

# Reference and Information Services in Special Libraries

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## Characteristics of the Special Library

THE LATEST EDITION OF the *Directory of Special Libraries and Information Centers*<sup>1</sup> lists over 16,000 libraries and centers, an increase in their numbers of over 700 from the sixth edition and 7000 over the inventory conducted by Kruzas in 1963.<sup>2</sup> "Growth," as Christianson has observed, "has been one of the outstanding characteristics of the special library movement throughout its 70 year history. New special libraries continue to come into existence with a vigor undiminished by another, less pleasant characteristic of special libraries, their mortality rate."<sup>3</sup> The numbers of libraries will vary from inventory to inventory depending upon the compiler's definition of a "special library," for while there have been many attempts through the years to define it, there is as yet no clear or universally accepted definition for the special library.

Special libraries can vary so widely in their organizational structure, purpose, function, level of support and size that it is difficult to generalize about them. Special libraries may include those with collections devoted to materials on a single subject or related group of subjects (art libraries, business libraries, law and medical libraries); others may be described by the form of material collected (map libraries and picture libraries). Many can be described in terms of their parent organizations (museum libraries and government libraries). Furthermore, special libraries may be either publicly or privately supported.

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The most significant characteristic which distinguishes the special library from other types of libraries, however, is that it is, as Ashworth has clarified, "one which is established to obtain and exploit specialised information for the private advantage of the organisation which provides its financial support,"<sup>4</sup> whether the parent organization is a government agency, business or industrial company or group of companies, a nonprofit organization, private society or institution, a research association, or a hospital.

There are other important differences which distinguish the special library from the academic or public library. Typically, the special library tends to be comparatively small—in the size of its collection, in the space occupied and in the size of staff. At the same time, its clientele forms a more clearly-defined community in terms of its objectives, in relation to the parent organization and its products and services. Many special libraries provide services exclusively to their own organizations and are not open to the public except through special arrangement. There may be, in fact, situations in which information or a certain part of the collection is regarded as proprietary or confidential and accessible only to designated individuals on a need-to-know basis. Above all, it is the users who are the *raison d'être* for the existence of the special library—all their information needs related to the organization's mission and development must be met. In servicing their needs, the special librarian may, in a sense, become an elitist, both as to the services provided and, particularly, to whom, when and how these services are furnished.

In most types of special library—especially those of commercial, profit-making organisations—the principal function of the library staff is to provide a depth of personal service to users which will save their time and energies for their real working functions as, say, engineers, marketing executives, salesmen or scientists. Instruction in library use in the sense of providing users with the wherewithal to help themselves in the library without calling upon the services of the library staff will not be a prime function of this type of library. It could be argued to be a complete negation of the functions of such a library in fact. That is not to say that some user education will not be given, but the initiative for it will almost certainly tend to come from the individual user who wishes to be shown how to use some particular service or reference book for himself—using an abstracting service for unfamiliar or complicated periodicals, for example.<sup>5</sup>

It is not unusual for the special librarian to provide certain services for clientele which have been considered, traditionally, outside the scope of librarianship. There are instances where the skills of a records manager, an archivist, word processing expert, editor or public affairs

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assistant have been expected and thus developed by the special librarian in order to provide that extra dimension of service to the overall organization. "This trend toward taking on nontraditional services is one of the major reasons for the gradual metamorphosis of many special libraries into *bona fide* information centers. It is also part of the reason why some special libraries no longer use the title 'library' over the door."<sup>6</sup> More and more the term *information center* is replacing the term *library* or is being used with *library* to describe more accurately the dual purposes of the organization.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, the distinctions between "special library" or "information center" or "technical information center" are becoming more blurred as improvements in technology increasingly permit the economical addition of new and sophisticated products and services to the repertoire of those traditionally provided by the library.

The foregoing, brief description outlining the diversity that exists among special libraries has been provided in order to place in perspective the descriptions that follow of the various reference and information services that some or many special libraries may provide in the course of serving their clientele. These services are categorized under the following topical headings: Information Services, Bibliographic Services, Online Search Services, Document Delivery Services, Indexing Services, Abstracting Services, Publishing and Alerting Services, Translation Services, Clipping Services, and Records Management and Archival Functions.

### **Information Services**

Information inquiries received by the special library vary greatly in the type of expertise and amount of time and effort needed to answer them satisfactorily. The requests received may be for the specified documents for which the author or title are known, or for subject requests ranging from general to particular; for example, ready-reference inquiries for simple data readily found in a matter of minutes in handbooks and directories to those involving extensive retrospective literature searches and the comparison and assessment of the information found for which hours or even days are required to provide the results. Industrial libraries and those serving the professions often have need for highly technical, detailed and current information. The overall pattern of requests received in any given library, however, tends to remain fairly constant; thus, the searching procedures for locating the needed information can become well established over a period of time. Typically,

users have specific questions that must be answered within short deadlines and all the tools of the librarian's command—the catalog, the reference collection, the in-house indexes and directories, outside sources, as well as the online search services are employed in finding and documenting the answer. Finding information for the user of a special library entails more than the mere presentation of the documents in which the information may be contained; it includes the identification, authentication and presentation of the information itself. The goal as Aspnes so succinctly stated is to provide, "the right information to the right person at the right time in the right form."<sup>8</sup>

Approximately one-quarter to one-half of the inquiries received by special libraries can be answered satisfactorily within half an hour. Many small libraries are not staffed to handle inquiries taking much longer than this and may be limited to quick-reference telephone services and guidance in research methods for those able to come to the library.<sup>9</sup> The small library with limited resources may be compared and contrasted with the services provided by special libraries having larger staffs and with methods they have developed and equipment they have employed to deal with the volume of inquiries received.

Most of the inquiries directed to the U.S. Senate Library are received by telephone. In fiscal year 1981, four legislative reference assistants using telephone headsets and operating at individual terminal stations, responded to over 61,500 inquiries from Senate offices for bill status information. To deal with the volume of requests received, an automatic call sequencer answers Senate callers with a recorded message when the available four terminal operators are busy, and places them on hold automatically to be answered in sequence. During the same fiscal year, three reference librarians responded to over 12,000 requests for reference assistance and an additional 1000 requests involving the searching of commercial online databases. Most requests are answered by the staff within one day of receipt.<sup>10</sup>

At the Congressional Research Service (CRS), about two-thirds of the inquiries received from the Congress are for basic, factual information. Among the types of inquiries handled are requests for books, documents and articles; quotations; biographical information; and information about organizations, associations, business firms and companies. In addition, the service provides a variety of in-depth policy analysis and research on every subject of interest to the Congress including background analyses, pro and con arguments, legal research, legislative analyses, legal research and legislative histories and scientific and economic analyses. The Congressional Reference Division (CRD), staffed by professional librarians, cleared over 230,000 inquiries during

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fiscal year 1981—71 percent of them within twenty-four hours of receipt. Another division of CRS, the Library Services Division, responded to over 26,000 congressional requests during the same period of time.

In order to respond to such a large volume of requests, over 60 percent of which must be recorded, assigned and answered the same day as received, the CRS Inquiry Section was established to serve as the centralized point for the receipt and assignment of congressional requests. Fifteen inquiry recorders receive incoming calls from the Congress and interview callers to determine the purpose of the request, what information or analysis is required, what format would be most useful for the response, and the time frame desired for the response. This enables the section to direct the request to the appropriate CRS division to provide the information required. Electronic call directors distribute the call load equally to all inquiry recorders; an automatic call sequencer controls incoming calls when lines are busy and callers receive recorded status messages until calls can be serviced. An automated management information system, the Inquiry Status and Information System (ISIS), provides machine-generated control over the inquiries received and speeds the assignment and tracking process while protecting the confidentiality of records of congressional requests.<sup>11</sup> In anticipation of requests received, conveniently prepackaged *Research Guides*, *Info Packs* and brief *Find It Fast* sheets on topics of recurring interest have been prepared by CRS for distribution which identify information search tools, provide packets of background information and list quick information sources.

### **Bibliographic Services**

Quite a number of organizations, particularly those engaged in research activities, have active publication programs. Frequently, their libraries are called upon to conduct the initial searches of the literature for relevant citations concerning a given project, provide assistance to staff in checking and verifying bibliographic citations and provide advice regarding bibliographic format and style. In addition, special libraries on their own initiative may compile various reading lists, bibliographies, bibliographic reviews and pathfinders to the literature on topics of interest to clientele of the organization.

The task of compiling these listings has been greatly aided by the utilization of the various online search services. Some libraries, in fact, have discontinued the compilation of formally published bibliographies in favor of using the online systems to produce on-demand listings of the literature, tailored specifically to an individual request.<sup>12</sup>

While this avoids the lengthy, labor-intensive and costly manual process of compiling bibliographies and provides the requester with rapid responses to his information inquiry, it passes on the problem of eliminating duplicates and false drops to the end user, as well as the problem of reconciling various output formats from different databases. Huleatt describes a technique for editing and formatting online searches to provide the user with a finished and more readily understandable product,<sup>13</sup> while Hawkins explains how machine-readable output (MRO) from online searches received in lieu of conventional offline prints on paper is used at Bell Labs in compiling attractively formatted, classified, arranged, and indexed bibliographies.<sup>14</sup>

### Online Search Services

Perhaps the most dramatic development in information service work in special libraries within the past decade has been the establishment and increased use of online interactive search services. Since their inauguration in 1971, there has been spectacular growth in the utilization of commercially marketed online services, particularly by special libraries and more recently by academic and public libraries. For the most part, external interactive systems provided by commercial vendors (DIALOG Information Services, SDC Information Services, BRS, The Information Bank, LEXIS, WESTLAW) or government suppliers (RECON, JURIS, MEDLINE, SCORPIO) have been utilized; however, a few special libraries were found to subscribe to the tape services supplied by database producers and had them mounted on in-house systems.

From 1975 to 1979, the number of searches performed by Bell Laboratories increased nearly 1200 percent.<sup>15</sup> A similar increase in search service activity at the U.S. Department of the Interior Library during the same time period was experienced by the author. Jacob reported that 46 percent of the subscribers of the New York Times Information Bank were special libraries; 50 percent of Lockheed's subscribers were either special or public libraries with special libraries predominating; 32.2 percent of SDC's subscribers were commercial libraries while 18 percent of BRS subscribers were identified as special libraries.<sup>16</sup>

Online searching is used by special libraries for ready-reference purposes—to identify and verify known items. It is also used for retrospective searching, the preparation of bibliographies, and for selective dissemination of information (SDI). Its value for bibliometric studies,

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making quantitative analyses of a body of literature or determining the contributions of a discipline is noted by Hawkins.<sup>17</sup>

The benefits derived from computer-assisted searching of the published literature have been substantial, not only in terms of improved service to clientele and faster turnaround time, but in terms of searcher productivity, retrieval effectiveness and reduced costs.<sup>18</sup> Online search services have enabled the special library to have access to a wide range of materials not in the library's collection, and to current materials not yet indexed in print sources. There have been other impacts. Lancaster and Goldhor surveyed academic and special libraries to determine the extent to which these libraries had discontinued subscriptions to printed abstracting and indexing (A&I) services as a result of accessing their equivalents online. They established that there had been relatively few such cancellations, but noted that, "new libraries tended to move directly into electronic access on demand without ever going through the print on paper phase." Moreover, they predicted an accelerated level of migration from print to online access within the near future.<sup>19</sup>

Many reference librarians routinely query one of the online cataloging support services, such as OCLC, RLIN, WLN, or UTLAS to verify bibliographical information and ascertain the location of materials for interlibrary loan. Although these systems have been considered largely technical processing tools, Blood described the impact OCLC has made on reference service,<sup>20</sup> Ojala illustrated the reference use made of BALLOTS (now RLIN) by the Bank of America Reference Library,<sup>21</sup> Woods discussed the capabilities of the WLN computer system to support library services for reference and interlibrary loan for both staff and public,<sup>22</sup> and Webster and Warden compared the cataloging support services for special librarians. The breakdown of special libraries subscribing to cataloging support services in spring 1980 was as follows: OCLC: 617; UTLAS: 150; RLIN: 72; and WLN: 1.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to utilizing the cataloging support systems for bibliographic verification and location information, these services are used to compile bibliographies on authors and, in the case of RLIN, WLN and UTLAS, subject bibliographies. Results of these subject and author bibliographies are merged with the results of the searches of other online systems to provide the necessary complement of monographic literature to the output from databases largely composed of journal articles, report literature and newspapers.

As a result of computerized searching, there has been a concomitant increase in the demand for documents uncovered by the search and, in many instances, a dramatic increase in the number of requests received

for interlibrary loans. Hawkins attributed a 67 percent increase in the amount of interlibrary loan activity to be due largely to online searching while Martin advised those planning to initiate online search services to be prepared to handle a 50 percent or higher increase in ILL requests.

### Document Delivery Services

For the reference librarian and information professional, the rapid identification and location of documents of interest is the important first step in satisfying user needs; the delivery of the needed documents within the required time frame is the next. If the needed materials are contained in the library's collection, they can be readily dispatched to the requester; those not owned must be secured and delivered as rapidly as possible. Special librarians, it should be noted, rely heavily on direct, quick and often informal connections among themselves for the mutual exchange of information and the expediting of interlibrary loan arrangements since frequently the time period for satisfying patron's requests is quite short.

A number of options are available for obtaining those documents not immediately accessible within the in-house collection: messenger service or shuttle to nearby locations; utilization of local-, state-, and regional-wide networks, or online ILL services; requesting documents through such suppliers as the British Library Lending Division, Linda Hall Library, and the Institute for Scientific Information; online document ordering via DIALOG's Dialorder, SDC's ORBDOC and The Source; various other commercial document delivery services; and delivery via telefacsimile. Systems with forty-eight hour or faster turnaround, Grattidge and King point out, are almost a requirement in the industrial library setting.<sup>25</sup>

The National Library of Medicine (NLM) has created a unique document delivery system to parallel its bibliographic services. McCarn describes NLM's hierarchical network system which operates through eleven regions within the United States. Each region has a Regional Medical Library (RML) to monitor interlibrary loans, search services and other service activities for that region. The larger libraries within the regions are designated resource libraries for the provision of documents. If a local library does not have a requested document, it turns first to the nearest resource library, then to the RML of the region, and finally to the National Library of Medicine. With the recent creation and implementation of SERLINE (Serials Online) which contains information on over 120 medical school libraries with holdings of over



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6000 biomedical journals, a request can now be forwarded directly to the nearest library holding the journal.<sup>26</sup>

### **Indexing Services**

The diversity and specialized nature of materials acquired and maintained by special libraries coupled with the need for the rapid retrieval and delivery of this material to clientele often necessitates the compilation of various in-house finding tools and indexes. Commercial indexes and directories generally are not available to cover such diverse and specialized materials in the depth and specificity required. In many instances, the reference staff is directly involved not only in identifying what types of information will likely be required by clientele on short notice, but in preparing the appropriate tools once identified: the indexes, directories, and resource and data files. In addition, organizations may turn to their libraries to develop indexes to various in-house publications and groups of records.<sup>27</sup>

Numerous examples appear in the literature describing the indexes created by special libraries for their unique collections of, for example: vertical files, reprints and preprints, picture collections, internal reports and correspondence collections, newspaper clippings, laboratory notebooks, test reports, technical orders and specifications, maintenance manuals, trade catalogs, as well as to indexes to local journals, ordinances and regulations, or documents and publications not indexed elsewhere. In the federal sector, particularly, and in innumerable law libraries, the reference staff is called upon to compile legislative histories citing bills, reports, hearings, debates, and other documents relative to legislation. These can be developed on demand, or there can be a formally organized program established in house to acquire the documents as issued so that the legislative histories relating to the organization's mission or particular areas of interest can be compiled in an on-going operation. An important function of the reference staff at the U.S. Department of the Interior Library was to index the Senate and House appropriation hearings for the department from galleys produced by the Government Printing Office. Detailed indexes to subjects, names and witnesses were compiled and rushed after editing to the appropriate House and Senate offices for transmittal to the GPO. The indexing function not only provided a vital service for government publishing and the department, but served to keep the departmental library reference staff informed about the programs, projects and organizations with which the department was involved.

Bator discusses the development of an automated vertical file indexing system utilizing a PDP-11 minicomputer and involving the entire reference staff in thesaurus construction and record input,<sup>28</sup> while Bivins and Eriksson describe the application of two related, low-cost microcomputer-based systems designed for reference work in the creation and utilization of in-house data files: REFLES, or Reference Librarian Enhancement System, used to store factual information, and REFLINK (the 'Missing Link'), a modification of REFLES adding tree structure with extensive use of links and pointers.<sup>29</sup> The development of a computer-assisted retrieval system involving a totally different system designed to provide access to the engineering and architectural drawings and maps of several large land development firms is described by Tenopir and Cibbarelli.<sup>30</sup> Both manual and computerized in-house files exist, but increasingly, the utilization of micros, minis and word processors on the part of special libraries for the creation, searching and maintenance of in-house files is being reported in the literature.

In-house files need not be restricted to the published or written word. Often valuable resource files are developed to identify individuals both within and outside an organization who possess expertise in given areas of interest to the organization. The clientele and staff of the Congressional Research Service benefit from a quotations file compiled over the years by reference librarians in the course of searching for quotations and sayings attributed to individuals but which were not found in conventional reference works. The file is composed of approximately 6000 cards which identify the person, the quotation, and the source for those items located, or, information that the quotation could not be verified for those items not found.<sup>31</sup> Resource directories and files containing descriptive information about programs, projects or organizations may also be compiled. Resource files to aid in the retrieval of information about available community service programs or concerning particular target groups are described by Mershon who lists the various groups which have formulated standards for information and referral (I&R) services and for the resource files they use. She also describes the development of a model automated resource file which generates listings of service organizations under six different reports.<sup>32</sup> In contrast to batch-mode of operation, Light and Yamamoto describe an online I&R file utilizing a large computer on a time-shared basis and the options currently available for those desiring to automate their in-house resource files.<sup>33</sup> Another example of a resource database providing online access to a directory of nonprofit organizations working in education is that developed for The Resource and Referral Service (RRS) of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education.<sup>34</sup>

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A number of special libraries utilize the private file services offered by several online, time-sharing vendors, such as SDC Information Services, DIALOG Information Services, and BRS to create, collect, store, search, and maintain their in-house files. In addition, some have produced specialized printed products from the magnetic tape output in photocomposition format from the databases they have mounted on these systems.

### **Abstracting Services**

The preparation in-house of abstracts of published information is a major activity in some special libraries and information centers. These abstracts may be prepared and provided in the course of disseminating current information or in the process of answering specific inquiries. Some special libraries regularly scan incoming publications in order to select for abstracting and indexing those items most pertinent to users' interests. Locally prepared abstracts have a number of advantages over commercial abstracting services in that they can be tailored specifically to users' needs and made available shortly after the original publications are received and added to the collection; and, importantly, they reflect what is immediately accessible on site to library clientele. LaSalle describes the activities of the Portland Cement Association Library in selecting, preparing and distributing via a weekly *Literature Received* list the library-prepared abstracts of publications received (journal articles, proceedings papers, reports, books, and patents) and considered relevant to the association's interests. Over 100,000 entries are represented in a special subject, author and source abstract file compiled and maintained by the library to which an additional 4000 abstracts are added each year.<sup>35</sup>

### **Publishing and Alerting Services**

One of the major functions of an active information service is the exploitation of the material acquired once it has been received and processed or otherwise identified as appropriate to bring to the attention of patrons within and, possibly, outside the organization. A wide assortment of means and techniques is utilized, singly or in combination, ranging from: library bulletins and "what's new in the library" columns in employee newsletters, to accessions lists, customized table-of-contents services, pathfinders, directories, guidebooks, bibliographic reviews, state-of-the-art reports, current awareness or selective dissemination of information (SDI) services, and annual reports. Most special

librarians see their role as active disseminators of information rather than passive custodians of documents; however, the type, number and range of alerting services provided clientele will not only be dependent upon perceived patron needs, but the availability of the necessary staff and resources to support such services.

Chicago's Municipal Reference Library publishes four pamphlets which are authored by members of the reference staff: "Facts about Chicago," "The Government of the City of Chicago," "Historical Information about Chicago," and "The Mayors of the City of Chicago."<sup>36</sup> The Senate Library, a legislative and general reference library for the use of the U.S. Senators and their staffs, has produced a number of important reference works including: *Index of Congressional Committee Hearings, Senate Election, Expulsion and Censure Cases from 1789, Presidential Vetoes 1789-1976, and Nomination and Election of the President and Vice-President of the United States.*<sup>37</sup> Many of its publications are found in the reference collections of libraries throughout the country.

The Congressional Research Service serving the U.S. Congress has an extensive publications program ranging from multi-volume Congressional prints providing in-depth policy analyses on every subject of interest to Congress to short, confidential legal interpretations and written analyses prepared for Members or Committees. In addition, CRS provides a selective dissemination of information alerting service directly to congressional clients and CRS staff. Subscribers to the service receive weekly computer printouts of detachable 3- by 5-inch cards containing bibliographic citations of recent articles, studies and documents relevant to their areas of policy. The cards are used to request full text copies of cited publications. In fiscal year 1981, CRS provided copies of over 53,600 documents requested by subscribers.<sup>38</sup>

The Bell Laboratories Library has an active publication program. In addition to publishing a diversity of specialized information directories, catalogs, indexes and pathfinders, the Bell Labs Library provides information alerting services, including the regular publication of fifteen major announcement bulletins and a computer-aided system for selectively disseminating internal technical documents. The bulletins cover internal documents, external reports, books, serials, Bell Labs talks and papers, audio/videotapes, and published papers in all major fields of interest to Bell Labs technical and managerial personnel. MERCURY, Bell Labs Library system for selectively distributing internal technical reports, seminar announcements, computer documents and other information, is directed primarily to getting a new internal document to the right readers. Over 5500 Bell Labs employees are

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enrolled in this service. Via MERCURY, an author may distribute a paper not only to named colleagues and departments, but also to all personnel who have indicated an interest in receiving papers on specific subjects or projects or from specified authors or departments. Two other alerting services issued biweekly by the Bell Labs Library are compiled by using data from external magnetic tapes and from internal keyboarding. The BELLTAB system produces *Current Technical Reports*, a subject-structured awareness service listing selected technical reports mostly derived from the magnetic tapes supplied by the National Technical Information Service (NTIS). The BELLPAR system produces *Current Technical Papers* composed of five different subject bulletins listing approximately 50,000 journal papers annually. BELLPAR selects citations of interest from the INSPEC and SPIN tapes and adds citations selected by the Library Network's Literature Analysts from journals not covered by the tape services. Each publication provides a convenient order form for requesting copies of items announced. Commenting upon the underlying philosophy behind the Bell Labs Library Network publications program, Kennedy states his conviction that, "the essence of special library services is outreach directed to need. The emphasis is on projection rather than reaction, which implies going to the users, making it easy for them to learn about the request and get information, marketing the library image and the repertoire of library service network-wide, and researching and developing information alerting and access packages addressed both to known and forecast needs."<sup>39</sup>

Mulvaney describes a much smaller but similar information alerting operation designed for the Caterpillar Tractor Company for which the semimonthly *Review of Current Literature* is compiled and distributed by the library. This service lists books, periodical articles, society papers, and university publications acquired and deemed of importance to Caterpillar's research and engineering programs, and provides, in addition, a convenient mechanism for recipients of the *Review* to request copies of items listed therein.<sup>40</sup> A minicomputer produces the library-compiled *Index to Current Literature* for the Blue Cross Association and Blue Shield Association Library to provide access to the specialized literature covering the financing and economic aspects of health care and health insurance.<sup>41</sup> One special library reported that a computer-produced library bulletin developed to announce recent accessions of technical reports had evolved into a full-scale information retrieval tool providing access to a small but developing in-house file of reports and journal articles.<sup>42</sup>

## Translation Services

It is not uncommon for special libraries to be called upon to provide three distinct services in regard to foreign language materials: (1) finding translations of articles or documents appearing in foreign languages, or (2) finding persons, organizations or services able to translate foreign language material into English, and (3) locating persons, organizations or services able to translate in-house publications or correspondence from English into another language.

A few special libraries have full-time translators on the staff; in most situations, however, the library merely makes arrangements for a commercial translation to be made after having ascertained that none has been prepared and made publically available through such services as the National Translations Center at the John Crerar Library in Chicago, through the National Technical Information Service in Springfield, Virginia or through the U.S. Joint Publications Research Service in Arlington, Virginia. Some key foreign journals are translated in full into English and published as cover-to-cover translations. In order to maintain this type of translation service for clientele, a special library must maintain an up-to-date collection of reference tools: directories of translations centers, translating services and translators, and publishers and their publications announcing and indexing translations.

At the Congressional Research Service, the Language Services Section, with a staff of six covering nineteen languages, provides translating and interpreting services to Members and committees of Congress and assists CRS researchers in the preparation of congressional analyses. During fiscal year 1981, this section completed more than 1500 requests involving six different areas of service: translations into English of a wide variety of materials—documents, articles and correspondence; translations of correspondence from English into Spanish, German, French, or Russian; oral interpretation of several languages either in person or by telephone; information on languages, the field of translating, or translators; materials and information on sources for foreign-language publications; and research for materials either available in translation or for those needed in the original foreign language. "One of the most popular services of the Section is the translation into Spanish of Members' newsletters, speeches, press releases, and correspondence for those Members whose districts comprise large Spanish-speaking populations."<sup>43</sup>

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### **Clipping Services**

The daily provision of newspaper clipping services is important to many individuals within an organization who must be aware of and sensitive to media coverage regarding the organization's activities and interests. A number of special libraries are responsible for providing such clipping services for their organizations; others, if they do not compile the information themselves, must make certain that they regularly receive these services on a timely basis in order to be apprised of current new developments concerning their organizations and be prepared to respond to the inevitable requests for additional background information. Daily reading of clipping services and the various news services on the part of reference librarians working in special libraries is a must.

The role of the newspaper library in collecting, selecting, organizing, indexing, and microfilming clippings, photographs and other new materials is described by Miller<sup>44</sup> while Bibby, Olson and Morrow provide further insights on the compilation and maintenance of clipping services. Bibby describes the activities of the Canadian Consulate General Library in distributing a weekly newspaper clipping service to its clientele in Chicago<sup>45</sup> and Olson reviews the responsibilities of the Illinois Agricultural Association (IAA) and Affiliated Companies' staff in reviewing and clipping six different newspapers on a daily basis.<sup>46</sup> Morrow, on the other hand, examines the activities of the Chicago Municipal Library reference staff in dividing the responsibility of reading and marking for inclusion into the newspaper clippings file those articles pertinent to and about Chicago taken from daily newspapers of the region, from about twenty local neighborhood weeklies and from the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and the *Wall Street Journal*.<sup>47</sup> One of CRS's major research resources is its Main Reference Files, a unique collection of over one million newspaper and magazine clippings, government documents, pamphlets, archival CRS reports and fugitive materials of current research interest. This collection, "furnishes the CRS staff with the raw materials for its work in responding to congressional requests for information and policy analysis."<sup>48</sup>

The alert special librarian will not wait for the inevitable inquiry for background information, however, but will assume the initiative and assemble the necessary data and provide it to appropriate individuals in advance of the request.

### Records Management and Archival Functions

The internal documents resulting from the activities of various units within an organization often must be retained by law or for future use. There are instances where these internally produced documents and records are organized and retained in the library as part of the organization's working collection of materials rather than administered separately. A unique archive of some 3000 projects of an engineering firm which is housed with and controlled by its library is described by Bagby.<sup>49</sup> Deere and Company, whose archives have been administered by its library for many years, now has more than 35,000 archival documents—all of which are entered into an online, interactive time-sharing system offering private file service.<sup>50</sup> Hospital archives administered by its library is outlined by Messerle<sup>51</sup> and the activities of the Technical Information Center of the Caterpillar Tractor Company which has the responsibility for indexing and retrieving information from the company's internal report and letter collection is described by Mulvaney.<sup>52</sup> Ammarete Roberts provides a detailed summary and assessment of the problems involved in records management together with recommendations for the special librarian in inventorying active and inactive records, the feasibility of microfilming, the supplies and equipment involved as well as advice concerning record retention schedules and the storage capacities of various media.<sup>53</sup> Two information centers of Merck Sharp & Dohme Research Laboratories are responsible for the storage and retrieval of site-oriented, unpublished project information. Each center processes approximately 1500 individual documents per week composed of reports, memoranda, correspondence, notebooks, regulatory submissions, prepublication manuscripts, and legacy files from various individuals and departments. The design, development and operation of a computerized system for handling these archived records in multimedia format is described by Peterson et al.<sup>54</sup>

Archival collections placed within the jurisdiction of the special library may come about by an agency or organization designating the library a central repository for receiving, for instance, one to three copies of all permanent records of the organization: internally produced reports, house organs, studies or publications. In other cases, it is the special librarian who takes the initiative and assumes the responsibility for collecting, classifying and indexing those internal documents of potential historic value. The archival responsibilities of the special librarian are outlined by Kadooka-Mardfin who describes the development and operation of a municipal archives in the City and County of Honolulu.<sup>55</sup>



## Special Libraries

### Afterword

"Perhaps no single development in libraries," wrote Galvin, "has contributed more to the growth of the concept of reference service in our own time than has the special library movement."<sup>56</sup> Through the years, the emphasis in special libraries and information centers has centered upon the information function and a determination to deliver timely, personalized and in-depth service to clientele. Individual special libraries vary considerably, however, in the extent to which they can provide the specialized services described above; each will, on the other hand, be expected to provide the type of information service most essential to the parent organization to support its mission and objectives. Recognizing that information is a resource whose generation consumes time and money and whose use could conserve time and money, the special library should be dedicated to finding the proper compromise between providing the best possible service and supplying it in the least possible time and at the lowest possible cost. More than any single factor, the special library will be judged and its success be determined by the extent to which it meets user information needs in the most cost effective manner; that is, its effectiveness in delivering useful information within the needed time frame and in the format required for its ready utilization.

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