replace HTML in the near future. This holds particular importance for libraries. PDF is proprietary, meaning publishers would have to pay Adobe royalties for its use, while XML is designed to support the creation of metadata, making it highly compatible with the Dublin

Core standard. If XML were properly implemented, it would allow libraries to search through the contents on an E-book in much the same fashion as they now search periodical databases. Since PDF would place top priority on resolution and reproduction of text and images, it would find little use in library settings where information retrieval takes a top priority. On the other hand, due to its ability to generate graphical content, perhaps it would find a niche in media libraries.

### HI-TECH SHORTCOMINGS

The second major failing of the E-book is its poor display technology. Stephen Sottong's criticism of E-book displays in the May 1999 edition of *American Libraries* is thorough and to the point. The reproduction of text on the LCD (liquid crystal displays) screens is difficult to read and over long periods of time would undoubtedly result in eye-strain. Print, with its higher contrast ratios and increased density, offers far superior legibility. According to Sottong, current E-books have a maximum density of 100 dpi (dots per inch), whereas traditional books offer 1,200 dpi — 144 times better than electronic print. "Contrast and refresh rates," he notes, "only add to eyestrain. For CRT displays, contrast (the ratio of dark to light) can be as low as 10 to 1; print on paper has contrast ratios of 100 to 1." The author goes on to assert that this technological shortcoming may be the primary reason that the fabled "paperless society" never materialized: "Whenever more than a couple of paragraphs of text are displayed electronically, most people instinctively print them to save their eyes."

Recent studies seem to support Sottong's theory. The University of Virginia's study on reading practices in the digital age found that because of paper's "cultural familiarity, convenience and printability," users preferred "paper-based media for actual consumption (reading) of

information," while "electronic media seem more acceptable for look-up and retrieval activities." This can be quite a paradox for libraries, as patron paper consumption typically increases after the availability of electronic journals due to the fact that all potentially useful articles are printed out and weeded through later. So much for the "paperless society."

### BETAMAX, THE EDSSEL...THE E-BOOK?

Finally, two serious considerations librarians should keep in mind are technological obsolescence and preservation issues. When speaking of digital formats, one cannot speak of one without mentioning the other, as their fates are intertwined. The permanence of electronic data is questionable at best. Although initially touted as the quintessential storage format, the lifespan of CD-ROM's was greatly exaggerated, and some worried institutions that want to preserve their archival data are transferring from aluminum to gold discs in hopes that it will reduce the current rate of data deterioration witnessed in the former. Others are relying on magnetic tape backups. Regardless, a crucial question has been posed in the library community: Do we really want to entrust our cultural heritage to a type of medium whose lifespan is shorter than the 50-100 year lifespan of acid paper — which most libraries refuse to collect?

What's worse, assuming the data deterioration can be halted, the hardware able to decode and display that data must remain in operating condition long after it has passed its technological "sell-by" date. Given the state of advancing technology and the corporate tech support available for older machines, this is an unrealistic option and one that libraries cannot rely on. Rather, it means that libraries must constantly update their digital data by transferring it to the newest formats, a labor-intensive task that would have to be undertaken every 10 to 20

years, according to preservationists. Only the largest, most well funded libraries have the economic resources to carry out such a cost ineffective procedure. Stephen Sottong points out that such a migration is comparable in cost and time to rebinding the entire print collection every decade or so. "Since corporations will not reap a profit from archiving," he states, "libraries that acquire electronic books must either archive them themselves or repurchase them as either the formats become obsolete or the data deteriorate. Those who cannot afford this additional expense will be forced to watch their collection disintegrate."

### AN EXPERIMENT IN PROGRESS

Librarians are a critical bunch with regard to new technology, and rightly so. Experience has shown us that anyone who trusts a new technological "innovation" without analyzing it and scrupulously assessing its potential strengths and weaknesses will get burned.

Luckily, North Carolina State University Libraries is conducting a trial run in order to examine how E-books could be best implemented in a library setting. Nancy Gibbs, head of acquisitions, purchased seven Rocket eBooks and five SoftBook Readers. They also signed up for service with netLibrary, which gave them access to the company's 1300+ titles. Both E-book hardware and the E-titles themselves were cataloged in the system, with special promotional information of the new service available on the "highlights" page of their Web catalog.

Almost immediately, NCSU ran into difficulties concerning copyrights and licensing agreements with the publishers and E-book vendors. The latter, apparently unaware of how libraries operate, wanted each user to be lectured on the issues of copyright before checking out a machine. More problems emerged when NCSU stated that they wanted to purchase one title and use it on two machines, but would not lend it more

than once at a given time. The library negotiated their way out of the copyright lecture, but they still were forced to purchase multiple copies of the same title to load onto several E-books.

A second major problem was the lack of complete bibliographic information on titles before purchasing. Gibbs states that, "Advertisements for the titles say you can purchase Shakespeare's Sonnets or the works of Poe. That level of title information is sufficient for a consumer purchase, but libraries that catalog their titles need to know which edition of Shakespeare's Sonnets is really being purchased." This problem was not resolved until the titles were ordered and viewed on the machines.

The test run is still in progress, but NCSU Libraries has determined several excellent uses for the E-book technology. They include providing popular newspapers and journals, placing materials on reserve for select courses, working with English faculty to load titles onto the machines for American and English literature classes, and loading information on the library itself, such as maps, bibliographic instruction, and pathfinders. The technology also holds great promise for distance learning, allowing users in remote areas to access not only the catalog, but also the materials.

However, judging from the initial problems encountered, it will be some time before E-book issues between libraries and publishers/vendors are resolved. In fact, it is highly probable that within that time span, the "next big thing" will come along and steal E-book's thunder. Still, the technology has much to offer scholars, researchers, and students due to the great amount of information that one machine can contain. The problem is, of course, that most of the material available for E-books is not scholarly in nature, since most publishers are setting their sights on the corporate and consumer markets, thus leaving library-affiliated companies like netLibrary to fill in the gaps.

### AN ENLARGED REPERTOIRE

The University of Virginia's study mentioned earlier observed that, historically, "new media do not simply replace older ones, but rather they enlarge the consumer's repertoire." This statement holds true for most media, although not all. Ten years ago, with the domination of compact discs, no one would have believed that music labels would once again begin to manufacture vinyl LP's, albeit in limited quantities, for demanding consumers. Yet this has been the case for the last couple of years. In much the same way, the traditional book will continue to exist, if for no other reason than sheer nostalgia. *Newsweek's* assertion that "the physical object consisting of bound dead trees in shiny wrapper is headed for the antique heap" is slightly exaggerated. Even James Sachs, chairman and CEO of SoftBook Press, admits that "in the same way videotapes didn't stop people from going to the movie theater, the E-books won't stop people from wanting books." Unlike many technophiles, he appears to know the advantages and disadvantages of electronic texts, what the E-book can and cannot do for the reader, and, more to the point, what types of print materials lend themselves to digitization and which, by their very beauty or intimacy, do not.

On a final note, librarians should be aware that E-casualties are already appearing. Librius.com, slated to release their much-publicized Millennium E-book later this year, has abandoned the project due to their hunch that the machines are about to become passé. Instead the company has devoted itself to the creation and marketing of E-texts. "So, if the E-book is extinct," you might ask, "where will all of these soon-to-be-released E-texts be displayed?" Well, on PDA's, of course. That's short for Personal Desk Assistants, the "next big thing" in portable computing.

In short, don't start weeding your stacks just yet.

### SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

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# Libraries and Book Clubs

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Since Oprah Winfrey began her televised book club program in the fall of 1996, interest in book clubs has soared, nearly doubling the number of such groups to an estimated 500,000 in existence in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Bookstore-sponsored book clubs, online readers' groups, and private groups are increasing the numbers and visibility of this centuries-old practice of meeting to talk about books. Libraries are a traditional venue for book discussion groups. For libraries that do not currently offer such a program, this is a great time to take advantage of the public's curiosity about book clubs.

At the Library of Hattiesburg, Petal and Forrest County, the Book Club has been in existence for more than ten years. The original Book Club has grown from one small group (the first meeting had one person besides staff) to twenty members, plus a second book group at our branch library. Each book club meets monthly for one hour of informal discussion of books and reading. The Library provides copies of the books at no charge to participants, and library staff makes the book selections and leads the discussions.

## WANT TO GET STARTED?

How do you start a library book club? Many print and online resources are available for ideas and suggestions. *The Reading Group Handbook: Everything You Need To Know To Start Your Own Book Club*, by Rachel W. Jacobsohn, is available in a revised edition covering everything from organizational details to reading suggestions. *What To Read: The Essential Guide For Reading Group Members And Other Book Lovers*, by Mickey Pearlman, is full of annotated books lists, which are very helpful for

making club selections (as well as listing hundreds of books you'll want to read yourself!). *Reading Group Choices*, an annual publication (on the web at [www.readinggroupchoices.com](http://www.readinggroupchoices.com)), suggests books for reading groups and provides a summary, author biography and discussion questions for each title. Publisher web sites are another good source of reading club guides for specific titles. Mississippi libraries can also use the Magnolia Database, *What Do I Read Next?* when selecting book club titles.

## ORGANIZING A CLUB

How do other library book clubs operate? Book clubs can be conducted in different ways. Some designate group members to take turns as the leader for each meeting, assuming responsibility for selecting the book and directing the discussion. Other groups are led by library staff. The establishment of a reading group, or any new program at a library, involves decisions about what resources will be devoted towards the service, in terms of staff time, books, and supplies. For most libraries, staff time is the biggest expense of this or any other program. How much staff time a library book club requires varies according to how the club operates.

## SELECT A DAY AND TIME

Besides leader preparation and book selection, what needs to be considered in beginning a book club? Designating a regular day and time is essential in building a group. The time of day selected will be important in determining who participates in the group. A daytime group will appeal to retirees and others free during the weekdays. An evening group offers people who work during the day an opportunity to attend. A weekday lunchtime, or even a Saturday meeting, may draw some from both groups. Before establishing a time, consider publicizing the planned reading group and identify some of those interested in partic-

ipating. Use library newsletters, bulletin boards, Web sites, press releases or bookmarks to let people know about the book club. Find out from the prospective members when is the most appealing time for meetings and use this information in decision making. Once the time is established, select a regular day, the last Monday of the month or the first Tuesday, etc. Stick to the schedule to avoid confusion among members. As with any other well-run meeting, book clubs should begin and end at the agreed-upon time. A one-hour meeting is common and gives a small to average-size group (around ten people) time for everyone to speak. As the discussion winds down, the leader may take a moment to introduce and distribute the following month's book.

## LEADING THE DISCUSSION

If a staff member can lead the group, especially when it is new, there is the assurance that the leader will be present and prepared for the discussion. The use of a group member as leader may be necessary in some circumstances. In these situations, staff should certainly make sure that this individual has the resources needed to lead the discussion and is prepared for the responsibility of the program. An appropriate analogy might be the use of volunteers to lead story time. Most libraries use staff in this role, but also make use of members of the public. Few libraries would, however, turn the program over to an untrained person without preparation. Since the book club may be the most visible example of adult programming a library offers, the role of a prepared leader should not be minimized.

What are the responsibilities of leading the discussion? First, make it a discussion, not a presentation. The group leader should not do all the talking, but should assume responsibility for keeping the discussion going. Consider going around the group at the beginning, asking everyone present to introduce him/

herself and give a brief "thumbs up or down" review of the book. This exercise assures that even the quietest member of the group will have a chance to express an opinion. Comments made during this portion of the meeting can also indicate which issues are of most interest to the readers. Have some biographical information on the author available in case members have questions. A sample of what reviewers thought of a work is often of interest to readers and can come in handy if conversation lags. Check to see if a reading group guide is available for the selected book. Publishers, recognizing this market for books, are even including guides for discussion in paperback editions of some titles. Have a list or examples of other works by the author for interested participants. Consider suggestions for similar works by other authors.

#### DISCUSSION ETIQUETTE

Other duties of a good leader include keeping the conversation on the book. Sometimes the discussion reminds a participant of another book, movie, experience, etc., which he or she may share with the group. Do not let a digression from the book become lengthy. If everyone present took the time to read the

book and then come to the meeting, they expect to discuss the book assigned. Be prepared to (tactfully) make everyone stick to discussing the book!

Group leaders should also be prepared to tactfully handle other delicate situations. For example, there may be one member who dominates the group to the exclusion of others. The leader should take every opportunity to draw others into the discussion. Call on members who may not speak up on their own and ask what they think about other comments made. A good discussion leader will also be prepared to put an end to comments by a member who is talking too long. Every group will have both reticent and vocal members. The discussion leader needs to keep some kind of balance. Tip for leaders: if all else fails to elicit discussion on a book, ask members present to "cast the movie." It's always interesting to see how readers view a character in their minds.

Occasionally, a book club may have a member who is not just vocal, but plain difficult. A club leader or facilitator should again use tact along with firmness to keep the discussion from being disrupted. Call on another member, or make a comment that brings the group focus back to the book and away from any indi-

vidual group member. Remember that everyone present has invested time in reading the book and attending the meeting. The library has staff time and resources committed to the program as well. A good leader will not allow one person to give everyone else and the library a bad return on this investment.

#### WHAT TO READ

Selecting books for discussion is one of the most challenging responsibilities of running a book club. For libraries, ever conscious of budgets, several factors must be considered. First, if a book club is to meet at or be sponsored by the library, will copies of the selected book be provided at no charge to the participants? If the library will provide the copies, then the availability of a title in an inexpensive paperback edition is almost mandatory. For small groups, interlibrary loan may be a way to obtain enough copies for book club members. To minimize staff costs in preparing book club books, the books can simply be signed out manually, eliminating the need for processing books for one circulation.

#### SUCCESSFUL BOOK SELECTION

Besides price and availability, input from book club members should certainly

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influence book selection. Many people participate in book clubs to expand their reading interests and want to read books they might not try on their own. A good way to get ideas about your members' interests is to pass out lists of possible selections and survey the group. At the Library, the Book Club tends to favor contemporary fiction, with occasional non-fiction titles. At least once a year, members like to read "classic" works of fiction for a change of pace. Some of these selections have been more successful than others. For example, our library's book club members loved *My Antonia* by Willa Cather but, with one or two exceptions, did not enjoy *Middlemarch* by George Eliot.

Successful book club selections have included such serious works of literature as *Love in the Time of Cholera* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, and Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, along with something as light as Helen Fielding's bestseller, *Bridget Jones's Diary*. Look for books that may have slipped past your group's attention. The highly praised non-fiction *Longitude* by Dava Sobel was a hit with the library's reading group, most of whom observed that they would not have read the book outside Book Club.

Books with intense or controversial contents can produce meaningful and memorable discussions. Anna Quindlen's *One True Thing*, which deals with a mother's death from cancer and includes issues of euthanasia, family relationships and infidelity, was a very successful book club selection for the library's group.

### SCHEDULING AHEAD

It can be helpful to schedule books for several months in advance, so that participants can read ahead. Having a schedule can also help book club leaders balance challenging, serious books with works of a contrasting style. Selecting titles a few months in advance is also helpful in obtaining necessary copies and preparing for the discussion. Sometimes, several books with a common theme can be read as a series. For example, a book club can devote a few months to Southern

authors or mysteries, discussing the books individually, as well as comparing each to the other. Publicizing an advance list of selections is also a good way of recruiting members for the group. Use the selections to increase both the number and diversity of the group. The best discussions come from a group with a variety of opinions and perspectives. Building a group that is diverse in age, gender, and ethnicity requires a reading list reflective of that same diversity.

### ALLOW FOR FLEXIBILITY

There is some advantage, though, in not planning too far ahead. Allow for some flexibility so that the club can also use the book or author that everyone is talking about. For example, if a Pulitzer Prize or National Book Award winner has recently been named, it might be a good time to schedule one of the author's books. Movie tie-ins can generate renewed interest in an older book, and fans of the film could become new members of the book club. In order to maintain a degree of flexibility, the Library's Book Club list has never been set more than a few months in advance. Book club members want to talk about the authors, books, and literary trends being discussed in the media. In fact, when Stephen King's *The Green Mile* was published in serial form, Book Club members were so interested in this work that everyone agreed to alter the schedule to allow for discussion of the monthly installments. The scheduled book was considered first, and the last quarter of the meeting was devoted to *The Green Mile*. Members found this to be a fun change of pace and enjoyed discussing, not only the work itself, but also the idea of serial publication of a book.

### "CAN'T MISS" PICKS

Based upon the experience of the Library's two clubs, here are a few "can't miss" selections:

*All Over But the Shoutin'* by Rick Bragg — a moving memoir of Bragg's poverty-stricken childhood in Alabama and the devotion of his mother, which

propelled him to his current life as a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist.

*A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest Gaines — the largest gathering in the Library's Book Club history attended the intense discussion of the issues raised in this challenging book.

*Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson — a mystery, courtroom drama, history and a wonderful love story offering something for everyone.

*The Sparrow* by Mary Doria Russell — the Library's Book Club members found this work of science fiction powerful, touching and unforgettable.

### MAKING IT SPECIAL!

If it is possible to offer simple refreshments, food makes a nice addition to any meeting. Coffee and soft drinks, along with cookies or popcorn, is usually plenty. If food plays a role in a particular book, it can be fun to incorporate that into the refreshments. *Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Cafe* by Fannie Flagg, for example, offers the perfect chance to change an enjoyable meeting into a memorable one. (Speaking from experience, all that is needed is an electric skillet, tomatoes, and some cornmeal!)

Special occasions for book clubs, where everyone brings refreshments, are also fun for members. For the Library's group, the December meeting has become a chance to share book recommendations based upon a year of reading. Book Club members are encouraged to keep a reading list to bring to the December meeting and share with the club the best books read in the past year. (Keeping a log of books read is a lot of fun for book club members and just about any reader. Suggest it early on!) Everyone brings something good to eat and comes away with a list of reading suggestions from other book lovers, the best treat of all.

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# Tips for the Novice Book Reviewer

Sarah Spencer

Information Services Librarian

The University of Southern Mississippi

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Book reviewing is an enjoyable pastime for anyone who gains pleasure from reading, writing, and helping others discover new authors and new genres. In a library setting, many of us make recommendations about books on a regular basis as we help library users make selections for pleasure reading and for research. So, why not take this practice a step further and prepare written book reviews for publication?

The goals of the book reviewer are to give the reader an overview of the book and to prove whether or not anyone else should take the time to read the book, purchase it for a friend, or add it to a library's collection. Although reviews are written using various techniques, most reviews incorporate the following basic elements:

- Introduction
- Partial plot summary (for fiction work)
- Overview of topic (for nonfiction work)
- Evaluation
- Conclusion

The introduction to a book review commonly gives the book's title and author, along with some initial hints concerning the reviewer's assessment of the book. In addition to the author's name, the introduction usually identifies any other works which she or he has written and notes any connections that exist between the current book and the author's other works.

Giving details about the plot is an important part of reviewing a work of fiction. However, the plot summary can be tricky because the reviewer must be careful not to reveal all the elements of the story. A good strategy is for the reviewer to avoid telling how major conflicts relating to the characters are resolved and to

focus instead on the situations and unique qualities of the main characters. Including quotes in the plot summary can help to give readers a feel for the tone of the book.

Reviews of nonfiction works normally include an overview of the topics discussed, plus information on any theories that the author is attempting to prove or any arguments that he or she is trying to make. Reviewers often point out any evidence that supports the author's position and may introduce the reader to important names, dates, and locations discussed in the book. And, like reviewers of fiction, reviewers of nonfiction should remember to save some aspects of the book for readers to discover on their own.

## HEART OF A BOOK REVIEW

The evaluation is the heart of the book review. In the evaluation the reviewer gives an overall assessment of the book and seeks to show whether or not it is worth reading. A common approach is for the reviewer to highlight specific aspects of the book which demonstrate its strengths and weaknesses. For example, a reviewer may note that while the author of a fiction work does not fully develop the characters, she does use language effectively to hold the interest of the reader and to keep the plot moving.

The conclusion sums up the reviewer's feelings about the book. In the conclusion the reviewer customarily stresses what he or she believes to be the book's most memorable characteristics and themes. Frequently the conclusion also includes a recommendation for the type of audience that is likely to find the book appealing. Most reviewers try to close the review with a catchy statement which will capture the reader's attention and leave a lasting impression.

Before writing his or her first review, a novice may want to examine the works of accomplished book reviewers. One excellent source is Eudora Welty's *A Writer's Eye: Collected Book Reviews*, edited by Pearl Amelia McHaney and published in 1994 by the University Press of Mississippi. The book contains reviews written by Miss Welty between 1942 and 1984 for publications such as the *New York Times Book Review*. Few methods for gaining knowledge about book reviewing are more beneficial than studying the words of a master such as Eudora Welty!

**Editor's note:** Individuals interested in preparing book reviews for *Mississippi Libraries* should contact Sarah Spencer, Cook Library, Box 5053, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-5053. Email: Sarah.Spencer@usm.edu

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# MLA 2000 Officer Nominees



*Terry S. Latour*

## Vice-President/ President-Elect

*Terry S. Latour*

**Education:** PhD Florida State University; MA and MLS Case Western Reserve University; BA Allegheny College.

**Experience:** Director of Library Services, Delta State University, 1995-present; Curator of Special Collections, Director of Special Collections, University Archivist, The University of Southern Mississippi, 1980-1995; Assistant Archivist, University of Akron, 1980.

**Professional Activities:** **ALA:** ACRL Chapters Council, 1989-91; RBMS Statistical Survey Comm., 1988-90; Program Speaker, 1993, 1994. **MLA:** ACRL Chapter, Vice Chair, 1989, Chair, 1990; Conservation Committee, 1985-89, 1996-present, Chair, 1988, 1997; Salary Committee, 1988-89; Program Speaker, 1984, 1985, 1992, 1993, 1994. **MAGNOLIA:** Steering Committee, 1997-present, Database Selection Committee, 1997-present. **Mississippi Library Director's Council:** Vice Chair, 1996, Chair, 1997. **Society of**



*Robert M. Lipscomb*

**American Archivists:** Manuscripts Section Steering Committee, 1980-84; College and University Archives Section Steering Committee, 1986-89; Program Speaker, 1984-87, 1989. **Society of Mississippi Archivists:** Board of Directors, 1982-88, 1990-93; Vice President, 1986-87; President, 1987-88; *The Primary Source*, National and Regional News Editor, 1987-95; various committee chairmanships, 1982-95; Program Speaker, 1984-87, 1993, 1997.

**Publications and Presentations:** "Fund Raising Professional Activities at Colleges and Universities in the United States," ACRL 8th National Conference Contributed Papers, 1997; "A Study of Library Fund Raising Professional Activities at Colleges and Universities in the United States," Florida State University, 1995; *Filing and Records Management Handbook*, 1985; 14 articles, numerous guides, registers, and pathfinders; 36 presentations and workshops conducted at national, regional, and state meetings; 10 grants.

**Honors:** Mellon Research Fellow, 1984; NHPRC/Mellon Archives Administration Fellowship Mentor, 1986-87; Preservation Intensive Institute Fellow, 1993.

## Vice-President/ President-Elect

*Robert M. Lipscomb*

**Education:** MLS Florida State University; BA Florida Atlantic University; Advanced Network Administration Certification, College of the Mainland, Texas.

**Experience:** Executive Director, Harrison County Library System, 1997-present; Head, Adult Services, Reference and Government Documents Departments, Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas, 1994-1997; Executive Director, Central Florida Regional Library System, Ocala Florida, 1987-93; Executive Director, Clay County Florida Library System, 1982-87; Head of Reference Department, 1973-1977 & Adjunct Professor of English, Flagler College, St. Augustine, Florida, 1982; Executive Director, St. Johns County Florida Library System, 1977-1982.

**Professional Activities:** **ALA:** Member, 1975-present. **MLA:** Public Library Section, Vice Chair, 1999, Chair, 2000; New Members Round Table, 1997-present, Chair, 1997; Automation and Networking Roundtable, 1997-1999. **TLA:** Member, 1994-1997. **Houston Area Library System (HALS)** Reference Back-up Committee, 1994-1997. **National Librarians Association:** 1989-1996. **FLA:** Member, 1973-1994. **SELA:** Member, 1984-1994. **Clay County Florida Reading Council:** 1982-1987. **Clay County Florida Adult and Community Education Advisory Council:** 1985-1987. **Florida Reading Association:** 1982-1988. Numerous civic activities.

**Publications and Presentations:** Numerous book reviews for various newspapers.

**Honors:** Outstanding Young Men of America, 1980 (Jaycees TOYM Program).



**June Chressanthis**

### Treasurer

**June Chressanthis**

**Education:** MLS University of Michigan; BA Purdue University.

**Experience:** Coordinator of Cataloging, Mississippi State University Libraries, July 1997-present; Serials Cataloger, MSU, June 1987-June 1997; Head of Cataloging, Law School Library, Texas Tech University, June 1984-May 1987.

**Professional Activities:** **MLA:** TSRT, Secretary, 2000; Author Awards Committee Co-Chair, 1999-2000; Conference Registration Co-Chair, 1998; SOLINET User's Group, Secretary, 1997-1998; ACRL Nominations Committee, 1993; Ad-Hoc Poster Session Committee, 1990-1993. **SELA:** Resources & Technical Services Section, Vice-Chair/Chair Elect, 1998-2002. **ALA:** LAMA Recognition of Achievement Committee, 1990-1994. **North American Serials Interest Group (NASIG):** State Membership Representative for Mississippi, 1990-present; Poster Session Task Force, 1999-2000; Evaluation and Assessment Committee, 1996-1999.

**Publications:** "An Introduction to Form Subdivisions," *Mississippi Libraries* (forthcoming); "Investments and Personal Finance," in Internet Resources, *College & Research Libraries News*, v.59, no.2, 1998 (co-authored); "The Reclassification Decision," *Cataloging and Classification Quarterly*, v.19, no.3/4, 1995; "A General Econometric Model of the Determinants of Library Subscription Prices of Scholarly Journals," *Library Quarterly*, v.64, no.3, July 1994 (co-authored); "The Determinants of Library Subscription Prices of the Top-Ranked Economics Journals," *Journal of Economic Education*, v.25, no.4, 1994 (co-authored); "The Relationship Between Manuscript Submission Fees and Journal Quality," *Serials Librarian*, v.24, no.1, 1993 (co-authored); "Publisher Monopoly Power and Third-Degree Price Discrimination of Scholarly Journals," *Technical Services Quarterly*, v.11, no.2, 1993 (co-authored); "Effective Communication," in *Communication: The Language of Library Leadership*, ed. Donald Riggs, ALA, 1992 (co-authored); "Mechanics of a Reclassification Project," *Technical Services Quarterly*, v.9, no.4, 1992.

**Presentations:** "A Look At the Web Pages of Technical Services Departments," NASIG conference workshop (forthcoming June 2000 at the annual conference — co-authored); "Cataloging and Classifying Multi-Language Materials," poster session at 1999 MLA and ALA conferences (co-authored).

**Honors:** Received \$3,000 grant from the Council on Library Resources to study price discrimination issues of publishers of economics journals, 1992-1993; Elected to represent the library on university-wide committees such as Provost Search Committee, 1998, and the University Promotion and Tenure Committee, 1998-2001; served as Secretary for MSU Faculty Senate, 1992-1993; nominated to be a NASIG Board Member-At-Large, 1999; Referee for



**Keith Coleman**

*Journal of Economic Education*, v.30, no.1, 1999.

### Treasurer

**Keith Coleman**

**Education:** MLS The University of Southern Mississippi; BBA University of Mississippi; AA Northwest Community College.

**Experience:** Director of Library Services, Mississippi Library Commission 1998- present; Regional Reference/ILL Librarian, First Regional Library, 1994-1998; Sardis Public Library Branch Manager, First Regional Library, 1989-1994; ABE/GED Instructor, Northwest Community College, 1992-1997; Reference Librarian, Northwest Community College, 1997-1999.

**Professional Activities:** **Beta Phi Mu, Beta Psi Chapter**, Vice-President/President-Elect, 1998/99. **MLA:** Member, 1994.

**Honors:** Beta Phi Mu, International Library Science Honor Society, initiated 1994.

# MLA 2000 Officer Nominees



Kaylene Behm

## Secretary

**Kaylene Behm**

**Education:** MLS The University of Southern Mississippi; BS The University of Southern Mississippi

**Experience:** Head of Circulation, Media Services Librarian, Acting Director, Teaching Learning Resource Center, Music Resources Librarian, The University of Southern Mississippi, Library Assistant, Southeast Mississippi Legal Services, Hattiesburg, MS

**Professional Activities:** **ALA:** Member, 1984-present; ACRL, 1991-present; New Members Roundtable, 1986-1989. **MLA:** Member, 1984-present; Conference Exhibits, Chair, 1999; *Mississippi Libraries*, Advertising Editor, 1993, 1997-present; Copyright Review Committee, 1994-present; Nomination Committee, 1998; Conference Registration Committee, 1994; Membership Committee, 1994, 1999; Conference Hospitality Committee, 1997; Conference Hospitality

Committee, Co-Chair 1992, 1993, 1996; Conference Local Arrangements Committee, 1991; New Members Roundtable, 1986-1991; Long Range Planning Committee and Membership Committee, 1989; Baker and Taylor/Grassroots Grant Coordinator, 1987-89; Conference Registration Committee, 1986. **Piney Woods Regional Library Association:** member, 1997-present. **Beta Psi Chapter of Beta Phi Mu International Library Science Honor Society:** Member, 1988-present; Past President, 1992; President, 1991; President-Elect, 1990; Secretary, 1989; Treasurer, 1988. **Music Library Association:** Member, 1986-1989. **Southeast Chapter/Music Library Association:** Member, 1986-1989. **USM School of Library Science Alumni Association:** Social Chair, 1987. **Selective USM Libraries activities:** Tenure and Promotion Committee Chair, 1996-97; USM Libraries Advisory Committee Chair, 1995; Practicum Brochure Committee Chair, 1992; Member of USM Libraries Management Group; member of numerous librarian search committees.

**Publications and Presentations:** *The Children's Song Index*, 1978-93, Englewood, Co.: Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 1996 (co-authored with Pollyanne Frantz and Ann Branton); "Queuing at Service Desks," (co-presented with Kay L. Wall) MLA Poster session, 1992; USM Library Personnel Development Series, "Supervision," 1995 (co-presented with Eleanor Robin) and panel member on "How to Deal with the Public," 1991; Mississippi Representative for SEMLA Directory, 3rd Edition.

**Honors:** MLA's Past President's Award, 1991; Beta Phi Mu International Library Science Honor Society, initiated 1987.



Janice K. Garrett

## Secretary

**Janice K. Garrett**

**Education:** BS Mississippi State University; Post-graduate work, The University of Southern Mississippi.

**Experience:** Media Specialist, Tupelo Public School District, 1995-present; Media Specialist, Pontotoc High School, 1992-1995; Law Librarian, Mitchell, McNutt, Threadgill, Smith and Sams, 1984-1992; Reference Librarian, Mississippi State University, 1975-1977.

**Professional Activities:** **ALA:** AASL State Affiliate Delegate, 1999-2000. **MLA:** Handbook Committee, Chair, 2000; School Section, Chair, 1999; Exhibits Co-Chairman, 1998; Various committees. Membership in various civic organizations.

**Publications and Presentations:** Presented at the First Annual Reading Conference for Mississippi Department of Education.

## OCLC Users Council Update

*Jessie B. Arnold*  
*Director of the Library*  
*Alcorn State University*  
*jarnold@lorman.alcorn.edu*

As a recently elected delegate to the Users Council for SOLINET, I thought it would be helpful to share news with member libraries in the state and the southeastern region some of the activities of the Council. The Users Council meets three times a year (October, February, and May) and the theme for the fiscal year 1999/2000 is "A New World: OCLC, Libraries, and Users in the 21st Century." Each meeting focuses on a specific topic centered around the overall theme for the year. Delegates are then given a list of goals and objectives for the year along with a list of key questions and issues to be discussed during the various sessions.

### **ROLE OF OCLC FOR FY1999/2000**

The focus this fiscal year is on the role

of OCLC and the networks in assisting libraries and their patrons to thrive and prevail in the millennium. For example, the fall meeting (October 1999) examined how library patrons are changing and what we can do to help them succeed in an age of ever transforming technology, and how we can help them obtain and utilize information and knowledge in all of its various formats. The winter meeting (February 2000) reviewed the global perspective and examined trends in communications, publishing, intellectual property, and technology. In our spring meeting (May 2000), the major emphasis will be on how OCLC can assist and provide guidance to libraries in this, the new century.

The various topics presented during each Council session relate to issues that concern all kinds of libraries and all types of library users. For this reason, I am asking for your ideas and suggestions on the implications of the 1999-2000 theme for

your particular library and clientele. In my campaign statement to SOLINET members regarding why I wanted to serve on the Users Council, I indicated that I wanted to represent all libraries in the southeastern region and that I would seek input from those libraries and bring their ideas and suggestions to the Council. This brings me to the *raison d'être* for this article: (1) to share with you the major focus of the Council, (2) to highlight the goals and objectives for each meeting, and (3) to seek your input on Council issues as well as share your concerns or problems with OCLC.

As OCLC seeks to improve the services of libraries and conceptualize strategies for building a sustainable information infrastructure to meet the needs of the library patrons of tomorrow, I believe that we, the members of SOLINET, should play a major role in shaping these concepts and strategies.

## Mark Your Calendar

April 9-15, 2000 .....	National Library Week
April 24, 2000 .....	Library of Congress Bicentennial
April 27-28, 2000 .....	SOLINET Annual Meeting and Conference, Atlanta
May 5-11, 2000.....	Medical Library Association, Vancouver
June 10-15, 2000.....	Special Libraries Association, Philadelphia
July 6-12, 2000.....	ALA Annual Conference, Chicago
October 18-20, 2000 .....	Mississippi Library Association, Jackson

# Highlights from Annual National Library Week/Legislative Day, January 24th

## AWARD WINNERS

### Mid-Mississippi Regional Library System

"Best Year-Round Coordinated Effort by a Group of Libraries to Publicize Library Services in General."

### Mitchell Memorial Library, Mississippi State University

"Best Year-Round Effort by an Individual Library to Publicize Library Services in General."

### Hancock County Library

"Best Effort by an Individual Library to Publicize Library Services Around a Single Theme or Event."

### Randy Sherard 1999 Golden Book Award

"Most Outstanding Volunteer Effort by an Individual Deemed to Have Contributed Most to Library Awareness in the Past or Present."



Representatives Steve Holland and John Reed receive honorary memberships in the Mississippi Library Association from Dr. Glenda Segars following their remarks to the NLW workshop.



Mississippi Library Commission board members, Russell Burns, Dr. Glenda Segars, Frances Coleman, and Hester Plauche, are shown with Governor Ronnie Musgrove (center) at the legislative reception at Eudora Welty Library.



Lieutenant Governor Amy Tuck speaks with First Regional Library Director, Jim Anderson, and other library supporters at NLW/Legislative Day.



Randy Sherard receives the 1999 Golden Book Award for "Most Outstanding Volunteer Effort by an Individual Deemed to Have Contributed Most to Library Awareness in the Past or Present." Richard Greene's Mid-Mississippi Regional Library System is honored for the "Best Year-Round Coordinated Effort by a Group of Libraries to Publicize Library Services in General." In addition, Gail Peyton accepts Mitchell Memorial Library's award for "Best Year-Round Effort by an Individual Library to Publicize Library Services in General."



Mid-Mississippi Regional Library again captures a top honor at the NLW/Legislative Day Program. Accepting the award were System Youth Coordinator Jean Fenwick, Walnut Grove Librarian Linda Bounds, Durant Librarian Betty Hathcock, Carthage Librarian Mary Ellen Ellis, Director Mid-Mississippi Library System Richard Greene, Lexington Librarian Laura Lawson, and Attala County Librarian Carolyn Pilgrim.

Governor Musgrove talks with Prima Plauche and Russell Burns. During the NLW afternoon session, Plauche's Hancock County Library was recognized for "Best Effort by an Individual Library to Publicize Library Services Around a Single Theme or Event."



# Tech Notes, et al.

Column Editor: Ann Branton, The University of Southern Mississippi

## An Introduction to Form Subdivisions in Subject Headings

June Chressanthis

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Subdivisions are essential elements in the Library of Congress subject heading system. Subdivisions are used to combine various aspects of a topic into one heading.<sup>1</sup> There are four types of subdivisions: topical, geographical, chronological, and form. Form subdivisions indicate what the item being cataloged **is** rather than what it is **about**. Form subdivisions have always been used in the formation of subject headings and were formerly coded as subfield \$x, the same subfield code used for topical subdivisions. In February 1999, the Library of Congress (LC) began to apply a new subfield, \$v, to form subdivisions in records for newly cataloged materials. The subfield \$v has been approved in MARC 21 to distinguish form subdivisions from topical subdivisions.

### WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN?

Basically, as indicated above, form subdivisions focus on what the item being cataloged is rather than on the content of the work. Some examples may include **\$v Bibliography** for a book which is itself a bibliography about a topic; **\$v Dictionaries** for a dictionary of the English language; **\$v Catalogs** for a catalog of a museum's holdings; and **\$v Juvenile poetry** for a book of children's poetry. However, the use of form subdivisions can become confusing, and the cataloger must consider various instructions established by LC to correctly apply particular form subdivisions. The most

frequently used form subdivisions may be used with all types of subject headings and other subdivisions. Most form subdivisions may also be used as *topical* subdivisions (\$x) for works *about* those specific forms. For example, the heading **Medicine \$v Periodicals** is assigned to a general medical periodical; the heading **Medicine \$x Periodicals \$x History** is assigned to a monograph on the history of medical periodicals.<sup>2</sup> Generally, but not always, a form subdivision is the final element in a heading. For example, in cataloging a software program about designing reactors, the form (software) is placed last after the subdivision, as in **Nuclear reactors \$x Design and construction \$v Software**; but for **Chemistry \$v Dictionaries \$x French** the form (dictionary) is placed between the subject heading (chemistry) and the term, French, because it describes a particular characteristic of the form, dictionary. Occasionally, two subdivisions are needed to indicate form, for example, **Technology \$v Bibliography \$v Periodicals** for a bibliography that is issued as a periodical on technology.<sup>3</sup> There are also subdivisions that do not indicate a form of publication.

### FUNCTION OF THE FORM

Not all subdivisions which can be used as form subdivisions will always be coded as \$v, and for subdivision strings of multiple terms, not every part of the string will necessarily be coded as subfield \$v. The cataloger must *think* about the function of each subdivision. Does it describe what the item being cataloged **is**, **consists of**, or **contains** or what it is **about**?

### SUBDIVISIONS THAT ARE NOT FORM<sup>4</sup>

Archival resources  
Computer-assisted instruction  
Computer network resources  
Computer programs  
Computer simulation  
Electronic information resources  
History  
History and criticism  
(any historical subdivision)  
Information resources  
Law and legislation  
Library resources  
Manuscripts  
Study and teaching \$x Activity programs

In some cases you might not code *any* part of the string with \$v if all the subdivision(s) represent the topic of the item rather than its form.<sup>5</sup> For example, the — Statistics subdivision could be coded either Fisheries \$x Statistics or Fisheries \$v Statistics depending if the book **is** actually statistics on fisheries or **about** fisheries statistics; or the subdivision string — History — Sources could be used as either Indians of North America \$x History \$v Sources or Indians of North America \$x History \$x Sources depending on whether the book **consists of** actual source material or is **about** Indian source material.

Generally, the last subdivision in the subject heading string is coded \$v, if it is one of the subdivisions which can denote a form. But there are exceptions to this. For example, some headings might end with the combination \$v — \$v such as \$v Bibliography \$v Exhibitions, or \$v Maps \$v Early works to 1800. Additionally, some headings might end with \$v — \$x,

such as \$v Readers \$x [topic], or \$v Dictionaries \$x [language] (language cannot be a form).<sup>6</sup>

### NOW TAKE A QUIZ<sup>7</sup> (answers at end of article)

1. 650 b0: Italians \$z Austria \_\_\_\_\_ Folklore (an analysis of legends told by Italians in Austria)
2. 650 b0: Navajo Indians \_\_\_\_\_ Folklore (Navajo animal tales translated)
3. 650 b0: Artists \_\_\_\_\_ Databases (an union list of names available via the Internet)
4. 650 b0: Working class \$z United States \_\_\_\_\_ Songs and music \_\_\_\_\_ Discography (Songs of American Labor: A Discography)
5. 650 b0: Law \_\_\_\_\_ Periodicals \_\_\_\_\_ Indexes \_\_\_\_\_ Periodicals (Index to Legal Periodicals: A Quarterly Cumulative Index to United States and Foreign Law Periodicals)
6. 651 b0: Mississippi \_\_\_\_\_ Maps \_\_\_\_\_ Early works to 1800 (an old map of the state)
7. 650 b0: Fisheries \_\_\_\_\_ Statistics \_\_\_\_\_ Databases \_\_\_\_\_ Directories (Where The Fish Are: A Comprehensive Directory of Online Statistical Databases)
8. 650 b0: Central business districts \$z France \$z Paris \_\_\_\_\_ Maps (a map of the center of Paris)
9. 651 b0: Africa \_\_\_\_\_ Study and teaching \_\_\_\_\_ Computer network resources (African Studies Internet Resources [computer file])
10. 651 b0: Oktibbeha County (Miss.) \_\_\_\_\_ Census, 1850 (1850 census of the county)

### ISSUES TO CONSIDER

As stated above, LC began assigning the \$v subfield code to form subdivisions in February 1999 for all newly cataloged

materials. If a library uses MARC cataloging records based on LC cataloging in its online catalog, then the library will eventually have to deal with bibliographic records containing this new code.

Issues to consider may include:

- can the library's OPAC distinguish between \$v and \$x subdivisions?
- how, or should, the library change existing subject headings that currently have form subdivisions coded as \$x to conform to the LC practice of coding form with a \$v?

### ANOTHER DATABASE CLEANUP?

This raises additional questions. Who should change the subfield coding, and how can one be sure all instances of \$x subdivisions actually meet the "is or about" test? And does it even really matter? Does it make a difference to the user when the same term is used to describe both the topical and form aspects of the work? If the term "bibliography" is used to describe both the "is or about" aspects of materials, how is the user to distinguish between the two applications when catalogers often have difficulty? Who then should do all this database clean-up? It would be wonderful to have an algorithm written so that a computer could globally change appropriate cases, but there is always the question of the \$x subdivisions which should *not* be changed to \$v. It seems wise to do the cleanup in-house, where decisions can be made based on an examination of the materials to determine the proper usage of the subdivisions. This work can be done on a case-by-case basis when the MARC record is being examined due to some other problem, or the work can be undertaken in a more systematic fashion, with all occurrences of a subdivision being updated and corrected before moving on to the next subdivision.

### POINTS TO REMEMBER

Form subdivisions, as form or as topic, have been used for a long time, but until recently, they have always been coded in subfield \$x. In the near future, subfield \$v will allow users to limit their searches by form. With the inception of subfield \$v for form subdivision, only topical, historical, or geographical subdivisions will now be coded in the \$x subfield *except* when a form is topical. Form subdivisions will be coded correctly on a more consistent basis for both subfields. The true benefits will show up when automated systems are programmed to show the distinction between \$v and \$x.<sup>8</sup>

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- <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*
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Answers: 1. \$x 2. \$v 3. \$v 4. \$x, \$v 5. \$x, \$v, \$v 6. \$v, \$v 7. \$x, \$x, \$v 8. \$v 9. \$x, \$x 10. \$v

# Library Education Update

Column Editor: Thomas D. Walker, The University of Southern Mississippi

## SLIS: By Way of Introduction

Thomas D. Walker  
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This is the first in a series of columns about education and training in the field of library and information science, particularly in Mississippi. Topics will vary and will by no means be limited to the activi-

ties of the School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) of The University of Southern Mississippi (USM). I would welcome suggestions for future columns, guest contributions, and descriptions of libraries' solutions to training problems.

There is not merely one typical education and career track in our field. Because of the universality of the informa-

tion professions and the relatively recent trends toward academic and other specializations, our field is quite diverse and varied. Yet there is some core of knowledge and concentration of activities that allows us to claim the status of a profession. One of the charges of information studies educators is to address these issues of diversity and cohesiveness in a rapidly changing environment.

By way of introduction, it may be useful to describe SLIS. USM was founded in 1910 as a teachers college, but is now a comprehensive university offering students dozens of academic programs at all levels. SLIS offers several academic programs:

- A comprehensive master's degree in library and information science, which is the only program in Mississippi accredited by the American Library Association;
- undergraduate and graduate programs leading to initial licensure, supplemental endorsement, and higher-level licensure for school library media specialists;
- two dual master's degree programs that pair the master's degree in library and information science with master's degrees in history or anthropology;
- a specialist's degree that is an advanced degree beyond the master's; and
- an evolving set of continuing education courses for practicing librarians and paraprofessionals.

Additionally, SLIS sponsors the annual Children's Book Festival, which brings together children's book authors, librari-



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ans, researchers, and students. Other institutes and similar events will continue to be offered on a regular basis.

### ONLINE CLASSES

In order to reach the entire state, SLIS offers an increasing number of courses via various distance education technologies. For years, the School has been offering regularly scheduled courses by Interactive Video Network. The number of sites where these courses can be offered is continuing to expand. Instructors make an effort to visit each site over the course of the semester in order to be able to meet all the students in person. SLIS was one of the first academic units on campus to offer a course completely online. And, while we intend to offer an increasing number of such courses, we have decided to focus more attention on what we call "hybrid" courses that combine face-to-face interaction in the classroom with the flexibility of online course instruction. In Spring 2000, the first term in which such courses are offered, eight courses have adopted this format. Some courses meet every week or every second week and have significant online components; others meet less frequently — three or four times a semester — and have proportionally more extensive online components. While these courses require that students attend class meetings in Hattiesburg, such courses allow many students to enroll who would not be able to otherwise. The purpose is to provide access to students and librarians statewide without sacrificing the advantages of the classroom experience. It should be pointed out, however, that research in online education has found that online courses can be even *more* interactive than traditional courses. This corroborates my personal experience with

web-based and hybrid courses. As the software and other instructional technologies advance, an increasing number of online courses will be offered here and at other institutions. Watch for announcements about online or hybrid courses of interest.

### OUTREACH EFFORTS

The School has several important constituencies, represented by all the major library types and our intent is to continue to serve these groups. There is a growing need to expand our efforts to reach paraprofessionals in academic and public libraries. Whether we will meet this need through a degree program or by offering individual courses or course clusters remains to be seen.

The role of library and information studies educators is not limited to the education and training of those who work in information settings. I believe that there is a dramatically increasing need to equip university students of all majors with knowledge and skills that will allow them to be information literate. Information literacy education should take place over an individual's entire academic career, starting in elementary school and continuing through graduate levels. Such a task is daunting and cannot be carried out by SLIS or any other academic unit alone. Perhaps this is an ideal opportunity for us to work with libraries, which are, after all, educational institutions.

The demographics of the workforce in our field and others are changing, the field itself is evolving quickly, and the needs of those seeking professional and pre-professional education and training are becoming more complex. I am hoping that this column will provide us with a meeting place to discuss these various issues.

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# In the Public Eye

Column Editor: Paulette D. Entrekin, Laurel-Jones County Library

## Job Searching: (Mostly) Mississippi Web Sites

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To find the answers to whatever questions they have, people have taken advantage of public library resources. Mississippians use libraries for education, research, and self-improvement. One such example is job hunting. Library users often want to find available job opportunities.

Through the advent of the Internet and the grant from the Gates Library Foundation to Mississippi public libraries, users want to discover the many different kinds of information that can be accessed through on-line computer resources. Here are some brief summaries of predominantly Mississippi-based Web sites that are geared toward positions available.

### MS JOBS WEB SITE

There are two Mississippi government agencies that provide general employment information on their Internet sites. Mississippi's Job Bank, the Mississippi State Employment Service Commission's jobs Web site, provides assistance to both employers and job seekers. Job seekers can either create an electronic resume or search for employment. People can find jobs by occupation, keyword, military code, or job number. Additionally, jobs can be limited by location. Because of its affiliation with America's Job Bank, users can also access job listings in other states. The WWW address for Mississippi's Job Bank is <http://ms.jobsearch.org>.

The Mississippi State Personnel Board Web site lists employment vacancies as

well. The site also details the procedure for applying for a state government job. Library users can access it at <http://www.spb.state.ms.us>.

### MISSISSIPPI NEWSPAPER WEB SITES

Employers also reach potential job seekers through newspapers. Several Mississippi newspapers include these job openings in their World Wide Web counterparts, as well.

The *Clarion-Ledger* lists job openings through its Mississippi Careers web site, affiliated with Careerpath.com, a national Internet employment site. Job openings are listed in Mississippi Careers for a two-week period. Users can access other Careerpath.com listings, submit a resume, look for prospective employers, and view job search hints. The Mississippi Careers Web address is <http://www.misscareers.com>.

The *Clarion-Ledger* is not the only Mississippi newspaper to list employment vacancies on its Internet site. Several newspapers throughout the state have job openings on their Web sites in varying degrees of quality and quantity.

In addition to the *Clarion-Ledger*, other newspapers in Mississippi are also affiliated with national Internet employment sites. Users can find the *Meridian Star* Web site at <http://www.meridianstar.com>. It is aligned with AdAmerica, whose presence is predominantly tied to the Southwestern United States and not at all to the Northeast. Unlike the Mississippi Careers Web site, users cannot submit resumes, look for prospective employers, or view job search hints.

The Biloxi-based *Sun-Herald* can be

found at <http://www.sunherald.com>. Since the *Sun-Herald* is part of the Knight-Ridder newspaper chain, users can also look at other Knight-Ridder newspaper classified advertisements if they choose through Jobhunter, its sister Web site found at <http://www.jobhunter.com>. Jobhunter allows interested people to post resumes, calculate the cost of living, and compare salaries.

### OTHER MS NEWSPAPERS

Other Mississippi newspapers with an Internet presence are not affiliated with national Internet employment sites. Two newspapers allow users to search through their on-line employment classified advertisements by subject. The Tupelo-based *Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal* through its employment classifieds on-line at <http://www.djournal.com> and the *Natchez Democrat* at <http://www.natchezdemocrat.com> are fairly similar in scope.

Other newspapers do not allow users to search their employment classifieds by the type of job. Located at <http://www.starkvilledailynews.com>, the *Starkville Daily News* allows users to view job openings in the Starkville area. People accessing the Web site cannot look for openings listed in other newspapers. Similarly, its sister publication, the *West Point Daily Times Leader*, allows people to look for jobs in the West Point area through its Web site at <http://dailytimesleader.com>.

The Cleveland-based *Bolivar Commercial* can be accessed through its Internet site, <http://www.bolivarcom.com> and the *Picayune Item* can be found at <http://www.picayuneitem.com>. Both of

these newspapers are also more similar in scope to their Starkville and West Point counterparts than to the newspapers in Tupelo and Natchez. Another example is the McComb *Enterprise-Journal*, which is located at <http://www.enterprise-journal.com>.

Unlike the previously mentioned newspapers, the *Vicksburg Post* does not include the classified advertisements from its print edition in its Internet edition. The only advertisements that are listed are specifically for on-line viewing. To access the Web site, library users must go to <http://www.vicksburgpost.com>. It also appears that the *Oxford Eagle* Internet site at <http://www.oxfordeagle.com> has the same policy. Upon viewing the classifieds section in late January 2000, only one employment advertisement was listed.

The *DeSoto Appeal's* Internet presence is neither fish nor fowl. The newspaper can be accessed at <http://www.desotoappeal.com>. However, it does not have a separate classifieds section listed on the Internet site. Since the newspaper is published by the *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, it might be advisable to view the Memphis newspaper's Web site at <http://www.gomemphis.com> and check their employment classifieds.

### NON-DAILY AND WEEKLY NEWSPAPER WEB SITES

In addition to daily newspapers, non-daily and weekly newspapers also possess Internet sites. The Holly Springs-based *South Reporter* can be viewed at <http://www.southreporter.com>. It does not list job openings completely separate from other classified advertisements. The same can be said for the *Madison County Journal*, located at <http://online.madison.com>.

Like its daily sister publication, the *Natchez Democrat*, Louisville's weekly *Winston County Journal* lists job openings by type by way of its Web site at <http://www.winstoncountyjournal.com>. Another sister newspaper, the *Houston Times-Post*, can be found at <http://www.houstontimespost.com>. Unlike the *Democrat* and the *Journal*,

access to the *Times-Post* employment classifieds is similar to that of most daily on-line Mississippi newspapers.

### NON-MISSISSIPPI NEWSPAPER WEB SITES

With three large cities just outside Mississippi's borders, it might be necessary for job seekers looking for employment within the state to examine the employment classifieds in the New Orleans, Memphis, and Mobile newspapers. Viewing classifieds in the *Commercial Appeal* was mentioned above due to its connection with the *DeSoto Appeal*. Job hunters in the Gulf Coast area can find the *Mobile Register* on-line at <http://www.mobilerregister.com>. Like the *Clarion-Ledger* and the *Sun-Herald*, the *Register* allows users to send resumes, and provides help options. Additionally, the Internet site also allows job hunters to access the classifieds of Birmingham and Huntsville newspapers. The New Orleans *Times-Picayune* Internet site is located at <http://www.nola.com>. Job searchers using the web site will find one major similarity between this site and the *Register* site. Both have the same search templates; however, users of the *Picayune* site can look for employment only in the New Orleans area.

### STATE AGENCY WEB SITES

Two examples of agencies that provide information regarding job opportunities in specific fields are the Mississippi Library Commission Internet site at <http://www.mlc.lib.ms.us> and the Mississippi State Department of Education Web site at <http://www.mdek12.state.ms.us>. Job seekers can be served by accessing state agency Web sites that relate to their chosen endeavors. One possibility is accessing agencies from the State of Mississippi Internet site located at <http://www.state.ms.us> to determine if they have listings of businesses with job openings.

### COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES, AND BUSINESSES

Mississippi's colleges and universities employ thousands of people. If job seekers are interested in looking for openings

in an academic environment, they should be able to see what is available through the college's Web site. Please be advised that many of the community college Internet sites do not have Web pages devoted to job openings. On the other hand, the opposite is true for the four-year colleges and universities. Links to public and private colleges can be found through the State of Mississippi Internet site listed above. Searches for employment opportunities or job openings can be conducted through the college sites.

Many Mississippi-based companies have Internet sites. Job seekers looking for Mississippi companies are advised to use search engines and directories, such as Yahoo!, Alta Vista, and Lycos to find such web sites. Searchers can also access the on-line version of the *Mississippi Business Journal* at <http://www.msbusiness.com>, which has a directory of Mississippi companies that have Internet sites. Mississippi State University also maintains a Mississippi Web Sites index at <http://msuinfo.ur.msstate.edu/links/> with over 1100 links.

### CONCLUSION

This is by no means a complete, exhaustive summary of Mississippi Web sites that have employment information for job seekers. However, these Internet sites should provide searchers with appropriate starting points and guidance. Of course, this listing does not mean that job seekers should ignore non-computer resources. On a personal note, I should add that, upon receiving my MLIS, I applied for many vacant position openings through research on the Internet; however, I found out about the position that I now occupy through a print announcement.

**In the Public Eye** features articles of general interest for or about public libraries. If you are interested in contributing to this column, please contact Paulette Entrekin at [pentrekin@laurel.lib.ms.us](mailto:pentrekin@laurel.lib.ms.us) or call 1-601-428-4313.

# What's So Special About...

Column Editor: P. Toby Graham, The University of Southern Mississippi

## The H.A. and Margret Rey Collection

Dee Jones, Curator  
de Grummond Children's  
Literature Collection  
The University of Southern Mississippi

What is a six-foot stuffed monkey doing in the McCain Library and Archives? Although many people think of library special collections and archives as stuffy repositories of dusty books and old papers, their perceptions are often incorrect. A case in point is the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection, housed in the McCain Library at The University of Southern Mississippi. Begun in 1966 by Dr. Lena Y. de Grummond, the Collection holds original manuscripts and illustrations created by more than 1200 authors and illustrators of children's literature. These primary source materials are complemented by more than 65,000 books for children and young adults dating from 1530 to the present — and yes — a six-foot stuffed monkey.

### CURIOUS GEORGE IN HATTIESBURG

The monkey is Curious George and he is a part of the exhibition, *Curious George Comes to Hattiesburg: The Life and Work of Margret and H.A. Rey*, on exhibit through April 30, 2000. Materials in the exhibit are drawn exclusively from the holdings of the de Grummond Collection. The Reys were among the first authors and illustrators to entrust their manuscripts and illustrations to the Collection in 1966. Donations were made periodically, and when H.A. died in 1977, Margret continued making contributions over the next twenty years. Upon her death in 1996, their entire literary archive was willed to the de Grummond Collection.

The exhibit explores the Reys' contri-

butions to the history of twentieth-century children's literature. Among the 400 illustrations, manuscripts, photographs, diaries, letters, books, pottery, and needlepoint on display are the original illustrations for *Curious George*, published by Houghton Mifflin in 1941.

Although the Reys did not have any children, they did consider themselves the parents of everyone's favorite monkey: Curious George. He made his first appearance in 1941 and has been going strong ever since. Six other stories starring the mischievous little primate were published from 1947 to 1966.



### OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

Other exhibit highlights are a rare copy of *Rafi et les 9 Singes*, the Reys' first children's book published in France; the original illustrations for *Zebrology*, Rey's first book in English; and products of the Reys' Brazilian advertising company, including posters, greeting cards, and direct mail advertisements. Personal items include diaries, photograph albums, correspondence between the Reys, and drawings of H. A. by Margret. On display

are the annual New Year's cards designed by the Reys and sent to their family and friends from 1940 to 1976. Examples of Margret's pottery and needlepoint are included as well.

Another interesting feature of the exhibit is a group of unpublished manuscripts and illustrations. One exceptional example is the story "Whiteblack the Penguin Sees the World," created by H. A. Rey in the late 1930s while living in Paris. The story consists of more than 25 full color illustrations with beautifully hand-lettered text. After being tucked away in a portfolio for more than 60 years, this picture book will finally be published by Houghton Mifflin as a part of their Fall 2000 list.

Over the years, the Reys created more than 90 outstanding titles, most featuring an irresistible animal as the main character. There was Spotty the rabbit, Katy the kangaroo, Billy the bunny, Cecily the giraffe, and Pretzel the dachshund.

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Both Hans and Margret were born in Hamburg, Germany: Hans Augusto Reyersbach on September 16, 1898 and Margarete Elisabeth Waldstein on May 16, 1906. Hans received an old-style humanistic education and studied Latin, Greek, French, and English. Although art was not a part of his studies, he drew from a very early age and was quite an accomplished artist. Hans, better known as H. A., served in the German Army during World War I and was stationed in France and Russia. In the early 1920s, H. A. and Margret met at a party at her parents' house in Hamburg. A short time later, H. A. moved to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to work as an accountant in his brother-in-law's import-export firm. Among other duties, he sold bathtubs and

kitchen sinks up and down the Amazon River for 12 years.

Meanwhile, Margret was still in Germany, where she received formal art training at the Bauhaus in Dessau in 1927, when Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky were on the faculty. She also studied at the Düsseldorf Academy of Arts from 1928 to 1929 and held one-woman shows of her art in Berlin in the early 1930s. Upon arriving in Rio, Margret became reacquainted with H. A. Rey and persuaded him to leave his brother-in-law's firm. Together, they founded the first advertising agency in Rio de Janeiro and were married on August 16, 1935. They created stories for newspapers and magazines, with Margret's writing and photographs and H. A.'s illustrations.

The Reys took a belated honeymoon trip to Europe, and their planned two-week stay in Paris turned into four years. During that time, H. A. began to write and illustrate books. *Zebrology* was published by Chatto & Windus in London in 1937 and is Rey's first title in English, although not a children's book. An editor at Gallimard saw Rey's whimsical drawings of a giraffe in a French periodical and suggested that he make them into a children's book. Thus was born *Rafi et les 9 Singes*, published in 1939. An English language version was also published the same year by Chatto & Windus as *Raffy and the Nine Monkeys*. Raffy's name was changed to Cecily G. in the subsequent American edition. French children loved the antics of one of the nine monkeys named "Fifi" and begged for more stories. Fifi was soon renamed "George" and went on to fame and fortune in his own series of books.

### THEIR WORK IN NEW YORK

In June 1940, on a rainy morning before dawn, the Reys left Paris on bicycles, just hours before the Nazis entered the city. They took only warm coats and their manuscripts and artwork; among the stories was *Curious George*. After selling their bicycles at the French-Spanish border, they went by train to Lisbon, on to Rio de Janeiro, and finally arrived in New

York City in October 1940. Although they did not know any publishers in the United States, Grace Hogarth at Houghton Mifflin quickly recognized their genius, and *Curious George* was published in 1941. *Curious George* quickly became a classic throughout the world, and editions have appeared in every possible language, with George renamed "Zozo," "Bingo," "Nicke," "Coco," and "Piete," among others.

Although H. A. and Margret Rey almost always wrote and illustrated their books together, H. A. did illustrate several books for other authors that were published by Harper and Brothers during the 1940s. Rey was fortunate to work with legendary editor Ursula Nordstrom, and together, they created several excitingly original books. *Goodnight Moon* author Margaret Wise Brown collaborated with Rey on two books, *The Polite Penguin*, in 1941, and *Don't Frighten the Lion*, in 1942. Other collaborations included *Katy No-Pocket*, by Emmy Payne, and *The Park Book*, by Charlotte Zolotow.

*Pretzel* (Harper 1944) was the first book on which Margret Rey's name appeared as author. She often provided ideas and edited the text and illustrations created by her husband, but this was the first time that she actually received credit for her creativity. After the publication of *Curious George* in 1941, fans had to wait another six years until more adventures of the mischievous monkey appeared in *Curious George Takes a Job*. The third title, *Curious George Rides a Bike*, was published in 1952 and was soon followed by *Curious George Gets a Medal* in 1956. In this new adventure, George is launched into space in a rocket and returns to receive a medal for his bravery. Two years later, the United States launched a squirrel monkey named "Gordo" into space aboard Jupiter AM-13. Then Able and Baker, two monkeys who rode in a nose cone to an altitude of 300 miles and a distance of 1,500 miles, followed Gordo in 1959. It seemed clear to Margret that their fictional story inspired the actual events.

### OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

During their 60-year career, The Reys created more than 90 books for children. Although most of the stories were about animals, the Reys did have other interests. H. A. was an accomplished astronomer, but found most star guides impossible to interpret and vowed to create a more understandable method of constellation recognition. That he did in 1952 with the publication of *The Stars: A New Way to See Them*. An immediate best-seller, it has since become the definitive star-watching guide, popular with laymen and professionals alike, and is still in print 47 years after its first publication.

### VISIT THE DE GRUMMOND COLLECTION

Even though *Curious George* is nearly 60 years old, he still brings joy to the hearts of children of all ages. In doing so, he keeps alive the spirit of his creators, H.A. and Margret Rey. *Curious George Comes to Hattiesburg: The Life and Work of Margret and H. A. Rey* is on exhibit at the McCain Library and Archives at The University of Southern Mississippi, in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Exhibition hours are Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The exhibit and public programming are funded in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities through the Mississippi Humanities Council, the Hattiesburg Arts Council, The University of Southern Mississippi Foundation, and Houghton Mifflin Company. An exhibition catalog is available. Visit our website at <http://www.lib.usm.edu/~degrum> for more information on the de Grummond Collection and the virtual tour of the *Curious George* exhibit. Contact us at 601-266-4349 or send e-mail to [dee.jones@usm.edu](mailto:dee.jones@usm.edu).

**What's So Special About...** is a quarterly column highlighting special collections and archives in Mississippi and surrounding states. Article submissions are welcome. Please contact Toby Graham at 1-601-266-5077 or [Toby.Graham@usm.edu](mailto:Toby.Graham@usm.edu) for details.

# News Briefs

## NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK 2000

Libraries across the country are invited to join in hosting a "Connect for Kids" Day on Saturday, April 8, to kick off National Library Week 2000 (April 9-15). The national event will highlight the variety of resources available to kids and their families at the library and in their community. The theme for National Library Week will be "Read! Learn! Connect! @ the Library." A free tip sheet from ALA and the Library of Congress with ideas for National Library Week, the Bicentennial of the Library of Congress (April 24, 2000) and other promotional opportunities are available from the ALA Public Information Office, 50 East Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. Telephone: 800-545-2433, ext. 5044/5041. E-mail: [pio@ala.org](mailto:pio@ala.org). The tip sheet and updates will be posted on the ALA Web site at <http://www.ala.org/events/promoevents/index.html>.

## BETA PHI MU, BETA PSI CHAPTER INITIATES NEW GRADS

Twelve new SLIS graduates from The University of Southern Mississippi were initiated into the Beta Psi Chapter of Beta Phi Mu, the library science honor society, following the 6th Annual Leadership Forum at the MLA Annual Conference in Hattiesburg, MS, October 19, 1999. Congratulations go to **Frances E. Boyd, Nan H. Crosby, Kattie P. Dugan, Torrey Faith Dukes, Mary Hamilton, Kay Holmes Leggett, Larry E. Madison, Terry Hendricks Rimel, Lorraine Merritt Russell, Virginia Witty, Mary Louise Breland, Vickie Vincent.**

Current officers for 2000 are Ann Branton, President, and Lynn Shurden, was elected Vice President/President-Elect, 2000/2001. Aiping Chen, Secretary/Treasurer, will serve out her second year term. Mary Hamilton is stepping in as chapter Webmaster and will maintain the chapter Webpage for the coming year.

## POSTER SESSIONS 2000: SHARE A NEW IDEA!

The 2000 Poster Sessions Committee hopes that librarians from all types of libraries will submit a proposal to present at the MLA Annual Conference in October, later this year. For now, this early reminder alerts you to be thinking of an idea or project, research, or displays you may want to share with colleagues in a poster session format. A poster session is also a simple and dynamic way to demonstrate a new procedure that you have successfully implemented in your library. It is a great method of sharing those creative and innovative ways of performing even routine tasks. This year we will add a call for bulletin board ideas, too. Bulletin boards are really fun and creative works that inform and inspire. Publicity regarding the particular dates and deadlines, (usually in late July), including the guidelines for submitting a proposal, will be released by May. In the meantime, please think about it! Contact person: Ann Branton, 1-601-266-4350 or [ann.branton@usm.edu](mailto:ann.branton@usm.edu).

## MLA ANNOUNCES 2000 PEGGY MAY/SCHOLARSHIP AWARD: DEADLINE APRIL 15TH

The Mississippi Library Association offers the Peggy May/MLA Scholarship to provide financial assistance of at least \$600 annually, for the education of individuals who plan to be professional librarians, information specialists, or media specialists in academic, public, school or special libraries. The scholarship will be awarded to a qualified current student or officially admitted new student enrolled in graduate course work in the School of Library and Information Science at the University of Southern Mississippi. Both full-time and part-time students are eligible. The scholarship is made possible by an endowment fund administered by the Association and is awarded on a competitive basis by the MLA Scholarship Committee.

Criteria for the scholarship include academic excellence, leadership capabilities, and evidence of commitment to a career in the field of library and information science in the state of Mississippi. Previous experience or activity in the library field is a bonus but not necessary to be considered for the award.

The Scholarship Committee must receive complete applications, with all required documentation, postmarked no later than April 15, 2000. The award recipient will be notified by May 15th. For application form and more information, please contact Tom Walker, Director of the School of Library and Information Science, The University of Southern Mississippi, Box 5146, Hattiesburg, MS, 39406-5146, or 1-601-266-4228. Please visit the MLA homepage at <http://nt.library.msstate.edu/mla/pmay.html> for additional information about the scholarship.

## CALL FOR ARTICLES

You are invited to submit articles of 1500 to 2000 words for publication in the Mississippi Library Association quarterly journal, *Mississippi Libraries*, and its regular columns which feature topics of interest to all readers interested in librarianship in all its sizes and forms. The journal features topics that inform and assist staff in public, school, special and academic libraries. By addressing timely issues that impact the way we do our work, articles provide new information about practical and innovative approaches to fulfill our mission to serve our users, and to share the expertise of others with the Mississippi library community. Please take this opportunity to share your own ideas and success stories in a forum for library personnel. Call me with your ideas. Student research papers are very welcome, too. It is easier than you think to be published! Contact column editors or the ML editor, Ann Branton, at [ann.branton@usm.edu](mailto:ann.branton@usm.edu) or at 1-601-266-4350 or the MLA Website at <http://nt.library.msstate.edu/mla/mla.html> for guidelines.

## People in the News

### HARRISON COUNTY LIBRARY

The Harrison County Library system has named **John Batson** Head Librarian of the Pass Christian Public Library. Batson comes to Pass Christian from the Jackson-George Regional Library system, where he had served as the Reference Services Manager since 1997. He earned a MA in English from the Claremont Graduate School in California, and his MLIS from LSU.

### HANCOCK COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

The Hancock County Library System has hired several new employees and two have been moved to new positions.

**David Woodburn** has been named Assistant Director for the library system. He served as Coordinator of Public and Information Services since 1997. He holds a MLS from the University of Denver.

**Sandra Marshall** has been named Coordinator of Technical and Automated Services. She holds a MLS from Louisiana State University.

**Jeanne R. Jones** has been named Public and Information Services Coordinator. A native of Gautier, Mississippi, she received her MLIS from The University of Southern Mississippi.

**Sandra Ladner** of Fenton has been named Branch Manager of the new Kiln Public Library, set to open February 24. Ladner has been with the library system since 1988, when she became Manager of the present Kiln Library.

Customer Service Assistants for the new Kiln Public Library will be **Laura Mills** of Kiln and **Janette Burlette** of Leetown. **Susan Beckham** of Vidalia will be the new Reference Assistant. **Karla Henley** of Kiln will serve as Student Shelves.

### DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

**Jeff M. Slagell** joined the staff of Roberts Library of Delta State University

in May 1999 as Serials/Interlibrary Loan Librarian. Jeff holds his MA in Information Resources and Library Science from the University of Arizona and will soon complete work toward a MA in Communications from the University of Miami.

**David Salinero** also joined the staff of Roberts Library this past June 1999 as a Reference/Instructional Services Librarian. David earned his MLIS from LSU.

**Jean Liddell** more recently joined the staff in November 1999 as a Reference/Instructional Services Librarian. Jean has her MA in Library and Information Studies from the University of Alabama.

**Vicki Bond** joined the staff of the Instructional Resources Center of Delta State University in December 1999 as Coordinator of Instructional Technology. Vicki holds an MS in Educational Technology from East Texas State University.

### THE FIRST REGIONAL LIBRARY

The First Regional Library is pleased to welcome **Ruth Pierce** as the System's new Regional Reference Librarian. Ruth holds a MLIS from Indiana University.

### THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Several new librarians began their professional careers with USM Libraries recently. **Joyce Radcliff**, originally from Alabama, received her MLS from the University of Alabama, and **Brooke Lippy**, from California, received her MLIS from the University of North Texas. Both accepted Catalog Librarian positions in the Cataloging Department.

Three librarians filled positions in the Information Services Department. **Erica Coe**, originally from Indiana, received her MLS from Indiana University and a MA in literature at Ball State University, and **Mary Hamilton**, formerly from Alabama, received her MLIS from The University of Southern Mississippi. **Ron Peterson**, formerly with Cox Library, USMGC, is now working at Cook

Library, USM Hattiesburg, as Electronic Services Librarian. Ron is originally from New York and was awarded his MLIS from San Jose State University.

In the Special Collections Department, **Peggy Price**, was hired for the position of Special Collections Librarian in McCain Library. Originally from Mississippi, Peggy graduated with her MLIS from the University of North Texas.

**Kathy Davis** is now employed as full-time library faculty at the USM Gulf Coast campus as the Electronic Access/Serials Librarian. She received her MS in Library Science from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and is from Louisville, Kentucky originally.

### MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

During the past several months, three new librarians accepted positions at Mitchell Memorial Library, Mississippi State University. **Maria Collins**, Serials Librarian, started in August, 1999. Maria is originally from North Carolina where she earned her MS in Library Science and a MA in Teaching (English Education), both at UNC at Chapel Hill, NC. **Renee Goodvin**, Reference Librarian/Reference Webmaster, started in September, 1999. Renee is originally from Iowa and completed her MLIS at the University of North Texas. **Mark A. Singer**, began working for MSU this year as Instruction Librarian. Mark is originally from New York where he completed his MLS at SUNY Buffalo, a MSEd from Niagara University, and postgraduate work in English at SUNY Buffalo.

**Editor's note:** Please submit the name, home state, graduate degrees earned and where earned along with the title of the position filled in your institution for new employees you wish to recognize in Mississippi Libraries. Send information to [ann.branton@usm.edu](mailto:ann.branton@usm.edu) by May 2nd.

## About Books

**Haynes, Melinda.** *Mother of Pearl.* New York: Hyperion, 1999. 448 pp. \$23.95 hardcover.

Hattiesburg native Melinda Haynes' first novel is both a coming of age story and one of racial healing at the individual level. Set in Petal, Mississippi, in 1956-57, the book follows the lives of two groups, one black and one white, through the time period of the early civil rights movement which is acknowledged but not directly related to this story.

Even Grade, a twenty-eight year old orphan; his friend Canaan Mosley, the intellectual; Joody Two\*Sun, seer; and Grace Johnson, housekeeper, form the Black group. Valuable Korner, confused fifteen year old; her mother Enid, the town whore; Val's best friend and boyfriend, Jackson McLain; and Joleb Green, teenager in search of himself, comprise the white group. The memory of Val's grandmother, Luvenia, looms large, and Valuable's great aunts Neva and Bea, Joleb's family, Grace's aunt, and a Catholic priest, Father Russ, fill out the large cast of characters, each of whom turns out to be an essential element. Haynes has managed to give each a distinctive personality and keep the different story lines from becoming confused. The story begins slowly, but gradually gets the reader involved in the lives of the characters.

In the beginning, it appears that the two groups move in parallel worlds; but as the story progresses their lives become intertwined in both happy and tragic ways. Much of the interaction can be traced to the teenagers seeking out "readings" from Joody Two Sun who is camped in the woods near town and has become Even's lover. She can predict, but not change, the future for these youngsters and their families. That future includes romance between Val and Jackson as well the deaths of Joleb's brother and mother during a climactic flood, and Joleb's discovery of his history. The rescue of Joody and Joleb from the flood by Even, Grace and Canaan helps cement

the bonds. And Val's friendship with Even, with whom she shares the bond of having been abandoned by a mother, leads to the ultimately heartwarming conclusion.

Haynes has written a novel that is both thought provoking and entertaining. She includes the feelings and tensions associated with the time, but does not dwell on them. The tragedies that befall the characters show a real grasp of human emotion. And the descriptions of Canaan and Grace's romance in its formative stages and those of Grace's attempt at driving a standard shift truck evoke chuckles. Her settings in both Petal and finally in Grand Bay, Alabama, can be easily visualized from her descriptions. One can see the locations, relate to the characters and feel oneself a silent observer to the complex sequence of events. This is a mature piece of work and, hopefully, the first of many from a new author.

Louise Plodinec

*Assistant Collection Development Officer  
Mississippi State University Libraries*

**Miller, Mary Carol and Mary Rose Carter.** *Written in the Bricks: A Visual and Historical Tour of Fifteen Mississippi Hometowns.* Brandon, MS: Quail Ridge Press, 1999. 231 pp. \$39.95 hardcover.

*Written in the Bricks* is a visually stunning, highly informative work about the nature of fifteen Mississippi towns and their relationship to the state. Dr. Mary Carol Miller carries on her award winning tradition of bringing Mississippi to life through history and photographs. Just as in her previous works, *Lost Mansions of Mississippi* and *Images of America, Marshall County: From the Collection of Chesley Thorne Smith*, Miller uses images to illustrate and humanize history. In this latest work Miller combines her talent with that of photographer Mary Rose Carter to present the reader with current images of architecture and landmarks from each area.

The author and photographer had an arduous task in choosing fifteen particular Mississippi towns to highlight, and they acknowledge this immediately in their notes. Their categories for selection were that the towns be unique and represent different regions of Mississippi. Of course, this selection criteria is subjective, but the result does provide a general overview of the State. The towns chosen share consequential similarities, despite geographical and cultural differences.

It is in the detailed history of each town that these similarities appear. The monumental importance of transportation is one of the first to surface. Effective transportation was often one of the main factors for choosing a particular location for a town, as in Yazoo City. The Kessler Bridge of Greenwood is a lasting testimonial to the importance of river transportation to the economy. The Holly Springs Depot stands as an important reminder of the significance of the railroad by the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The effect of the Civil War is another notable similarity in the history of these fifteen Mississippi towns. Miller skillfully recounts the fate of towns in the thick of action; towns like Oxford, Vicksburg, Holly Springs, and Jackson. In contrast, the histories of towns which emerged practically unscathed architecturally are recounted also.

Intriguing aspects of this work are the detailed contemporary accounts of the condition of historic buildings. Through Miller's description and Carter's photographs the reader can observe the current state of several notable buildings. The renovated Barnard Observatory on the University of Mississippi campus, the abandoned state of the Mississippi Industrial College and Chalmers Institute in Holly Springs, and Brookhaven's Whitworth College, soon to be renovated to house the Mississippi School for Fine Arts, are a few unique examples.

*Written In the Bricks* reveals the character behind fifteen distinctive Mississippi towns. It is recommended for public, academic, and school libraries. The work

goes beyond the boundaries of an illustrated historical overview and provides insight into the character of the State.

Jennifer Ford  
*Special Collections Librarian*  
*The University of Mississippi*

**Morris, Willie.** *My Cat Spit McGee.*  
New York: Random House, 1999. 141  
pp. \$18.95 hardcover.

*My Cat Spit McGee* is the admission of a life-long dog lover turned cat lover. How does this happen to one who has hated cats since childhood and who has only accepted dogs as beloved pets? For Willie Morris, it started with the love of a woman who loved her man and her cats.

Spit McGee, a white male cat with one golden eye and one blue eye, began life precariously in the home of Morris's fiancée, JoAnne. Morris was placed in the position of rescuer for this newborn, thus causing a bond between the two. Facing death a second time at three weeks, Spit is again rescued by Morris. What Spit's odd birth began, his near death sealed: a love relation between man and feline.

Accepting his destiny as cat owner, Morris began to learn everything he could about cats. He talked with cat lovers, read books about cats, and observed very closely the actions and reactions of his new pet, Spit McGee. He soon realized how intelligent the members of the cat group are and had visions of Spit learning the tricks he had once taught his dogs.

Determined to make a "dog" out of his new pet, Morris tried to teach Spit how to fetch sticks, come when called, and walk with a leash. Citing humorous incidents that happened along the years in this unlikely relationship, Morris delights his readers with a memorable tale of his last years with his beloved Spit.

*My Cat Spit McGee* is a beautifully written work filled with humor and a touch of sadness. It is recommended for collections in every Mississippi library. This book will appeal to readers of the late Willie Morris, as well as touch the very soul of all cat lovers.

Donna Phelps Fite  
*Branch Librarian*  
*Purvis Public Library*  
*Lamar County Library System*



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## About Books

# About Children's Books

### **Multicultural Children's Books, Copyrighted in 1999**

*New books, for the middle elementary reading level and up, relate stories with rich details of ethnic ways of life from separate time periods, and geographic areas, plus enough adventure to interest young readers.*

**Rosales, Melodye Benson.** *Leola and the Honeybears: An African-American Retelling of Goldilocks and the Three Bears.* New York: Scholastic, Inc., 1999. 37 pp. \$15.95.

Heavy on rural southern images, *Leola and the Honeybears: An African American Retelling of Goldilocks and the Three Bears* retells the classic children's story using Leola who wanders away from grandma's cottage, meets a weasel and a blackbird, and discovers the Honeybear's home. The book is full of beautiful artwork and would make a good addition to any library's picture book collection.

**Bridges, Ruby.** *Through My Eyes.* New York: Scholastic Press, 1999. 63 pp. \$16.95.

*Through My Eyes* is a juvenile biography full of photographs and boxed quotations. In it, Ruby Bridges recalls her experience at the age of six with school integration in New Orleans in 1960. Born in Tylertown, Mississippi, on the day the U.S. Supreme Court ordered the end of "separate but equal" education, she was four when her parents moved the family to New Orleans hoping for a better life. The summer after her kindergarten year, her parents were persuaded to send her as the first Black student to integrate an all-white school near her home. This would be a good addition to juvenile col-

lections. Ruby Bridges' story depicts this trying period in American history well, and is very inspiring when you consider how courageous Ruby and her teacher were during that experience, and the success Ruby made of her life.

**Eboch, Chris.** *The Well of Sacrifice.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999. 236 pp. \$16.00.

*The Well of Sacrifice* by Chris Eboch, with illustrations by Bryn Barnard, is a work of fiction centering on a courageous female protagonist in 9th century Mayan Guatemala who suspects the High Priest of sacrificing anyone in the way of his power, more specifically, her brother and other young males.

**Erdrick, Louise.** *The Birchbark House.* New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 1999. 244 pp. \$14.99.

Erdrick both wrote and illustrated this fictional story based on one of her ancestors. It is the story of one year in the life of a young Ojibwa Indian girl on an island in Lake Superior in 1847. There is a glossary and pronunciation guide for Ojibwa terms at the end of the book.

**Hazen-Hammond, Susan.** *Thunder Bear and Ko: The Buffalo Nation and Nambe Pueblo.* New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1999. 32 pp. \$16.99.

For a more contemporary, true American Indian experience, young readers will appreciate *Thunder Bear and Ko: The Buffalo Nation and Nambe Pueblo* with text and photographs by Susan Hazen-Hammond. Thunder Bear is an eight-year old Indian boy who helps his father bring the Ko, the Tewa word for "buffalo," to their pueblo to care for

them. In caring for the buffalo, he and the others at the pueblo learn about the connection between their ancestors and these animals and revive some Indian traditions. This book also includes a pronunciation guide.

**Talbert, Marc.** *Star of Luis.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999. 181 pp. \$15.00.

Still in the American Southwest, *Star of Luis* is a fictional story of self discovery. Shortly after Pearl Harbor, Luis' mother moves the family from East Los Angeles, where his friends are all Mexican Americans, to her village home in New Mexico. His father disparagingly described it as a place where the chickens were smarter than the residents. There Luis discovers his eccentric family and a surprising heritage.

**Godden, Rumer.** *Premata and the Festival of Lights.* New York: HarperTrophy, 1999. 90 pp. \$15.00.

Set on a different continent is the story of *Premata and the Festival of Lights*, written by Rumer Godden and illustrated by Ian Andrew. Premata is a Bengali girl whose family is so poor that her mother has to sell their "deepas," tiny lamps shaped like leaves which are lit on "Diwali," the festival of lights. Without "deepas" to guide the Goddess Kali (who battles the demons of wickedness, bad luck, and darkness) to Premata's house, her family's future will be dismal. In the end, evil is set to right.

There is much detail about Bengali life featured in the story.

Stella Wheat  
Library Director  
Lamar County Library System  
swheat@lamar.lib.ms.us

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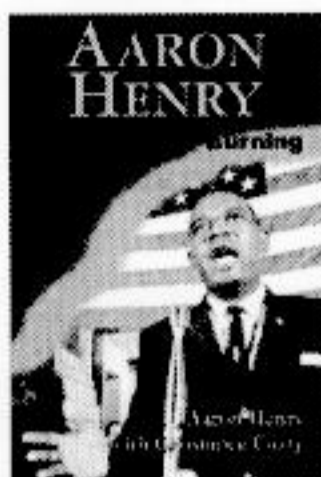
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